REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

INQUIRY INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS

At Sydney on Friday, 8 April 2005

The Committee met at 9.45 a.m.

PRESENT

The Hon. Jan Burnswoods (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans
The Hon. Kayee Griffin
The Hon. Robyn Parker
The Hon. I. W. West

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GREGOR RAMSEY, Chair, National Institute of Quality Teaching and School Leadership, Australian National University, 5 Liversidge Street, Canberra, and

FRANCES MERRILL HINTON, Chief Executive Officer, National Institute For Quality Teaching and School Leadership, Australian National University, 5 Liversidge Street, Canberra, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: You are both appearing on behalf of the institute, not in a personal capacity, is that right?

Dr RAMSEY: I think if we believe that we are giving our own opinion and it is important that we say so we will, if we can work that way. Generally we will try to give an opinion based on our organisation.

CHAIR: Just before we start could I, on behalf of Dr Chesterfield-Evans, apologise, he can only be here briefly.

Do you want to make an opening statement?

Dr RAMSEY: It may be helpful, Chair, for me to mention what the National Institute For Quality Teaching and School Leadership is. It was established last year by the Commonwealth Government with a ten million dollar grant to focus on, obviously, from the title, the improving the quality of teaching and taking some leadership role in school leadership.

We are an interim board and we are advising the Minister on how the final form of the institute should operate and what its governance requirements and arrangements should be and we are well into that set of deliberations now.

I guess, just by way of explanation, I think if we look at the education industry there are obviously the employers, and in the case of this inquiry you are inquiring into public education and so we are talking about the major public employer. There are the unions, who take their issues to the employer about their members, and that is entirely appropriate. What has been missing in education has been a concerted group of people that represent the profession of teaching and Minister Nelson's aim with this organisation, since the Commonwealth does not hire any teachers and is not an employer of teachers, in the sense that states are, and constitutionally has no responsible for education, the issue there was to fill that gap. That is, to establish a professional body that could look after the interests of teachers and quality teaching and school leadership. I thought that might be helpful to the committee.

CHAIR: Our first question asks you about the various State accreditation bodies, but then we go on also to look at the issues of the relationship, I guess, that exists or will exist between the national body?

Dr RAMSEY: Perhaps in terms, and you would probably be aware that I did a review in New South Wales that came out in 2000 and the institute that's been established here is, in a sense, an outcome of some of the recommendations of that inquiry.

In that original review I pushed the direction of it towards establishing a professional body for teaching, but in New South Wales. What has happened, and I think entirely appropriately, the State here has established the institute which will, in effect, be the regulatory body, and the states have that responsibility. If you are looking for a difference, there are the regulatory responsibilities of the State institute, it will do other things of course, and in terms of the national institute we see it as a professional body. That is, it will have responsibilities for the profession irrespective of who the employer is. A regulator of who may teach in the State. We are saying that is your responsibility but we are interested in developing the profession of teaching.

CHAIR: It is good to get that clear. Given that the New South Wales institute is so new as well, there is a certain amount of confusion?

Dr RAMSEY: I guess I ought to make the point very strongly on behalf of the board, and in conversations with the similar State authorities, that we are looking to cooperate strongly and to assist the states fulfil their obligations in the way that we can and use the states, wherever is feasible, to assist us in what we are aiming to do.

Ms HINTON: To that end we have had discussions and meetings with a number of the State institutes individually, including the New South Wales institute. We have also met with the body that represents the collective of all of the State institutes, the Australian Forum for Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities, I think it is. So we have met with them, we have talked about the importance of collaboration, building on work that has already taken place and looking for convergence and commonalities where we can find and build that. Recently, in the last couple of weeks, I had another meeting with one of their nominated representatives with a view to developing a partnership agreement between the national institutes and the collective of the State institutes.

CHAIR: Arthur, before you go did you have a particular question you wanted to ask?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No, not particularly. I am interested to read the transcript.

Dr RAMSEY: If I may just intrude, I noted with interest your exchange with the Dean from Western Sydney about the interview versus simply being selected from TER score.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes.

Dr RAMSEY: I share your caution.

CHAIR: The University of Newcastle and medical schools?

Dr RAMSEY: University of Western Sydney I think it was.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes.

CHAIR: Well, just to look at our questions, and feel free to expand on them or whatever, and committee members can take over and have their own questions too, but we did want to get your views, which may be your personal opinion rather than your official opinion, about the similarities and differences between the various State bodies and then, in that context, whether the brand new New South Wales institute is an effective model?

Dr RAMSEY: I would say it is a very thorough model, just to come up with a response to it. The issue will be, can it deliver on the responsibilities that it has with the resources that will be made available to it. That is always going to be an issue and it always is an issue. It covers the ground we addressed in the review in a statutory sense very well, very well indeed. And I think should have a significant impact on the quality of teachers in the State.

This was the best that could be done with the people who were here to think through the issues and time will tell whether they can be put into effect. The important thing about all of these institutes, I would like Fran to comment on this, because Fran has been closer to the individual State institutes than I have. Each of the states is focusing on the quality of teaching and how can we recognise this, how can we make sure that the teachers that go into our schools are as effectively trained as they possibly can be. Each of them is doing it a bit differently but they are sharing their knowledge and they are working together to see how effectively it will all come together. One of the things I will add, ten million dollars, added to what the states are doing, should be a way of progressing so we get quality teachers throughout Australia.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Is there an issue about resources in New South Wales? You mentioned the resources, you said whether they can achieve the results with the resources, do you think there is insufficient resources?

Dr RAMSEY: It would be brave of me to make a judgment about that. These kinds of

tasks take more resources usually than you think about when you are setting the system up and I expect this is not going to be an exception.

CHAIR: On the other hand because the other states have the models in place New South Wales can look at what resources they are devoting to them and get a fuller idea than some of the earlier states did?

Dr RAMSEY: If we get the cooperation right that will make a big impact on seeing the nation has the appropriate levels to do this task.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You don't think there is a bureaucratisation of getting a Dip. Ed. and strengthening the hand of those who would spend a lot of time teaching teachers?

Dr RAMSEY: As soon as you get regulation you are walking down the path of a bureaucracy, you have to have one, and it takes a very strong leader to know where you need the kind of support you need for teachers and where it is simply working out rules.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: We already had the teacher training organisations saying we have 18 months as our cram course and we need two years. I thought the Dip. Ed. was a year and now we are saying 18 months is not enough and two years would be what we need. I mean, universities still don't have any teacher training, do they, it is how many papers you have published?

Dr RAMSEY: Of their own staff.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: For their own teaching staff. One end we have a huge expansion, at the other end nothing happening, and my understanding was there were PhDs who were well qualified people but did not have Dip. Eds and these are the people going to be forced out.

Ms HINTON: I was going to comment that I think there is a balance between the regulatory requirements and the need to be able to assure the community that the people who are placed in front of their children and have responsibility for their children, for significant parts of the day, for their social, emotional, as well as their cognitive development, are adequately able to undertake that task. That is an important aspect and it is an important distinction I would make in terms of the work that we would be involved in. You need that regulation but the major part of that probably is ensuring that you do not have inappropriate and incompetent people in front of people.

On the other hand, I don't believe that the regulation process around that is going to do a great deal to ensure the quality of teaching that occurs. I think that what we have learnt, from a lot of experiences around the world, is that it is the quality of that work that goes on in class rooms of teachers that makes the difference and that is why, from where we sit, we think that the next major advances in quality of education will probably come from a greater input of the profession themselves in to the policies and the practices of teaching?

Dr RAMSEY: I think it is important to note that no other profession is in that situation whereby you can operate as a doctor unless you have professional qualifications to be a doctor, or you can not operate as an accountant, in the full sense of that, unless you are certified to do that. That is true of engineering. We have seen examples of medical practitioners, without qualifications, who have operated for a year without being caught; it is much more than whether the person has not been caught really, it is about whether the person has been inducted into this very important profession of teaching.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Doctors teach doctors all the time, with no teaching qualification. The whole apprenticeship system does not have qualified teachers. The person who is teaching the other person does not have teaching qualifications.

Dr RAMSEY: We do not do what they do in medicine. In medicine you get inducted in into the business of medicine, you do not suddenly be given the job of a heart operation or

something of high significance.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Jump out of uni and jump into the body, as it were?

Dr RAMSEY: A teacher is given a full class and a full load from day one and that is where we fall down.

CHAIR: Is there an important philosophical matters, when you are dealing with minors, are there issues in relation to teaching children because they are children? I know doctors also operate on children but is there an acceptance that there is a fundamental distinction? Is that built in to the work of the institutes?

Ms HINTON: There is certainly a fundamental distinction in relation to the duty of care that a teacher owes to the children in that school or class compared with the responsibilities of a university lecturer to those who are over 18s, a very real difference, that is reflected in legislation, as you are intimating in that process. I think that is quite a significant issue.

The other issue I would say is that increasingly I think there are moves in universities to actually encourage and sometimes require, increasingly, university academics to undertake some form of teacher training, teacher education. I think there will be more of that, not less. That, I think, has arisen from the dissatisfaction of students to the quality of teaching that they have received in their universities.

Dr RAMSEY: That is certainly so.

CHAIR: Getting back to question one; I guess we are reliant on your judgment there, do you think there are important similarities and differences, and you said before Dr Ramsey, that Ms Hinton was going to deal with this. Are there differences and similarities that this committee should note, particularly if we are to say anything useful in the early days of the New South Wales institute?

Ms HINTON: There are similarities and differences and I would not pretend to be across the detail of that. We have been in existence a very short time and whilst we have had discussions with representatives of those institutes, both the chairs and chief executives, I would not pretend to be able to critique the relative merits of particular models. Especially as I imagine that in critiquing the appropriateness of particular models you would need to look also at the complete landscape of educational and support arrangements in that State. So a State which proposes, for example, not to have the same degree of interest in ongoing professional development, as is the case in the Western Australian college, as the New South Wales institute has, also has other arrangements for professional development. I think it is a matter of having a look at the totality of that. But also being able to really focus in on what are the core responsibilities of those institutes that make a difference and I think, as Gregor suggested, it really gets to the issue of the regulation of who in this State is essentially licensed to teach and that responsibility.

Dr RAMSEY: And how can the State maintain or enhance that level of skill and ability. They are the two critical things, I think. We have a broader brief, which is to be advocates for the profession, to advise on and determine quality, in terms of teaching, at various levels of your life as a teacher and one of the things that we have been given by the Commonwealth to do is to run the awards for teachers who are outstanding in the nation, and to give them the appropriate award.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you believe in rewarding teachers financially in terms of acknowledging their abilities?

Dr RAMSEY: I believe in rewarding teachers financially.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: On scale?

Dr RAMSEY: One of the things we do not do, like other professions do, is discriminate broadly enough for teachers who are doing a major professional task to reward them effectively for

the work that they are doing. So, I think it is up to the employer to say that if a level of qualification or a level of recognition that they have been given by the profession is sufficient for that teacher to be rewarded more for it, I think that would be a good thing.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Given that then as an example, how do you then determine what sorts of, who should determine what skills should be remunerated on a different level?

Dr RAMSEY: We are in the midst of looking at that now. Where each, for example, of the maths association, English association have determined standards that they see for a teacher who is not just average but highly competent and they have now identified some of those standards. How do we assess them is the next question. We hope that can be looked at nationally because we think you wouldn't really want to have State by State differences, particularly for the outstanding ones, and we are looking how to make that assessment now. The other level is the one beyond that, you might describe as school leadership, how do we assess those people who are able to become leaders in schools and take a role that will improve education.

Ms HINTON: The professional associations, the science teachers, the English teachers, English as second language teachers, librarians, have worked through national associations and have done for a very long time, and it is interesting that they have been at the forefront of driving the need for standards for highly accomplished teaching and have developed standards in all of those different areas. Following on from that, employers, major employing bodies, particularly the State departments, have also developed some standards, institutes are looking at standards, and I think there is a very real danger that there were will be a plethora of these different kinds of standards that the teachers themselves won't know when they are responding to, or how it works, or what is significant, let alone the parents, who would not have much hope at all.

CHAIR: That is a bit behind some of the questions we have. What are the advantages and limitations of national professional standards? You could end up with a plethora of things which is perhaps self defeating in the end.

Ms HINTON: I think so. I think we are close to that now.

CHAIR: Really.

Ms HINTON: I do. If you were to get a copy of each of the standards around Australia, by recognised and reputable organisations, and pile them up they would be quite high.

CHAIR: Would they be as big as the pile of inquiries into the training of teachers?

Ms HINTON: Perhaps not as big.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You have mostly talked about secondary associations et cetera, I am interested in how you then assess and compare skills within the primary sector. How do you assess someone performing really highly in a two teacher school, in comparison with someone in a metropolitan school, or in an area of challenge or something like that. I would have thought that is more difficult than a secondary assessment.

Ms HINTON: A very good question and it is one that has been exercising our minds as well. We have actually said to some of the professional associations; how can you expect a primary teacher to meet the maths standards, the English standards and so on? Flowing from that consideration of the issue we are convening a conference for the professional associations in August on the issue of national standards. The aim there is to explore the further uses and development of professional teaching standards, to share our experiences and see if we can identify some ways in which we can come together and agree, perhaps, some form of national framework that would apply.

I think there is an issue that needs to be addressed about the advantages of broad generic standards of the kind that have been developed by institutes of teaching and State departments, compared with the more specific standards that have been developed by maths associations, etcetera, in terms of the value of that. In terms of improving classroom practice, and whether or not

we should be, which I think we should in my view, be seeing primary education as a specialisation in itself, and early childhood, and develop a set of standards that apply to the early childhood and primary areas that recognise the complexity of the work that they do, which is really truly remarkable.

CHAIR: Within that you could cover the question between a small school and a bigger school, because that would be built in to the standards for primary teachers.

Ms HINTON: I think it would. But I think the issue, the heart of the role of the teacher is about managing the totality of student learning, not just their discipline based knowledge and skill based areas, but their social and emotional development. I think that management of the student learning in that way is the same whether you are in a small school or a larger school. That is the task you have got with the students that are in your care. The processes you use and the techniques might be slightly different but the aim is the same.

The Hon. IAN WEST: The techniques for that difficult area of assessment, which would take into account those subjective issues of, or the subjective and objective difficulties of geography, of size, of whether we are talking about assessment partially by peer groups as opposed to employer/employee, all those difficult issues you are looking at at the moment, do I understand you are saying that?

Ms HINTON: There are a lot of issues to look at in terms of how the standards are constructed, the purpose of them, how they are used, and probably one of the most difficult ones is how you then assess performance against those standards, because that is a cost benefit analysis, not just about finding the best way to do it.

The Hon. IAN WEST: That is my question, question on assessment and how you are dealing with those subjective difficulties and trying to make them objective and what weight you would be putting on the involvement of the peers as opposed to those who may have an economic requirement over the particular individual.

Dr RAMSEY: I think again I would make it very clear that we believe that assessment of standards of professional colleagues has to be done by the members of the profession, as is so in any other profession.

Employers, believe it or not, the quality of a teacher in State public employment is determined by class size and curriculum. You have got to have a teacher in front of a class, so you go and find one. You could turn that round and say, we will only employ quality teachers to teach mathematics or something else and you will adjust - which is what happens in other professions, you do not reduce the quality because you do not have enough of them. You say, this is how many we have got, we will alter the world so that those quality people do the jobs.

Ms HINTON: Increase the waiting lists.

Dr RAMSEY: There are a whole lot of other people who can be helpful in teaching but at the moment that sort of thing is done by teachers, professional teachers. For example, if you take the accounting profession, a whole lot of people work with a qualified accountant in doing the books or making an arrangement for an audit or any of that, but the person who signs off on that is the qualified auditor or the qualified accountant.

You could look at different ways of doing it, but making clear that the person you have responsible for the education of the child is a qualified professional teacher as assessed by that profession.

The Hon. IAN WEST: If I was a teacher in a two teacher primary school in the back of wherever - a long way from Sydney - my professional qualifications and the assessment of my quality would not be reliant upon the other teacher?

Dr RAMSEY: You could not do it, they would be friends, I am sure.

CHAIR: What you just said about shortages and what other professions do, are you assuming that there will probably be almost a permanent shortage of, for instance, mathematics teachers and that therefore we do need to look at other ways of teaching the children, because we are likely, actually in the foreseeable future, not to have enough quality mathematics teachers?

Dr RAMSEY: I think there are two things in that, the first is we have got to make better use of the good maths teachers we have got now. They need to be, if you like, spread more widely across the number of children that there are to be taught and the second thing is, I believe you can make teaching mathematics more attractive than it is. In fact, I saw the submission from Professor Michael Cowling from the University of New South Wales, saying just that, how important it is to have good and well prepared maths teachers, and that this can happen, but as soon as you allow maths to be taught by a phys. ed teacher or someone who has not had sufficient maths training, then it is actually a very interesting choice, whether it is better not to teach maths at all, than have it taught by a poor teacher, and I say that no one knows the answer really, but that is something that has to be judged.

I have got a little bloke in primary school now and there are four primary classes at his level. Three have got extremely good teachers and one has got a teacher who is just out of training and is totally unable to deal with that class. If all those four had the responsibility for all of those children, as opposed to putting that one teacher in class with that thirty or however many for every day, then there would be a fairer distribution of that quality, which is clearly in the school. So there a whole lot of issues about how the profession should distribute its skills and abilities that employers at the moment are not able or prepared to address.

Ms HINTON: I am not sure that it comes within the terms of reference of your inquiry, but it is really important that the work on standards looks forward and not backward. It is very easy when you are constructing standards for any particular profession to look at the way in which the profession operated in the past and to construct a set of standards that describe that rather than to look to the future and in a number of other areas - nursing is a good example - there have been quite significant changes to nurse practice and changes in the types of professionals and the work that they do.

Whilst it is not the responsibility of our Institute, you could postulate that in the future some of the roles of teachers, particularly highly accomplished teachers, might be as much around organizing, planning the kind of learning experiences of children and that other para-professionals might assist them in that work. In the way in which for example in a kindergarten class now in a metropolitan area typically, there would be teacher aides who assist that process, also for students with disabilities. There are aides who help in that process. So the role of the teacher is likely to evolve in the future and we need to ensure that the standards that we set don't enshrine a past practice.

The Hon. IAN WEST: What impact do you think the technological age will have on that development?

Ms HINTON: I think we are poised now to allow that to happen. We have the technology that can allow that to happen, that can allow students to learn much more at their own pace in ways which a number of the students engage more readily. What is required in that process is the development of a profession so that they are able to take advantage of that technology for the learning processes.

Dr RAMSEY: You take the public education system, a school say costs $6 million to run. The school does not look at it that it has got $6 million to apply to the tasks of that school in the most effective way, and it is a group of professionals that can advise on how that should be done in the most effective way. A school is actually not $6 million, a school of however many children, 500 children, and it is say, 50 teachers, and that is your given, rather than how do we best use the money and the resources.

As we move into the future and coming out of your question, Mr West, the issue of using technology to assist in that process out of the $6 million rather than some kind of add on to 500

children with 35 or whatever it is teachers, it is a different question.

The Hon. IAN WEST: So that a particular individual school, the concept that a school is an island on its own, the technology would be playing against that sort of philosophy.

Dr RAMSEY: Absolutely.

Ms HINTON: And indeed I think that one of the reasons that some of the best teachers that we have have had experience in rural areas in small schools, has been that they have actually adopted those sorts of strategies and approaches and they have taken children out of classrooms, they have used the expertise of people who are within the community, they have used technology in different ways to expand those learning experiences.

Dr RAMSEY: I think the point you make that schools are going to be less and less islands and they will be seen to be part of a contributing group of canvasses, if you like, that are providing education to a particular region that has got some kind of consistency.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Not only for the learnee but for the learner in terms of teaching the teachers, I would imagine the technology would be able to be coming from regional centres into the so-called island.

Dr RAMSEY: That is already happening. I don't think we are as good at it as we can be but it is already happening.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It is interesting for us from the New South Wales point of view to talk about these things, but you have got a national perspective. Is there somewhere where it is happening exceptionally well in your view? Can we learn from another State or can we learn from overseas, another model?

Dr RAMSEY: I think it is going on here. We should not under value what is happening here. I think the States tick tack with each other pretty well on something like this. I think it is doing fairly well in Queensland, which is, I think, the most dispersed State in terms of population per unit area. I have just done a review of secondary education in the Northern Territory and that was a big issue, how do you continue to provide professional development to teachers and we would hope as an Institute at some point down the track, where we will be able either to engage a provider to do it for the profession, that is cross-employers if you like, at a distance, so that the teacher will be able to plug onto the computer to say I've got this question or this problem, and answers will come back. We have even talked about maybe, as a professional service, NIQTSL could provide a help desk if you like for teachers who want to search outside of what they have got available to them to find answers to their problems.

The thing that I regret most of all about my own career in education is that it is only now are we starting to get a professional body that is looking at teaching as a profession as opposed to having forty or fifty different ones that are looking at individual things. There is no professional body of teachers that can join the National Association of Professionals because we do not meet the criteria.

CHAIR: Why do you think teachers as a profession have been so slow in that respect?

Dr RAMSEY: I think one reason has been historically, the single employer has been very, very powerful and has looked after most of the things. The second thing is, to give unions their due and credit, they took a very strong responsibility for professional issues as well and the third is I think that the issues that related to the professional teaching content was taken up by small groups of interested teachers and that seemed to satisfy them.

CHAIR: Is it a status issue as well, that perhaps teachers and nurses have always had a lower status than say, accountants and doctors, etcetera and therefore the kind of conversation we are now having about the status of professional standards, that the community has not really comfortably applied that language to professions like teaching?

Dr RAMSEY: I think I am attracted to that. I think there is a whole set of issues. There are very few educators, although an increasing number of teachers who are so-called self employed - but that is growing and I think professions that have established an identity for themselves often have significant components of the profession that are self employed. I think that teachers have always looked to either the Department or their union to look after them and that has been the way of the world. I think also that the employers and especially the State employer, has been very close or if not one and the same, in terms of curriculum development, assessment and evaluation and so the need has not been there.

I suppose finally the terms and conditions of teaching - and I know this is caricature of sort of 9 to 3 daily and however many weeks of the year on holiday, does not allow them easily to put their flag up and say: We are a professional group like anybody else, but that is changing too. It is a pity we did not get onto it thirty years ago.

CHAIR: What about the proportion of men and women in teaching and again perhaps as in nursing, the usually high percentage of women that we have always had in teaching, has that had an influence in terms of status?

Ms HINTON: What I was going to say is that I think the issue of the status of teachers is one that we need to be quite careful about, that we do not - through worrying about it - actually start to create a problem that does not actually exist. In any of the popular polls on the status of professions, teaching is right up there in terms of the community. Certainly the overwhelming number of parents are very supportive of teaching and see that as a very real contribution that is made and valued for contribution. Students themselves value the work that teachers do with them and that comes through in a whole set of areas. Certainly in my previous life as chief executive of the ACT education system we used to survey the students and the parents of public education at each school ad we would get those students' and parents' responses about how they felt about that. I think that is happening.

It has also been very interesting to see the developments this year, in terms of the difficulty of getting into teacher education pre-service programs. There has been a very substantial rise over the last few years of university admission scores required to get into teacher education. It is now easier to get into a great many other university programs and very difficult to get into Dip Ed programs too, so the issue about status of teaching I think is perhaps at the end of its useful life and I would like to see the language start to change a little more from that deficit model to one which actually recognizes and celebrates the fantastic work that teachers do. When you look at the results of Australian education at international benchmarks, school education is very high indeed. Certainly we are not perfect and we are constantly looking for ways to improve that right across the country but I think celebrating and recognizing that is really terrific and it is something that we would hope that your inquiry would be able to do at the final report.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You were talking before about professional development and often, it seems to me, that the professional development does occur the longer someone stays within the system, a teacher locks into looking for more opportunities, compared to teachers coming out of training. It seems we cannot retain them in that first five years to the level that we need to. Do you think the professional development in those first five years is sufficient to keep them for a long term?

Dr RAMSEY: I think one of the real problems with that first five years is the fact that the teacher is expected when trained and employed to fulfil a full role, like a veteran maths teacher, rather than being inducted into the business of teaching. There is more and more mentoring and processes for assisting that going on.

I know one of the things that is very much at the core of the Victorian, and this NSW Institute has to deal with staff development because that is a professional issue - but we have no profession to speak about that issue. It is also an employer issue and the employers could have done--

CHAIR: And the resources.

Dr RAMSEY: It depends how you calculate the resources. If you simply mean salaries, yes it is. If you talk about the outcomes from the teachers, the resources issue of one fully paid teacher not producing the sufficient level of learning in a class is a resource deficit that is probably going to cost the State - I would hate to estimate the number of dollars. If you get it wrong at the front end, you can rest assured you are in for a lot of trouble at the other end.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The professional development seems to be at the wrong end, it seems to be filled up at the front end.

Ms HINTON: You cannot just add that on to the workload of the teacher. The other thing is we need to look at it in the context of what is happening to employment patterns generally and certainly we are saying to our young people today that they can expect to have six or seven different careers - not just jobs but careers- and some of the latest ones, people are talking about longer periods. In my experience, in talking to young people, whether they are at school or at university or in their early years of employment, in whatever field, they are all talking about - I'll do that for a couple of years, then I'll do this and travel a bit here, so they have a different set of expectations than the expectations I think when I started work.

The Hon. IAN WEST: That is not to say that those expectations will ever be brought to fruition, that is an expectation they have.

Ms HINTON: That is right and I think in a large measure those expectations are being brought to fruition, they have been taking time off and going and doing this - just doing different things is what I mean.

CHAIR: Is the pattern of career change either as an expectation or in reality, as great for people in professions as it is for people in other segments of the workforce? I would have thought most people who train as a doctor, for instance, might actually be more likely to stay as a doctor. Lawyers do seem to crop up in all kinds of areas.

Ms HINTON: I am not sure about doctors. I do know that some of the satisfaction levels of doctors is the lowest.

Dr RAMSEY: Politicians have even been doctors previously.

Ms HINTON: There could be a correlation between that as well.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Some more successfully that others.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We do have a great education minister.

CHAIR: If we look at resignation rates after five years from the teaching profession, one comment will be: well, you don't necessarily need to worry about it unless it is markedly higher than the rates in other professions and the evidence we have does seem to suggest that it is not.

Ms HINTON: I think it is important in this sense, that the employing strategies do not make returning difficult and I think that has been the case in the past. So, one of he responsibilities would be that you would have to free up the kinds of processes by which people who have gone and done something else, can return to teaching and to have their remuneration reflect the totality of their experience as well.

Dr RAMSEY: I was going to make the same point, yes, we will lose some in the first five years but then we can start bringing them in after having done something else.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Having been in that position myself, there needs to be some recognition of what they have achieved in that time. I do not think we do that, do we?

Ms HINTON: It happens in some States.

Dr RAMSEY: It happens with TAFE teachers. If someone was working as a plumber, they would be given credit for their plumbing work that they have been doing and I think the same thing does happen for people who come in with a degree, if they have been an accountant and they did their Dip Ed on the end of that, they would be given credit for it. I think it is 100 per cent better. The universities have tried to be flexible.

I think the other thing that is important to state is that in our universities in Australia, teacher education has been put at the bottom of their priority list and so they have not had the resources to train people properly. If something could come out of this, it is to make sure that the universities give an appropriate level of resources to the training of teachers and that it becomes a much higher issue with the universities in terms of their priorities.

CHAIR: Why do you think universities have been doing that?

Dr RAMSEY: Because they have not had to. There has been no process that accredits their courses in the way that other professions do. We have not had that. There has been the sort of 'have a look at this course' kind of approach but no-one has said 'this is unsatisfactory or not good enough for preparing teachers and so the faculties of education have been squeezed and squeezed and squeezed and they have been expected to do more and more with less and less and one of the outcomes of that is a lot of the teacher training is done by part time people who are not as highly skilled as teachers who would be teaching a medical student or a legal student.

CHAIR: I have looked at some of the questions we sent you. We have not asked many of them in so many words but we have actually covered quite a lot of them. We have certainly talked a lot about professional development. I am not sure whether you think we need to say a little bit more about how your institute is going to fit in with, compliment or compete with standards devised by other States and the other major area we have not got to is the question of community awareness of the importance and quality of teachers and how your institute is planning to increase that, but otherwise, as I said, we have covered a lot of it but I know you have prepared some things to tell us.

Dr RAMSEY: Actually, it might be useful for us to send to you our notes.

CHAIR: In other words, taking our questions on notice.

Dr RAMSEY: Yes and send that back to you later. I suppose the issue that I would like to underline is the need for a national system of accrediting courses of preparation for teachers. You have to provide in Australia a national recognition of the courses that you offer here are acceptable right across the country and that they are acceptable internationally. If you take the Catholic University, it offers courses in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria and it would not particularly want to go through three different processes of accreditation to deal with that and so what we would like to do is to provide a national accreditation of teacher education courses that meet your requirements as a State and meet national requirements and we think that is achievable and obviously in the process of doing it we would want to involve a lot of people form New South Wales, not only in their accreditation but involve all other States because I think that is a healthy process as well.

So I guess if we were to draw a line of some kind between the State and our job, we would see the rest as accredited on behalf of the State's courses for preparing teachers nationally but the States would determine who will teach in their State and we would want in that process to be sure that we met your requirements as a State for teachers who also have the national requirements met at the same time, so the university does not have to go through accreditation several times.

CHAIR: Could I raise a specific example? This Committee previously did an inquiry into the early intervention for children with learning difficulties and one of the things we explored was the requirement in New South Wales for universities to include a special component in teacher training and we had a variety of evidence about that. Some people said it is good in theory but not in practice,

a waste of time, and that is partly because if you do not know what a large number of teachers are going to go into, how do you decided the exact content of the special education component and will it in the end be of much use?

In terms of the difficulties, when you get down to that level of detail, how do you see your Institute and indeed, the State institutes coping with that description of content?

Dr RAMSEY: The first thing I would say about that is that one of the ways we are always trying to solve a particular teacher education problem is to put yet one more thing front end. And it does not mean a lot to the student because they have not experienced, if you like, that special needs thing to the extent you need to comprehend what they need. In the review we talked a lot about preparing the teacher in such a way that they know and will grab hold of the special education learning they need at a point where it is relevant to them in the classroom.

In other words, it has to be part of the continuing growth and development over the practice of that teacher's working lifetime, and where we can help with that. It is not going to happen tomorrow, because we are doing plenty at the moment, is to have available, so the teacher can ring up the help desk and say, "I need to have a good unit in teaching children with special needs", and we will be able to say, "Here is a package you can use", or a group of teachers will come together under the auspices of the university to do that. The Institution of Engineers is extremely good at that. I don't know whether you have had an opportunity to look at some of the special development work that the Institute of Engineers does. It says if you want upgrade on this, this and this, here are the times and dates.

We can play a role and what we will provide is a national approach to it and if then there needs to be a State approach that needs to be grafted on. Areas like you are talking about, Aboriginal education is another one, it is exactly the same, until you have the need to deal with Aboriginal children it is a bit out there. So we want to see teaching English as a second language or speakers of another language. In that report we did we talked about teachers in the way nurses used to be single certificate, double certificate, and each of threes was referred to as the next set of skills. We would see that as an entirely possible way to proceed as teachers. Your first skill certificate, if you like, is special needs, your second one is Aboriginal education, your third one is math in primary school. That sort of approach.

CHAIR: Would you have a firm view as to who should run those courses? Are we talking about university post graduate courses, or are we talking about one of the institutes, almost, you know, buying in a course and then making sure someone has a bit of paper at the end of it?

Dr RAMSEY: I guess it is all of those. My wish at the back of it would be that the organisation makes some decisions about what is effective. There are a lot of fly by night people who put up a course that is not worth the time you spend on it. What we want to do is prevent that. But I think peers, other professionals, are as good as anybody to get teachers to learn new things. The university is incredibly important, to have their input, and obviously employers and unions and others should be involved in the process. But, ultimately, the profession ought to decide which of those are worthwhile and where they are and how you should go about them. There might be five different kinds of delivery and you take which one is best for you.

Ms HINTON: There is a lot of evidence as well that whole school based professional learning in some of these sorts of areas is a very powerful way of professional development that changes practice. When all of the teachers who are in that school are engaged in collectively saying how are we going to improve what we do for indigenous children in our school? What sorts of strategies do we have to put in place? How do we do that? Those sorts of things are powerful as well. There is no single answer on professional learning.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We are running short of time, I have a burning question that is not clear. It goes to the development in New South Wales, increasing development of the middle school idea and the compartmentalisation of training in being just primary or secondary, and the ability of teachers to cross that boundary. Do you have a view about that?

Dr RAMSEY: I have quite a strong view and it comes out in the review I did of the

Northern Territory education, in that I identified stages of learning. You could have two stages of learning in the primary school, if you like, and two in the secondary school, but that people are trained to teach say two of those stages. So we do not have a rigid primary/secondary divide, you have a gradual moving through an education system and we ought to be training people to focus on, say, the middle school. I think it is an excellent idea. The problem we have got is that so many teachers feel that in the end they have to end up teaching in the upper school. There is some status about the upper school. Whereas I think there is no more status to being a medico who is looking after old people than there is being a paediatrician. In other words, it is applying your medical knowledge to a specific group of people and I think that is what we have to do in teaching. You have to see yourself as a specialist in middle school or specialist in upper school. It is not just a transition from middle to upper, it is the transition from year 12 to first year university. You can't tell me there is much difference in teaching year 12 physics to first year university physics, yet the number of teachers that cross that transitional border is much much lower than undergo the transition from primary to secondary.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Or TAFE to university?

Dr RAMSEY: Yes.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: The other issue, when we have been talking with other witnesses about recruitment, is the ability to recruit male teachers, particularly into primary. How can we do that better?

Dr RAMSEY: There are a lot of factors involved in that. Take my little bloke that I mentioned before, he has gone through seven years of primary school and not had a male teacher. There are two aspects to that. It is not just that they do not have a male teacher it is that the male teachers that are in primary schools in a sense get, I don't know whether I should use the word, they get caught up in the feminine environment that is there. All I am saying is it is a really big issue. Some of it goes to the fact that it is not seen to be something that men do. It is just not traditional for them to do it. It is seen to be the sort of thing that women do. There is also, as it has been put to me the concerns about child care and all of those things. I think we have to get through that. I think we are going through a period now where it is a big issue, but we have to get through that. I have always said you ought to be able to, whether you are a man or a woman, to put your arm around a kid who is seven or eight who is crying and not be afraid that this is going to be misinterpreted. My view of that is if you do something like that then the world should know about it; tell your principal or another professional, "Yes, I did put my arm around to console Mary", and that be an incident that is recorded. If you are public about these things then those bad things that happen in private are controlled, it does not overlap with the good things.

Ms HINTON: I have two thoughts on it, for what they are worth: The first is obviously it is a long term issue to address and so that in the short term that we need, in schools, to be adopting strategies that are readily available and implementable now to have more males in the school environment, they do not have to be teachers. That is one thing I would say that I think can be done without too much difficulty. A little bit of resourcing but leaving that aside.

The second strategy that I has some merit is that there are actually going to be the most incredible promotional and career prospects in teaching over the next 20 years. The ageing profile will provide for people who are going into university now, I say to the people sitting in the back stalls and moving forward into looking for careers of different kinds, there will be more promotional opportunities in teaching than in many different fields because of the ageing profile and the retirement of people. I think some publicity around those sorts of processes in career materials for students is important. That is something that we are going to look at producing and developing some career materials.

Dr RAMSEY: I think teachers ought to take a greater responsibility themselves for encouraging students in their classes who should think about teaching as a career to do so. Quite often the opposite is the effect, that is, teachers say, "Do not you get into teaching, it is a terrible job". Whereas I don't think it is, I think for those people who like dealing with children and who like to see children learn it is an exciting and challenging job.

CHAIR: You have mentioned a couple of times the deficit or a tendency amongst teachers to be negative about the profession. Part of what you see as your role is to turn that around?

Dr RAMSEY: It is.

CHAIR: You do see it as an important problem?

Dr RAMSEY: Yes. I think the more that the profession can speak for itself rather than the employers and unions speaking about the issues, the more that is going to happen. It is not going to be Fran and me speaking about the profession all the time, it will be people from the profession who know about the issue coming forth and saying these are the things and it will be seen to matter. We have already seen, in the six months or so that we have been established newspapers contacting us direct for comments on various issues and people from outside, industry and so on, saying can you give us a view on this position from the point of view of being a professional as opposed to the union or employer view. I always give the hoary one of the class size: Employers want class size as big as they can get them because that saves money; unions want them as small as they get them because this are easier for teachers; but there are professional statements that can be made about class size in various circumstances that need to be made and are not being made, and that is an example.

CHAIR: I think we have just about covered it, particularly with your offer to get back to us, to take on notice the material you have proffered. I think you have probably told us some of what you want to come out of the inquiry, but if you have written notes about that that would be useful?

Dr RAMSEY: All right.

CHAIR: If you want to round things off by giving us your wish list?

Dr RAMSEY: We look forward to your outcomes because we think they will have national implications. There is no doubt about that. The fact you are focusing on public education which will deal with national issues that every jurisdiction with public employment of teachers is grappling with right now.

(The witnesses withdrew)

GILLIAN ELIZABETH CALVERT, Commissioner, Commission of Children and Young People, level 2, 407-411 Elizabeth Street, Surrey Hills, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: You have made a submission and you are appearing as the Commissioner, and you have received some questions from us?

Ms CALVERT: I have.

CHAIR: We may end up not really asking any of them, but having an interesting and productive time anyway. Would you like to make an opening statement?

Ms CALVERT: Yes, I would, if that is okay. I am pleased to have the opportunity to appear before the New South Wales Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry Into the Recruitment and Training of Teachers. A principal function of the commission is to listen to and promote the views of children and young people and at the commission we know how important teachers and schools are to children and young people because kids constantly tell us that they are a valuable part of their lives. Schools are where kids spend so much of their time and usually where many of their friends and social supports are located. And kids have told me that having good teachers is one of the most important things about school. Good teachers turn kids on to learning while bad teachers turn off learning.

As one young person we spoke with told us, "I have got a maths teacher who only picks on me and three other guys and no one else. He makes me not enjoy it even more. That is the only subject I don't like". We felt that our most significant and useful contribution to the inquiry, therefore, was to help committee members hear the views and experiences of children and young people. Other witnesses are better positioned to provide evidence on the technical aspects of teacher recruitment and training.

Our submission is based on the views expressed by 120 children and young people that we spoke with between December 2004 and February 2005. We held 13 small focus groups with children and young people aged four to 19 years of age, as part of consultations for the Department of Education and Training Futures Project. We spoke to children and young people across the spectrum of schooling and training and they were children from metropolitan, regional and rural areas. Some children we spoke with attended Catholic schools, others attended public schools and some attended independent schools. Some children attended child care centres, alternative education programs, hospital schools or schools in juvenile detention centres. We spoke with young people with disabilities, homeless young people, children from indigenous backgrounds and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

When they talk with us children rarely mention teacher recruitment or training specifically. Instead they praise and criticise the quality of teachers and teaching that they receive. Children and young people told us that schools would be improved by having teachers who are friendly and respectful. Children want teachers to genuinely involve them in planning and decision making within classrooms and schools. Children and young people also said the best teachers are those who make learning fun, interesting and feel easy. Teachers who have a good understanding of subject content and are confident teaching are highly valued by children and young people.

Kids want teachers to have the time and know how to support them when they are having difficulty and this help can make a world of difference to children when they are having trouble with their school work. One young person the commission spoke with in an alternative education program said, "Things are much easier here because you get help. I am good at maths and English now but wasn't at school".

For many children and young people school can be a stressful experience and some periods of schooling can be more difficult than others. Children and young people value teachers who they trust to turn to for help in these difficult times and they often suggest to the commission that there should be more help from teachers or other trusted people like counsellors in schools. Children recognise that teachers can't do it all on their own and they recommend that teachers work with parents and others in the community to help support kids.

Some young people we spoke with, who had left school early, said it might have helped them if their parents were more involved in their schooling. It is the development of these qualities in teachers that we believe should be the focus of teacher training and recruitment in New South Wales.

CHAIR: Thank you for that. It may be that we might want to get back to you if we want more detailed information in particular areas, but we appreciate the work you have done on our behalf, almost, asking children and young people for their views on some of these issues.

We have given you some specific sorts of questions, which do not necessarily take up some of the issues that come out of what you have just said, but they will probably come up incidentally.

We picked up some of the things in your written submission and we started off with the comments about the knowledge age and the need for teachers to be able to respond to the changes there. Would you like to expand on that?

Ms CALVERT: Well, the knowledge age is characterised by the need for approaches that are flexible, creative and innovative, because that is what knowledge has to be. Our technology has to be flexible, creative and innovative. This is often at odds with how children and young people are taught at school. Current teaching methods focus on ranking children and on children doing well in written exams and being able to regurgitate what it is that teachers teach. And teachers themselves are trained to teach in a way that relies on the written word and on, I am sure you have heard many times in your inquiry, 'chalk and talk'. So what we are saying is that teachers should be trained to teach in a way that promotes creativity and innovation amongst students, because it is that capacity to promote creativity and innovation that will in fact prepare children for the knowledge age, which is based on creativity and innovation.

We also think that the knowledge age gives children and young people much more knowledge and expertise than adults in their family, or adults in their community, or adults in their school. For example, it is often kids who teach parents how to fix the DVD or access the internet. Equally, it is often students who do the repairs to the computers in the schools, not the teachers.

So I think that is another, if you like, dissonance from old style ways of teaching, where the teacher was the source of all knowledge and the student was the recipient. We have that change where, in fact, students have far more knowledge than teachers sometimes. That requires again a different type of teaching arrangement in the school or classroom.

CHAIR: There is a power shift there too, I guess, which has important implications for the way teachers teach.

Ms CALVERT: There is a power shift from someone who stands up the front and does chalk and talk, to being somebody who then facilitates the acquisition, or facilitates the learning that is inherent probably in all children and who sees their job as the development and enhancement of that learning urge rather than, as I said, the one who stands out the front and imparts that knowledge in to the children.

I also think that the other thing that probably shifts that power balance a bit, is that kids have much greater capacity through the internet to independently access knowledge and to access information and to learn, to self learn. Again, that can shift the relationship between the teacher and the student and having the teacher as the sole source of knowledge no longer works because there are, in fact, easily accessible sources of knowledge as a result of the knowledge age.

The fostering of the capacity to acquire knowledge and to self learn and to motivate yourself I think is a key requirement of the knowledge age, and yet often the way in which we teach children is the direct opposite of that. It is about waiting for the teacher to impart that knowledge rather than encouraging the student to go and find it out themselves. I guess what we are saying is that the sorts of methods that operate in the classroom really need to change to take account of the knowledge age and the sorts of students who are in their class rooms in the knowledge age.

CHAIR: Given the variety of children and young people you told us you have talked to, I just wonder whether some of the children coming from more disadvantaged families, for instance, disadvantaged geographically or language or poverty, whatever, whether things like increased access to internet, and so on, have much meaning for some children. You have got more access to internet and more of the resources of the knowledge age if you come from a more affluent family.

Ms CALVERT: I think there is no question that there is that disparity between those that have access to those resources and those who do not. People talk about that being the new divide, if you like. I still think that even those who don't have as easy access to those resources, still know about those resources and still use them and still often far more up to date with that information and knowledge than their parents and still sometimes with the teachers. Really, I guess what we are saying, is that teachers need to be facilitators of learning amongst kids rather than the gate keepers of knowledge.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: One of the things that always fascinates me is the lack of vetting of education by its receivers. Like, it was regarded as a very radical idea when university students would comment on their lecturers. Has there been any progress in getting kids to evaluate their teachers and, if so, could that be coordinated by a body, perhaps beyond the capacity of your department perhaps, but to actually say which teachers are good and which are bad, from the kid's point of view. If you have not got a feedback from the customer then really you have not got feedback at all. There used to be inspectors floating around that used to do a lesson once in blue moon and I gather they have even abandoned that now, haven't they?

Ms CALVERT: I think there are probably individual teachers that seek feedback from students, but there isn't a systematic approach to seeking feedback from students in teaching. If we look at the establishment of The Institute of Teaching then one of the things that we think could be done is for students to be involved in the institute as a way of giving feedback about the profession of teaching and we would certainly be wanting to encourage The Institute of Teaching to put things in place that enabled them to seek children and young people's views, so that they could then bring that in to the development of teachers.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is right up the top, is it not it? That is very much the bureaucracy at the top. If you make X change into some bureaucratic procedure at the top in the way they evaluated teachers, what that would do way down the bottom in whoop whoop high school is quite another question, surely?

Ms CALVERT: I think it would be really interesting to explore that idea about systematically seeking feedback from children. It would require development because we know that those instruments can sometimes be cursory and tokenistic. It is not just about seeking the feedback of children and young people, it is about developing a profession who is willing to hear the feedback of children and young people and willing to incorporate the feedback of children and young people in to their teaching and in to their professional practice.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have to have a structured system of collecting the feedback before you can start knocking on the door of getting it implemented. At the moment it would seem that there is no system and there is no drive to put one in, is there?

Ms CALVERT: I am not aware of it.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I must have been deaf if there is.

Ms CALVERT: Interestingly, for example, if you look at the accreditation processes for out of school hours, they have a requirement of their accreditation process that they seek the views of the children that they are servicing. We are beginning to see it happen in things like out of school hours services and their accreditation processes, but we do not see it systematically in schools.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Isn't this a thing that you, as Commissioner, should be pushing for and why aren't you?

Ms CALVERT: I actually raised with the Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Office and independent schools the need for them to be much more participatory in their practices, not just in terms of feedback about teacher performance, but across a whole range of activities that occur within the school community. I constantly advocate for the participation and inclusion of children and young people in their school life. That would include teaching.

CHAIR: I might put on the record your recommendation two in your submission that strategies be developed for the participation of children and young people in pre service teacher training as well as on going teacher training and evaluation of teachers. Probably frighten the universities almost as much as it frightened the department, I suppose?

Ms CALVERT: Possibly. One of the things we did talk about in our submission was some work that is being done by Helen Cahill at the University of Melbourne, where she is using young people to develop student teachers. So she has brought young people in to the teaching of young teachers or student teachers and uses role plays and a range of problem solving activities and communication exercises to give teachers the opportunity to have feedback directly from young people about their teaching performance. That, I think, has some quite interesting potential and possibilities for how we might train and create trainee teachers who have thought about their teaching style and had feedback on their teaching style, before they actually go in to a classroom. I think there are some interesting and innovative programs that we could look towards which really build on student feedback to, I guess, enhance teacher performance.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How have you gone with the Department with all this lot?

Ms CALVERT: We continue to work with the Department constructively on this.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Have you written to them and have you had a response and what does that response say?

Ms CALVERT: To be fair, we constantly work with the Department of Education and Training in relation to their participation strategy and their involvement of children in school life. We do that through the student representative council primarily because that is the elected student body that goes across the whole of New South Wales.

In my submissions that I make to the Department of Education I constantly raise the issue of student involvement and in fact on of the things we have raised in the Futures Project, which we have made a submission to, is how students should be much more involved in school life. I think it is really important because they are the consumers.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can we have a copy of that submission or is that, in essence, similar to the submission you have given us already?

Ms CALVERT: It is similar to this, because it is based on the same group of consultations, but it is on our website.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In terms of that participation of young people, then looking to the ability to recruit a diversity of people into teaching, particularly into primary teaching, and that is not just gender diversity but I suppose that is particularly an issue, what do young people say about why they might be attracted to teaching, or conversely, why not?

Ms CALVERT: We actually have not asked children the question about why they may or may not be attracted to teaching. What we have spoken with them about is what they like about teachers and what they don't like about teachers. I would suspect that if you have had a positive

experience of teaching, you are more likely to be attracted to the profession of teaching but that would just be guess work on my part.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It is a concern particularly attracting male teachers to primary school teaching, do you think that that is an issue you might take up in your consultations with young people?

Ms CALVERT: We have spoken with young people about who teaches them and there is a concern about the shortage of male teachers. Can I say, the concern has been around for about thirty or forty years. It is not a new concern, it is quite a longstanding concern and when I speak with some of the males in education, they will talk about their experiences thirty years ago of being one of two men in their teachers' college class.

In the consultations we did with children and young people, they did not identify the gender of a teacher as a factor in determining whether or not they were good or bad teachers, so gender was not identified as a factor in whether they liked them as teachers. One young person said "It's probably the individual teacher, like their personality and that, that's what you get along with, teachers, their personality." I suspect that the strategies that will succeed in increasing the number of male teachers into the profession are those that will benefit the entire teaching service, which is to do with status, pay, conditions, valuing the profession. I think they are the things that will bring more men into the profession and I think they are the things that will benefit the women in the profession as well. I think that is what is going to benefit teaching as a profession.

CHAIR: To get back to your comment about participation of children and young people in training and so on, at least on the surface it would seem reasonably easy for the universities to incorporate children and young people around the practicum of teachers in training. If you have got trainees going into schools and doing their practice teaching, they are doing it with guinea pigs who are children and young people, have you taken that up at all or do you have strong views about the way in which the administration of that practical part of teacher training could be developed to take into account what you are talking about?

Ms CALVERT: I think certainly with a range of professions, which are also craft based, such as nursing and social work, there has been a move towards increasing reliance on academia and a research focus and raising the knowledge base of those crafts, which is to be applauded. Unfortunately, it has frequently been at the expense of practical experience and I think when you are part of a craft, you need to have quite extensive periods of practicing your craft prior to you being accredited in your craft.

As we have become more research academically based, we have seen a decrease in the amount of time that is being spent in practice, supervised and observed practice. I think that is a problem because it is in that experience of doing the practice that you will often come up and face the fact that you may not be suitable, you don't fit with what the craft is and then you can, for good reason, drop out, if you like. I do think that that practice experience, not only enables you as a practitioner to make some choices about your suitability and the fit between you and the craft, I also think it is a great opportunity for you to get feedback in a sense, in a more accepted way, than when you are actually accredited. I think there are a lot of opportunities for feedback in that practice context but for me probably the prime condition is do we have enough period of practice in the craft before we accredit.

CHAIR: Which has been raised by other witnesses too.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: One of the questions here relates to overseas trained teachers and you have a recommendation 6 in your submission. The recommendation actually has quite a number of elements to it. Could you perhaps expand on the reasons why you have put that recommendation together and also whether or not the comments of children and young people have influenced that recommendation.

Ms CALVERT: Yes, there were comments by children and young people who did directly

affect us. For example, one young person told us, "We couldn't understand what she was saying", which is a problem when you rely on 'chalk and talk' as your teaching method. Another said, "It was bad, the teacher was crying because the class was so bad." Now kids don't want to see their teacher crying in front of them, that is terribly distressing, not only for the person who is up the front crying but for the students who are in that very awkward situation of seeing someone who theoretically they want to respect and who they see as a competent adult in their life, in tears because they are unable to control the classroom.

I think that really prompted us to have a think about overseas trained teachers. I think like locally trained teachers, overseas trained teachers really need to have an understanding of the expectations of the children and young people of New South Wales and the cultures of children and young people in New South Wales, and they need to have skills to establish and maintain relationships with those children.

We think there is a real need again to perhaps give overseas trained teachers sufficient practical time with the students so that they can experience the reality of what it is they are going into and make some decisions, either by themselves or with someone else's help, that they are perhaps not suitable to work with children in New South Wales classrooms and they can make that decision before they get into the classroom, not after they get into the classroom on a permanent basis.

That was why we made that recommendation, kids were saying to us that there are overseas trained teachers who really are unable to cope with the classroom and the expectations of kids in New South Wales and that we, therefore, would prefer them to discover that before they became fully fledged teachers and that the way to do that is probably through things like practical time before they get their accreditation.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: I suppose given that these people have already received training overseas, I suppose the expectation is that they would be able to cope reasonably well because they have had that previous teacher training and what you are basically saying is that there has been evidence taken previously that that does not necessarily mean that one person can move from the same profession taught overseas and move exactly into New South Wales or teaching positions in Australia.

Ms CALVERT: I think teaching is dependent upon the relationship between the children and the teacher. That requires a high level of cultural knowledge and cultural flexibility and it is not the same as computers. I mean, computers are probably the same whether you are operating them in your own culture or whether you are operating them in another culture. However, relationships between adults and children and the position of children and the way in which we understand learning and education and the way that gets expressed is very varied across cultures and unless you are very culturally flexible, I don't think you can assume that because you did it in your own culture, that you can do it in a different culture. I would struggle as a social worker to really practice in other cultures because it is so much about the relationships and about the culture in which I live.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: So there should be more thought given in terms of the pre-teaching process or after X amount of training that overseas teachers then move into a classroom, there should be an expanded period -for want of a better phrase - of retraining that occurs to enable these teachers to move into New South Wales classrooms but there should be an expansion. There has also been some comment made about the practical training for new teachers moving into a classroom setting from the educational training that they have had to do themselves that should equip them to become teachers.

Ms CALVERT: I certainly think the more that we can expose young trainees to the reality of the relationships in the classroom, where they have got support and feedback from a more experienced teacher, it is probably the better.

The Hon. IAN WEST: If I could just ask, in terms of this new age we are going through, the technological age, the knowledge age, whatever you wish to describe it as in this particular point in time, and this era where we are going through the self-learning, isolating type of arrangements, can

you give us some feedback you may have received from children and young people as to that difficult area of inter-personal skills and where those click in years are between the need for developing those inter-personal skills and then going into that age of self learning.

Ms CALVERT: What I think is interesting Ian is that it is probably the reverse, I think that probably what happens is that child care workers and the child care curriculum and the infants curriculum, the early childhood curriculum, is very good at being a facilitator of knowledge that children already hold and being in the relationship of encouraging learning and encouraging the child as a learning child. Once you start to have to learn all your sounds, write all your words down, start your numbers, that is when the switch occurs and we stop being facilitators of knowledge and learning and we start to be gatekeepers and to impose this 'chalk and talk' relationship if you like.

What I am hearing from kids is that they would, in a sense, like that facilitating of their learning impulse if you like - it is almost like we are born with an impulse to learn, and that we are very good with our little kids about fostering that, facilitating that, but what I am hearing from kids is that they want that to continue throughout their school years, not just be in their early school years, and they want teachers to be facilitators of that impulse and to support it and to grow it, not to squash it, and say, well you might want to learn about cars but I need you to learn about these three things. They want teachers to be able to say, well, you're interested in cars, so how can I facilitate your interest in cars to still give us the ABC that you are going to need later on in life.

The Hon. IAN WEST: That whole process of facilitating can also be used, that system of learning can also be used, can it, in developing of inter-personal skills?

Ms CALVERT: Absolutely. In fact I think it requires teachers probably to have far more inter-personal skills than the 'chalk and talk' method, where you are authoritarian and you just try and, I guess, have a louder voice than the thirty children's combined voices in your classroom, so I think it requires the teacher to have more inter-personal skills and I think that then models and encourages kids to develop their inter-personal skills. So that where a child has a productive engaged relationship with their teacher, they are going to learn about relationships, whereas if a child has a closed off, disinterested, disengaged relationship with their teacher, they are not learning anything about inter-personal skills because they are closed off, they are not interested.

The Hon. IAN WEST: So finally then, you would be wrong to be assessing the isolating nature of the technology to be alien to developing of person's inter-personal skills to be able to give feedback as to how good the teacher is?

Ms CALVERT: Well I think technology is just a tool. There are a whole lot of social relationships that happen around that. When you sit at a computer you might be chatting to your mate next door, or the way in which a teacher comes and helps you with what is on the computer, that is all about relationships, so maybe I am not hearing what it is that you are asking, but I do not think technology necessarily has to be isolating.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I am wanting reassurance for those people who say that if people sit at computers, they are all going to become non-communicating birds who will have no inter-personal skills and I am thinking of the feedback coming from the children and young people as to the qualities of their teacher and how do you assess that?

Ms CALVERT: Can I say that fear has more to do with our old age Ian than young people, because we sit there and look at the technology and go, ooh, how do we do it? Young people took at the technology and go, great, so now I can use my voice to talk to somebody. I can also use snail mail and write letters, I can also SMS them, I can also get on chat rooms. For them it in fact broadens their communication skills and so if anything, from my experience with young people who have used a lot of computers is they still can talk a lot. I can reassure you that in my experience that computers has, if anything, encouraged kids communication ability, not reduced it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I am interested in your comments about the individual learning and individual programs in early childhood and I would suggest at the other end of the scale,

at TAFE, we see a similar sort of process and in the middle is where the problem is. You mentioned before being in a class of thirty students, do you think reduced class sizes might make a difference? I am thinking where there are small class sizes, perhaps in country schools, whether that sort of learning is much more interactive and individualised because there is more one on one.

Ms CALVERT: I would probably have to defer to the people who know about education rather than make a comment. I have to say though that it has not been something that kids have raised with me. What they talk about is the quality of teaching. I would have to defer to someone with expertise to know what the relationship or what impact class size on the capacity of a teacher to be a good teacher, compared to say their knowledge of pedagogy or their personality, inter-personal skills. I think it is an interesting question but I think someone else probably has to answer it.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: We have talked a lot about this generation and their communication skills. In fact the bulk of teachers are a completely different generation. Do you think we are training using the rights sorts of training mechanisms in order to teach the current generation and those coming forward or are we still using methods that you and I might have learnt?

Ms CALVERT: I can probably only take up the point that Arthur was making, which was that kids are probably one of the best indicators we have got of the quality of the product and what I am hearing from children and young people is that there are some extremely talented teachers out there who absolutely turn them onto learning. There are some good enough teachers, and however, there are some teachers who are not good enough and who turn them off learning. So clearly there are some things that are happening with the way in which we train teachers that is not giving us the product that we need.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Is it that we are selecting people on their academic attainment more so than their personality or their inter-personal skills? The young people that are telling you about the good teachers that turn them onto learning, is that because of their dynamic teaching inter-personal skills?

Ms CALVERT: They tell me that the teachers that turn them on have both, that they have the inter-personal skills to manage the classroom, to develop a relationship with the young people, to respect and listen to the young people, inter-personal skills. Equally though the young people say to me that teachers need to know their subject material. So that it is a combination of both the inter-personal and the academic. I think the point that I would probably make is that we seem to focus on the academic and perhaps not enough on the inter-personal and that is what we need to insert into the teacher training and I take Arthur's point, there is no better way to confront the inter-personal skills and to practice and have the opportunity to get interaction and so on with children and young people and get their feedback.

CHAIR: We have got a couple of questions that bear on this. Your comment on whether university graduates entering the school system are sufficiently prepared for life in the classroom, which I guess is a question about the university's role but then the question a bit further down about how could graduates be better supported when they begin teaching. I guess it is implicit in what you are saying, that induction to teaching, that the relatively recent system of mentors for beginning teachers and those kinds of things, are very important in that transition that new teachers have to make.

Ms CALVERT: The other thing probably about teacher training and the transition is that it is not enough just to give teachers practical experience with model children. You need to in fact give them practical experience with the range of children and young people that they will come in contact with in their school and in their teaching profession. It is about the diversity of what they are going to face that I think we also need to assist them with as well, and with any new move from being a trainee to actually being a practitioner, certainly in the early years of that you need to have support. You need to be supported as a new teacher. You need to be supported as a new doctor, as I am sure Arthur would appreciate. You need to be supported as a new social worker or a new politician. May I suggest also that you need ongoing training in all of those things, that it does not just stop.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are perhaps the wrong person to ask this but it follows from Robyn's question about the academic side of teachers. It would appear to me, as a total outsider who would not know, that the teaching profession when I was at university was somewhat favoured, in the sense the teachers' college scholarships paid more money than other scholarships, so there was quite a good reason to go to teaching and the people's TERs were quite good. Then it appeared that there was a period when the TERs of teachers dropped. It related to the status, pay and conditions of teachers I think, and now it is coming up again. Do you think that has made any difference to the quality of teaching? I am asking you for a linear progression of opinions of teaching.

Ms CALVERT: I could not answer that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you know if any work has been done on it?

Ms CALVERT: No I don't.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I should ask teacher training people actually.

Ms CALVERT: You should.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Or perhaps the Department.

CHAIR: Victoria could perhaps follow that up. Paul Brock would possibly know the answer. He has done research in that area.

Ms CALVERT: It is interesting too that I am not aware of any research that tracks children's perceptions of teachers and children's views about teachers either.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: They are not being asked, that is what we just said.

Ms CALVERT: Except we now are asking children about teachers and about teaching. I mean the Commission is and asking about schools. It is equally as interesting to ask that question in relation to kids' experience of school as well as teachers' experience of school and qualities of teaching as well.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have to break it down quite a lot.

Ms CALVERT: Yes, you do.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If the standard of teacher graduates or the academic TERs of teachers dropped for a few years and then went back up again, that would only be a fraction of the total mass of teachers teaching and so you would get a very delayed and modified response.

CHAIR: If we move onto our questions about the New South Wales Institute of Teachers, beginning this year, I guess there is an issue there in terms of asking children and young people, I am just wondering whether you have spoken to the Institute about the need for them to take the views of children and young people into account and whether you know whether any of the institutes in other States which have been around a little bit longer, are embarking on any of that or whether they have sort of forgotten the customers.

Ms CALVERT: I cannot talk about the other States. I would be surprised if they were seeking the views of children and young people. That is not the impression I have formed but I couldn't say categorically. I think in relation to the Institute, I haven't since the Institute has been

formally set up, but in the development of the Institute and the work that went into getting it set up, we had discussions with the interim committee about doing some joint work in seeking children and young people's views about what the children and young people thought the Institute should look like. At the end of those discussions the interim committee decided not to proceed with that and when I was meeting with Gregor on the way out, I said that I would be contacting him to have a conversation about these things.

CHAIR: About the National Institute?

Ms CALVERT: Yes, but also we had discussions with the State institute when they were setting up about doing some joint work but they then decided not to proceed with that.

CHAIR: With Gregor as the interim chair of the national institute.

Ms CALVERT: We will be raising that with him.

CHAIR: So when you say the interim body, we are talking to the institute this afternoon, by the way, when you say the interim body decided not to proceed, not to proceed with a formal consultation with children and young people?

Ms CALVERT: They did not proceed with working with us. I am not sure whether they proceeded in doing any work themselves.

CHAIR: So what kind of role do you foresee them fulfilling. I mean I guess given the accreditation process, the regulating, the levels and so on, what sort of things do you want to see them take into account in drawing up standards for teachers?

Ms CALVERT: I would like them to actually go out and talk with children and young people about the standards in teaching and that is what I would want, first and foremost. There is no point in me saying they need to take all these other things into account, if they do not get to, in my opinion, square one, which is to go out and ask children and young people what they think the standards of teaching should be. I might guess at what the children and young people will say to them, given the work that we have already done, but I think the institute itself needs to go out and find that out, and to bring children in to the process of setting those standards, because they are the consumers of that product. I think they have a right to have a say in what that product should look like.

CHAIR: I guess you are also saying that you do not have a great deal to say in detail about the kind of role the institute plays?

Ms CALVERT: No. I do think that one of the things that the institute could do is to take a leading role in promoting the participation of children and young people in teaching and in class rooms and in learning. Their position to take, to influence back on the profession itself, that we should set up a, in a sense, a culture within the profession that children and young people should be an integral part of the development of learning and the development of the sort of school systems and class rooms and so on, the planning around school life, including class rooms, curriculum, what is taught, how it is taught. I think the institute is well positioned to do that. That is certainly one of the things I would like the institute to do. The first step in doing that is that they have to model that good practice and consult with young people and children themselves about what children and young people think the standard should be.

CHAIR: Do you have any comment on the role of parents in any of this?

Ms CALVERT: Kids certainly have a comment on the role of parents. What they say is that they want their parents involved in school life and involved in the development of their schools and in the development of their learning. So when kids talk about, it is not just about the school and teachers doing it by themselves. They will talk about parents being partners in that learning process as well. Kids absolutely see their parents as critical and essential and that they are involved in school life. And in a sense I think that kids would probably wonder why we would even ask that

question, because it would seem so natural and such a strong expectation that, of course, their parents would be involved in their school life. There is a strong expectation of that by the kids and honest disappointment when they are not. Children are disappointed when their parents do not get involved with school life because school is a large part of their life.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Would that be across the board in terms of ages? You are saying that is the case when you are five as to when you are 15?

Ms CALVERT: Yes, young people would still want their parents involved in school life. If something goes wrong in school kids need their parents to help them and need their parents to advocate for them. It is difficult for kids, if they are having a dispute with a teacher, to do that by themselves. If it is serious enough then they do want their parents there.

CHAIR: Another generational change, you think.

Ms CALVERT: I think most young people do see their parents as key people to turn to when things are difficult.

The Hon. IAN WEST: That was not the school I went to.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do children and young people make comments about whether there should be more involvement in the school from outside professionals other than teachers?

Ms CALVERT: Yes, they do. They will talk about having youth workers involved or youth councillors being involved, other members of their community, you know, police, as part of the way in which we teach kids and so on. And they themselves like to go out in to the community, as you know, on excursions and so on. As I said, schools, for children, are a key community for them. They are a key institution for them because it is where they spend so much of their lives. It is, in the way, the equivalent of our work place. So just like we like external people coming in to our work place they like other people coming in to their work place.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do they say that that exists enough. I mean, are schools operating too much as isolated communities?

Ms CALVERT: I don't know that I could give an opinion across the board, but certainly there are instances where we have been and spoken with children and young people. It is probably more the young people who are in disadvantaged circumstances or who are feeling marginalised in their school setting, they will talk about wanting to perhaps have broader experiences. Certainly where schools have brought other people in to the school, like they might have a youth worker come half a day a week, or they might have Centrelink come, or they might have someone come in regularly, the kids value that and the kids like that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you have a view about teacher remuneration according to ability?

Ms CALVERT: No. I don't have a view on that.

CHAIR: I was just looking, somewhere in your submission you made a comment or reported children make a comment about school councillors, but I just can not find it. The discussion about other people coming into schools has reminded me that there are a whole lot of other people in schools who are not teachers. You may have been here just at the end when Ms Hinton made a comment that you could actually get more males into schools if you concentrated on getting males in that did not necessarily need to be teachers. But school councillors who are a group who are quite difficult to recruit, partly because of the double requirement in terms of training. I just can't find the bit.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: It is a recommendation, is it not it?

Ms CALVERT: We in our Inquiry Into Children Who Have Got No One to Turn to made

recommendations that we thought school councillors should not be restricted to teachers, that they should open up the qualifications of school counsellors to include social workers, nurses and a whole lot of other professions, and not limited to teachers.

CHAIR: Recommendation 8.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: I was going to ask a bit more of an expansion on the reasons why and if you could maybe as you just started to say, if you might expand that a bit further?

Ms CALVERT: In our inquiry into children that have no one to turn to, we got a very clear message from the children and young people we spoke with, that they wanted to have access to someone to help them, and often that was the school counsellor. There were some comments about needing to have privacy, and so on, around accessing the school counsellor, but nonetheless there was a clear message from the children and young people that they wanted access to school counsellors at a greater rate than they currently had. Restricting it to teachers I think limits your pool of people to call on. We felt it made sense to broaden it out. I mean there have been previous times where, for example, there have been social workers in schools programs and they have been extremely successful. There is no reason why social workers or just psychology trained people could not take on the role of school counsellors and do it effectively.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: A different type of expertise, apart from people who are trained as teachers?

Ms CALVERT: I think a social worker or a psychologist can operate in schools without having to be a teacher. I don't think you have to be a teacher. I don't think being a teacher is the only thing that you need to bring into a school.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: I think that some children and young people would prefer that if they had an issue, particularly the kids who were involved in that report about no one to turn to, would not necessarily feel comfortable talking to someone from that back ground, they would like an expansion of perhaps expertise.

Ms CALVERT: School counsellors do do extra training to pick up the social work/psychology type of things. It would be interesting to know whether the kids knew that the school counsellors were teachers. I suspect that kids see the school counsellors as counsellors, not as teachers. They wouldn't even know that they had to have a teaching degree. What the kids want is someone they can talk with and someone that will listen to them.

I have to say often that is the teacher because that is the person they have got the relationship with and they feel comfortable with but they also sometimes don't want a teacher and sometimes the teacher needs to be able to refer them on to someone else and that is often the school counsellor.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: They might just want to see someone who is a little more removed from the teaching profession.

Ms CALVERT: Yes.

CHAIR: Gillian, in making your recommendation about counsellors, some people would make that recommendation because they know there is a shortage of school counsellors, but are you also saying that you are thinking it is it not a bad idea to have more of a mix of people in schools, more of a mix of trainings and professions?

Ms CALVERT: Yes.

CHAIR: The school community should have a bit more variety in it?

Ms CALVERT: Yes. In some ways we see the effect of that as the schools with community centres that have been set up, that quite deliberately try to bring the community in to the

school and open the school up. Often those generally and usually the people who run the schools as community centres have no teacher training, may never have worked in the education system prior to taking on this role. Yet they are quite successful. Really, they have been very successful but they have also enhanced the school life and the richness the school community.

CHAIR: The committee visited the one at Coonamble a few years ago and it would be true.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Can I just ask in terms of that of schools as communities, and we have talked of early childhood and that transition, it seems to me that there is a difficulty with transition from primary to secondary school. There is a differentiation between teacher training for those two areas and yet we talk about middle school a lot. Do children and young people talk about that transition as being a difficulty and do you think we would cover that by other means?

Ms CALVERT: When we did our inquiry into children who have no one to turn to, yes, they did raise it. They would talk about how in primary school they had a teacher who they knew, who was the same teacher, the schools were often smaller, and the primary school teacher would make the effort to look after them and to deal with their difficulty, if you like, or take account of their difficulty in the way they ran the classroom. When they got in to high school it was often much larger and they felt overwhelmed. They also felt that having to change teachers all the time meant that the teachers did not know about them and did not know they had this difficulty that had to be accounted for. So they felt they got lost.

Yes, some kids talk about that transition being difficult. Other kids though welcome it because they do not want to be treated as a primary school kid any more and they are ready to grow up and they are ready to make that next step and have greater autonomy than you might have in a primary school.

One of the things that I know is being piloted is a thing called Primary Connect, where they are working with primary school kids to try and then connect them, before they go to high school with their local high schools. In a sense taking that schools as communities principle and information around transition that we know about and applying it to that primary to secondary school age group.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Just thinking about transition, and that program, when you talked to young people was there a difference in those young people that were going to a separate school, perhaps a senior high school for year 11 and 12 and how they felt connected with their teachers at all?

Ms CALVERT: I don't think we talked enough with the groups to be able to pull out some distinctions. I think transition always has challenges associated with it and there is a lot to be said for focusing your resources and your effort at those key transitional points, so people do get from the first to the second. I think there will always be kids that welcome the transition and there will be kids that find that challenging and they will fall through the net, and we need to have things in place to try and catch them.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Just in relation to things like special education, and some of those other very specialised parts of teacher training and where they should fit in, perhaps, to the teacher training. One of the suggestions this morning from a previous witness was to look at them along the lines of the way nurses had double certificates and so on, that they perhaps should be added in a bit later. Have you any views on how some of those aspects, like special education, needs to fit in to the training process or where it should fit?

Ms CALVERT: No, I would leave that up to someone who has more technical knowledge than I do. Except I would say that in training teachers we need to train them to deal with the varying levels of ability that you will find in any classroom. I don't think we should, in a sense, lose the fact that there will be really quite different levels of ability even within a normal classroom. We need to train teachers to be able to teach those varying levels of ability. The specialties really are the outliers, if you like.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Did the focus groups that you had, the children and young people, make any comments about that particular problem within the classroom?

Ms CALVERT: What the kids talked about was how the mainstream schools, people did not help them and when they got into alternative education that had different teaching methods and a different culture and a different way of doing it, kids would often talk about how they blossomed. I don't know how much of it is the teacher separated out from the whole way in which teachers operate and class rooms operate and schools operate. Certainly kids who are struggling, often when they get in to an environment, a different environment, which takes account of their special needs they really feel much more confident about themselves and much better about their own abilities.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You talked today a lot about the involvement of young people in the teachers institute.

Ms CALVERT: Children too, not just young people.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I note today that we have young people here but they are not involved in the discussion that we have been having. In fact we have our backs to them whilst we talk about children and young people. So I was wondering if there is a possibility that those young people, having listened to this discussion might, if they feel the need, add some contribution by way of alternative, another letter to us, or whatever.

Ms CALVERT: Sure.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Why did you bring them to the committee?

Ms CALVERT: I did not bring them. They are trainees in the commission. We have a program where we have four trainees in the commission and two of the young people are trainees, they left school last year, they are doing a year as a policy trainee at the commission. We always offer our staff the opportunity to come and sit in public hearings because it builds their knowledge of the environment in which the commission operates because of course we are accountable directly to parliament. It helps them understand the environment in which they are working. So they are staff, trainees.

CHAIR: It is just as well we treated you nicely.

Ms CALVERT: I will certainly extend that information to them and facilitate that happening if they wish to add something to what I have already said.

CHAIR: Certainly if you want to add anything, as you know, we would be more than grateful to hear anything. Particularly if you are looking at anything on the web site, or what you heard of the previous witnesses, and want to expand on any of your comments.

Ms CALVERT: Thank you.

(The witness withdrew)

(Luncheon adjournment)

BRIAN FERRY, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, and New South Wales Branch President, Australian College of Educators, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: You have made a submission and we have sent you some questions which, after our experience this morning, we probably will not adhere to.

Mr FERRY: I have some responses.

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement?

Mr FERRY: I think it is good to put in context where I have come from, so you know my background. I am originally a two year trained teacher, way back. My first history was at a one teacher school. I was trained at Wollongong Teachers College. Then I taught Aboriginal students at another one teacher school. I also taught visually impaired students, which I was not trained for and then I retrained as a physics teacher, became the head of the Science Department and I was also in the first group of leading teachers that was appointed in New South Wales at that time and then I moved to universities, where I have been a lecturer in science education, Director of Primary Education, Director of the Graduate Diploma of Education and now I am Associate Dean. I come with a wide background with diverse experience.

CHAIR: Do you want to tell us about the College?

Mr FERRY: We have 1,852 members at the moment, nation-wide we have 5,600 members. The College is set up in regional groups and the idea is that each regional group is a professional body that works across all sectors of the profession and its goal is to stimulate professional discussions, in-services and to raise the debate about teaching and the profession in general. It has a good support structure in Canberra, in New South Wales and people have access to all sorts of professional development and materials through the College.

CHAIR: Did you want to say anything more or shall we go into the group of questions?

Mr FERRY: I can go onto the questions.

CHAIR: Which we divide really into the training programs and the recruitment, which I guess in some way our Inquiry fits into those two parts, although clearly they are very related. The retraining programs, why they are not successful and we now know you are someone who has been retrained yourself.

Mr FERRY: My retraining was done without any support at all. The University of Wollongong has come into retraining programs just in the last year or so, so we have built on the knowledge of the other universities by doing this we learnt from some of the things that they have done. I have obviously met with people who have spoken to you before.

If you take a retraining program that runs for six months, and that is some of the ones that have been done, I know from talking to the head teachers and talking to deputy principals who have received people from this program, it is a mixed bag, simply because the focus is on gaining the 'essential' knowledge and skills but not practical skills. The problem is that is not sufficient training for when the teachers get out in schools. They need a longer time to actually readdress their new role. For example, in science, physics and TAS, they are going to be working either in a laboratory or a workshop and they may not have had that experience before. Occupational health and safety is difficult with twenty or thirty students in a classroom, plus trying to cope with new knowledge and skills and making it meaningful for the children, it is a big task. So there needs to be more time to process and reflect on their changed role and my view is, and we have found from our experience with this, if you take a program and stretch it a little further over a year some of the programs that are being run now have intensive workshops, followed by on line learning so they can still remain in their other jobs and think a bit more deeply about those other issues that they are going to face, particularly the management type issues and for the head teachers, that is the biggest worry for them, the

occupational health and safety issues. Retraining, in short, is definitely a good idea but it needs a longer time to give people time to reflect on their changed role.

CHAIR: Can you tell us a little bit about the background, the age, previous career and how long the Wollongong program been running?

Mr FERRY: It has just started this year but I am familiar with the other programs which have been running longer. We are doing a TAS one and computing studies this year, we would be six or seven months into that one. The teachers are scattered all over New South Wales and they come in for intensive workshops and they go back to where they were, then they work with mentoring teachers as well and have a lot of support.

CHAIR: They will have had twelve months?

Mr FERRY: Yes, twelve months. We also run a course at the moment for school counsellors. This one that has to be managed very carefully because what happens in that one is the counsellors undergo an intensive training program to start with and then they are appointed as counsellors in training in schools and are being supported by mentors who are experienced counsellors. The teachers studying such courses are fantastic but problems may arise when desperate principals might be asking them to take on roles that they are not yet qualified for.

It takes time to get your mind set from being a teacher to a counsellor and that is one of the issues that we are working with at the moment, to ensure that the trainee counsellors are not put in a position that they are over stretched early in this role. Certainly DET are aware of this.

CHAIR: Other witnesses have made a similar point about the future of new teachers, the period of induction, reduced work load and mentoring being necessary.

Mr FERRY: Absolutely. There is no doubt that a teacher training course, or no matter what course you do which is equivalent, it has been the experience that they need support from the first day they leave university and there is no way the university is going to be able to do that. The college takes the view that mentoring should be continuous and ongoing and it should be the joint responsibility of the employing body plus the universities as well. Universities need to have some incentive to follow that through and I am actually going to leave some material for you to examine in that regard.

We have started the BEST website, which is called the Beginning Established Successful Teachers website and it is designed to be a support for beginning teachers. It involves using the network of the highly accomplished teachers through our quality teaching awards supporting beginning teachers, so they are getting the best advice we can find from the best teachers on line. We are using the University of Western Sydney to work with us on this and if successful and we get more funding, we will take it further.

We have already learnt that we need to have group meetings with the people involved. We see enormous value in providing extra support once students leave. We are not there into their professional lives to see students end a degree and then cut off the relationship, we want to continue it further.

CHAIR: Getting back to your TAS students, how many have you got and roughly what is their background?

Mr FERRY: Twenty-four at the moment, some come from primary schools, some are secondary from other faculties, some are from other areas, so you get a variety. The challenge is TAS training is a very complex area of requirement in New South Wales. The focus is particularly upon computing studies and the other TAS type subjects, workshop subjects.

CHAIR: How old are they?

Mr FERRY: It varies, all would be in their thirties, up to probably late forties and I think there are three women in it at the moment.

CHAIR: The course is being run because this is an area of acute shortage?

Mr FERRY: The focus is on all the occupational health and safety issues in working with people and we teach them at local schools because we want them to work in the real environments where they are going to work with students. The on line component is delivered also through our university and it involves using a whole series of mentors on line to ensure that they are getting extra support.

CHAIR: Does running it through schools help overcome the problem about the need for teachers to have some sort of training or exposure to the culture of schools? It is a point made about the overseas trained teachers but also about the career changed teachers. If you are working through the schools during the training period, that helps get people accustomed to the way New South Wales schools run.

Mr FERRY: There is a very important pattern and you would have heard about the research on this, that the students leave university often feeling unprepared for life in classrooms and schools. Various universities have taken the view that the earlier you can take students into school and the more continued exposure they can get to the culture of the school, the better teacher they will be.

We have got a program at Wollongong called the KBC program, knowledge building community program, and it is a small program of about thirty students, that we have been running every year for five years now and basically students spend two days a week in schools and another two days a week at university. They do not have formal lectures and tutorials as such, it is set in a real life environment that links back to their school. The idea is they get to understand the culture of the school and the sorts of issues the teachers are grappling with. Teacher education courses are accommodated within this broader based learning course. We have just extended it to Shoalhaven campus and it is going quite well. Definitely we are finding a better understanding of the culture of schools.

CHAIR: Do you want to make some comments in relation to overseas trained teachers since we have got onto that because that seems to be the most frequent problem that has been identified to us in terms of overseas trained teachers.

Mr FERRY: And obviously we get them in areas of shortage at the moment. I have said in the document that overseas trained teachers have two things they have to adjust to, they have to understand the nuances of the Australian language and the accent, plus the culture of the schools that they are going into, which is again very different. I have got a lot of head teachers that I speak to and the common problems they find is not the the teachers do understand English, but they do not understand the nature of the culture of Australian schools and how Australian students behave in schools and their expectations often clash with what the culture of the school is and what the children want. That becomes quite an issue at times.

There needs to be more induction for these people who come into schools and they need some sort of mentoring. There is a tendency to put them out there and not follow them through and give them that sort of support and it is very difficult if you are a principal of a school - and principals of schools - can face a situation where somebody has been put there and may have PhDs in science and have great spoken English but do not understand the culture of how to manage classrooms in an Australian school setting. If they had been given more help with that they probably would have been far more successful. Instead they are facing a situation where they may be considered at risk of being unsuitable to be a teacher, so it is a big problem that needs to be addressed and I think needs resources put into it because there is a shortage of teachers. They are quite capable of making a real contribution provided we do not set them up for failure too early.

CHAIR: So are you suggesting induction, perhaps a lesser teaching load, et cetera--

Mr FERRY: Yes.

CHAIR: --at the point of starting at a school?

Mr FERRY: Yes.

CHAIR: Rather than a kind of retraining type exercise, or both?

Mr FERRY: Well, you could, when they first come here, do a short-term induction to get them understanding a little about how the New South Wales system works and if you can pair them up with a mentor teacher, at their school preferably. They need to have an identified role model they can work with, and that person also is going to need some relief to work with them. It is no good taking your best teacher on your staff to work with this person and then burning them out as well, they are going to need some support to do it, so you have to provide that as well. There needs to be on staff and on line because problems occur on a daily basis, they do not just occur when you think they are going to occur, by appointment.

CHAIR: So are you familiar with the mentoring program that the department is running?

Mr FERRY: Yes, the one that Norm McCulla runs, yes.

CHAIR: It seems to be spoken of quite highly.

Mr FERRY: It is.

CHAIR: But it needs extending, everyone seems to agree.

Mr FERRY: Absolutely. It has been small-scale and obviously that is the amount of money that was available when it started. They accredit the mentoring program into their masters courses so that people who take on board this program and act as mentors and follow through the process, they get accredited. It is part of the master's course because we recognise the level of input that people have to put into the course. Certainly it is a step in the right direction, but of course there is far more needed.

CHAIR: Do you have any comments about the way it is structured? At the moment I think mentors are working with more than one school. Is that a problem?

Mr FERRY: It depends on where it is and the school and the number of people they are mentoring. It is hard to judge because I think, from my own experience, you could go to a school and have 18 first year out teachers. That happened at one of the schools I was at and I was in charge of mentoring them. I hope they are still there. Then you had the situation where you could get a very established school. I think some of the ones down the south coast are like that where it is rare to get a new teacher, at least until they all retire, and then that person may have to be spread around if they are going to be effective in mentoring new teachers. You probably know the figures, there are something like I think sixty-something with the number of new teachers in the south coast region, yet you go to western Sydney and there are about 350 new teachers, so there are big discrepancies between the regions.

CHAIR: The other two questions in that section relate to your comments about incentives and whether the departmental scholarships are sufficient incentive and also the kinds of incentives we need to get more Aboriginal teachers in, so do you want to make some comments on those?

Mr FERRY: If you are looking for career change teachers and scholarships and incentives for them in particular, they are married, they have a mortgage, they have children and you want them to become teachers, so you say to them: We'll pay so much, but you're going to have to live in poverty. Well, that is not a great incentive to become a teacher. That becomes a real problem.

The other issue is if you actually create scholarships for students, and then they go to areas of teacher shortage, and you do not follow up, well, that is all right, but there needs to be more done. Providing more money alone is not enough. They need to see that they are valued potential members of the next lot of professionals that are coming into teaching, so it is very important that these people who get scholarships - and I am thinking of the maths/science ones that we know of - actually get support and encouragement from the potential employing body so that they realise that they are coming into a valued profession and they are valued as the future professionals and people like the Science Teachers' Association, the Australian College of Educators, all of us need to actually target these people and say: Yes, we value you as future professionals. How can we help you through your studies to make it more interesting and more useful for you? What other experiences can we evaluate? I think that is a level that has been missing quite a bit from the past.

In terms of ways of doing this, if you look at industry models - and I am familiar with BHP obviously living at Wollongong - if you can provide people to reach a stage where they can have a minimum entry requirement into the profession and they might need to do some more study, and then get them out there, and maybe have them on a reduced load with some sort of support, at least they can still keep moving forward. We need to consider options like that, not just a straightforward scholarship because for some people there is just not going to be enough money. Has the Government got enough money to provide more scholarships? Is it better to provide fewer scholarships with more money or more scholarships with less money because eventually it comes down to the finite resources we have, doesn't it, no matter what we do.

CHAIR: And in relation to indigenous students?

Mr FERRY: One of the concerns that I have had for a long while has been that we are obviously not getting enough indigenous students through the system and often you do get great people coming through the system who would make great teachers, but the demands of their community often pull them away after they have been at university for a year or so and they fail to graduate because other demands have come upon them, so we need other ways of approaching, other than the traditional ways of operating teacher education courses. I think there need to be short-term intensive sections of the course going back to the local community, working with their community, being mentored within their community, and they should be, as far as possible, looking at being placed in their local community when they become a teacher because that is where they are from. We are tending to say the best way to be an effective teacher in your local community is to draw you out, send you to some rooms in a place called university, study the theory of a whole lot of things in isolation and then go and do a practicum and go back afterwards. To me that is the wrong approach. They need to have those links back.

It means you have to think differently about teacher education programs. It is not going to happen as rapidly, you are not going to get them out as quickly, you might have to take more time. You might have to provide a different range of support to them, you might have to make sure they have on-line facilities so they can do some of the course on line, identified mentors in their area or people who travel around working with them. Some of the models that we have been trying, like I was mentioning the KBC approach, where they spend some time at school and then come back as groups to a central point to work on really important issues around their education, may be a way to go. I know that is considered in places like PNG where they have even bigger problems.

CHAIR: That presumably raises issues such as, if they are working in a school, someone has to be paying them to do so.

Mr FERRY: Exactly.

CHAIR: But they are actually untrained.

Mr FERRY: Exactly.

CHAIR: So if the department is paying them it is paying an untrained teacher, which is a bit illegal or--

Mr FERRY: Well, they have to come up with a category, and I notice that you have the Institute of Teachers coming here afterwards. Is there a provisional category that can be applied to people who have a certain minimal level of entry and they can do a certain minimum amount of practice as a teacher, somewhere in between? We have teachers' aides, Aboriginal teachers' aides. Is there a level where you can be an associate teacher and you can perform some of the roles of a teacher, but not all, and you are under some supervision?

CHAIR: Would you recommend that?

Mr FERRY: I think it would be a good move.

CHAIR: We spoke to some people, as you probably know, from UWS and I cannot remember whether the other person was from Sydney or UTS?

Mr FERRY: That would have been Andrew Gonczi.

CHAIR: But they both made the comment about their Aboriginal students that they were groups and that they worked well when they were quite strongly connected groups and therefore word of mouth, like recruitment into the course and groups that really had a lot of community links, so that they did not sort of turn up from one part of New South Wales not knowing anyone else, but that that tended to make them work well and also tended to help with retention. Would you agree with that?

Mr FERRY: Yes, I would agree. Our experience is much more limited in Wollongong in numbers than what they have had because much of the community lives south of Wollongong around Nowra and my ambition is to put something into the Shoalhaven campus to make that happen there because that is an area that is sorely missing out at the moment, certainly I would say that, but yes, I agree with their approach. I think really word of mouth, quality of program, the sorts of role models you have in place - I notice they mention an older Aboriginal person who was working with them at the University of Western Sydney. That is the ideal type of approach to use.

The Hon. IAN WEST: You would not want to see a situation developing where only, for example, an associate teacher's position was available and it was filled by a qualified teacher? You would need to have obviously good mechanisms in place to ensure that there was not a downgrading of skill.

Mr FERRY: Yes. If you did that, I mean in the back of my head the model was that, okay, this becomes an appointment, a conditional appointment, and the condition of the appointment is that over the next two years you have to complete the remainder of your training and the employer is going to subsidise the cost of that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Traineeship?

Mr FERRY: Yes, and if you do not achieve that, well, you do not keep your position. There used to be, in the old days of teaching--

CHAIR: Pupil teachers?

Mr FERRY: Yes, and there used to be things called conditional certificates. People left teacher training often with what they called a conditional certificate because they failed a spelling test or a maths test in the old days and they had to complete those to get registration in a certain number of years, otherwise they never got their teacher's certificate, so I think the mechanisms are there.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I can just think of professions where there are people who are grossly over-qualified and are in lesser positions, but you would not envisage that sort of thing happening here?

Mr FERRY: No. I think what you are talking about is we are trying to get these people

into a situation that allows them to start to understand the role of the teacher and to take on a small aspect of that role and they might only have a reduced face-to-face contact under supervision of a teacher in an apprenticeship role. Then over a period of time, as they get more qualified, they reach a stage where they do become a fully qualified teacher, which is a different approach, but if you wind back the clock I guess you would go back and see it 100 years ago.

CHAIR: In the document that has just come out, or I think there is one about Aboriginal education - I forget its exact title - but there has been talk of, for instance, community schools, almost again going back to the old days, a separate system, but presumably some of the things you are talking about administratively would be easier to deal with if they were operating in a school which had some special rules and operated differently from the other 2,000 or whatever.

Mr FERRY: That is a hard one to comment on. I am a great believer in schools being within their community and I think I am a great believer that schools need to reflect the community they work and live in and the teachers also that are in that school need to reflect that as well. The rules that govern schools are one size hat fits all rules that the system has in place. The trick is to be able to make the rules flexible enough to allow schools to define their own needs and to have the ability to appoint teachers and to arrange their teachers in a way that suits their needs. As you know currently, if we get back to looking at staffing of schools in New South Wales, a principal really has very little say over who actually gets appointed to their school and that makes it very difficult for them to satisfy the needs of their particular school, very difficult.

CHAIR: So would you lean towards more flexibility?

Mr FERRY: Certainly in terms of staffing I would, yes.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I do not know that we have addressed the concern about the number of male teachers specifically and we have heard some concern about that and certainly in the media. Do you see it as a need and, if so, how can we encourage more men into the profession?

Mr FERRY: It is a really interesting question, because basically you want the best teachers, not male or female. Just putting more males in and lowering the standard for the males is not necessarily going to lead to good male teachers. In terms of your typical teacher education at the moment, where I work, one in six of our students in primary education are males and we have done some interviews and research over a number of years, the sorts of things that keep coming back when you talk to them about how people feel about becoming teachers if you are a male, is the image of teaching. In primary school the male teachers are not there so young males coming through do not see male teachers as a role model.

You are probably aware of all of this and the fact is then they see teaching, particularly in primary school, as a woman's role. It is reinforced in the community by saying it is a 9 to 5 job, you have got a lot of holidays and can look after your children and still have a career. There is a perception also that the salaries of primary school teachers are lower than secondary teachers and we have to correct that. Even though they have come into a teaching institution, they come from high school with that perception and also all the paedophilia makes males feel they are under greater scrutiny and they are not quite as secure about what they can and cannot do with children. That always comes up.

In terms of older males coming in, mature age, some of the best young male teachers coming through have been the mature age males who have decided to change careers and come into teaching and they have made a terrific impact in schools and that is through the group that I have met, but they are making a huge sacrifice to do that.

There is no easy answer. You certainly do not want to turn around and lower the standards, you want the best teachers out there. It has got to go back earlier. It is the fact that a lot of teachers have been in the game a long while. They have gotten tired, they are not as happy with the profession as they were in the past and there is a small number who are giving a negative message about teaching as a profession. If students are exposed to that in schools, they may not want to go into teaching so

then they consider other things and also the big emphasis on money. If you ask students when they go to university why they chose a certain course, they usually pick the course that will get the big dollars. But that perception is changing. Over the last five years I have noticed the UAIs going up and up as they go into teacher education courses and I have noticed also you are getting a lot more of the 90 and high 90 UAI people have decided if this is what they want to do they are going to do it.

CHAIR: That includes women?

Mr FERRY: Men and women.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What sort of communication do you have with your graduates after they are teaching and what sort of feedback do they give you? Do you talk to them six months in, a year in?

Mr FERRY: We have exit surveys which bring material back, that is done across the whole university. We have the alumni association, obviously I am part of that. We do not have a systematic way of finding everybody. The hardest thing is once they actually leave and they go to schools casually, where are they, because their addresses are hard to match up. We catch up with say, thirty out of one hundred every year. The sort of feedback we get are the sorts of receptions they receive in schools varies very much.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Have you thought of doing something better about that communication so you can get some more feedback because that would be a good learning tool across the board. Surely the Education Department can track down graduates?

Mr FERRY: The BEST website is trying that. We have a session, the College actually sponsors it, they give us the information about their mail addresses and hopefully they are going to stay current for a while and we start a data base and then we connect them all up to a website, so we are trying that and hopefully will get a bit more quality feedback. The field work we have done till now when they come back into our courses, including third and fourth year retraining or complete their masters, I think we did about thirty of those last year. The major concerns were managing the classes, how to live in the culture of the school, dealing with parents and dealing with difficult staff.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you find our most talented students are snapped up early by the private sector and if so, why is it the case and if it is the case, how can we ensure that that the public sector keeps up with that phase?

Mr FERRY: It is a really fascinating thing to watch this happen every year. If you said to me where are the most talented graduates around our university now, in the Wollongong district, I would say in the Catholic schools and the most successful of those now, if it got to the stage when they are in their early thirties, and they are back doing part time lecturing for us. The reason for this is that the system that the DET uses, it is improving and they have improved but the system is still fairly cumbersome. Students want to know if they have got a specific school they are going to go to and they want to know when and what happens is the other systems get in early, they offer them jobs and incentives. A lot of Catholic dioceses are offering them local schools and of course maths/science teachers are going off in droves before they are going into the public system and they know their school is nearer to home. I thought all along it is pretty damning when you think about it, you have got a system where students finish their training course, they have done some practical experience, they have got some reports, a transcript, to decide whether they are eligible for a graduate position, all they get is a thirty minute interview to decide whether they may be offered a graduate program, which is a permanent job in a school, or just be suitable for teaching. Most other professions you do an hour interview with a follow up interview.

It seems to me the system should be identifying in that first line of interviews who are the best people and then those people should be allocated or identified in some way so the principals of the schools should be able to interview these people and then have the ability to make appointments of these people to their schools because principals tell me they want to best graduates in their schools.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Can I get your opinion on the subject of should all those efficiency issues be addressed? I am visualising what happens in many areas, for example, in the TAFE system where architects are trained with taxpayers' money through the system in government establishments, railway workshops, etcetera, the best of those tend to go out into the private sector. In the teaching profession I have noticed there is a similar correlation, that no matter how efficient you might make your system, it is only normal or natural that the incentives of certain independent schools - independent being schools that are publicly funded but privately subsidised as well - it seems to be a natural progression. What are your thoughts on that?

Mr FERRY: It is true that if you think about it you have got private schools that have got larger resources to apply to get all these graduates. If you look at the way DET conducts its recruitment process, it is delivered in a large mass lecture hall where you have got two people, who may be well presented, but they are talking to three hundred or four hundred people at once. They have a talk, there is a question and answer session but it is not a very personal type of approach. There needs to be something a little bit more than that. There also needs to be a sort of approach that gives a face of attractiveness to teaching as a profession. Teaching NSW has started that with their website but they need to really bring out the fact that teaching is a valued profession and public schools in New South Wales really need great teachers to be there because they are great schools and that is the sort of message fundamentally they need to convey.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Once you have done all that, is there not one-upmanship?

Mr FERRY: You will get that from some who have got more resources but still, remember, there is a large number of graduates going out there and they are not getting taken up because the system has to follow the rules of transfer. For example, down in the region where I am, I think there are only about four or five places in local primary schools for first year out graduates last year, the rest were filled by transfers from other areas.

The Hon. IAN WEST: I am thinking about the profession football as another example.

Mr FERRY: The same thing.

The Hon. IAN WEST: When you have got a cap tend to have much more equality in the division, the divvying up of the good, the bad and the ugly but when you have got a situation where there is not a cap and some clubs can get more money through the revenue sources that they have got and they can offer a better price, they tend to get the best players. I am not making a moral judgment as to whether that is right or wrong--

Mr FERRY: That is a reality.

The Hon. IAN WEST: Is that not a reality?

Mr FERRY: It is, definitely.

CHAIR: I think you said before you have about one hundred and fifty in your cohort?

Mr FERRY: That is in primary.

CHAIR: That is with many graduating each year in primary?

Mr FERRY: Yes.

CHAIR: Do most of them come from the Illawarra and South Coast area and do most of them come out of government schools, do you know?

Mr FERRY: I am just guessing here but there would be somewhere around about eighty per cent would be from the Illawarra/South Coast area and you would get the majority from government schools for sure. We draw from Southern Sydney and we draw from Campbelltown. We

get some from Canberra and some from Nowra, Shoalhaven as well and you get the odd scattering from other places.

CHAIR: Most of that area has fairly well established older teachers?

Mr FERRY: Yes.

CHAIR: Except, presumably, for the Campbelltown area?

Mr FERRY: Most of the graduates end up teaching usually over around Campbelltown and Western Sydney.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: In terms of your intake, how much work - and knowing that we are going to have a large bulk of teachers - the Baby Boomer group or whatever - retiring in the next few years, what sort of forward projections are done and how does the university determine the intake over the next few years taking that into account?

Mr FERRY: It is now complicated of course by the Commonwealth quotas that are put on universities in various sectors, so our estimates have got to be balanced against quotas because we can be penalised for taking over-enrolments, so it becomes quite a difficult game. What we try to do always is look at those subjects we know there are going to be shortages in, math/science and TAS, so we make sure we run as many places of those as we can.

We have a fairly large cohort of Canadians, international students who come out here to be trained, in addition to our other students, and what we could do with them is use some of the moneys we get from that to subsidise some smaller methods, so local students who are, say, music or LOTE or arts trained get the chance to train as teachers locally and then go back to the local community, so that is how we get around that.

At the moment, in terms of prediction, we can only get the figures that we know are coming from the DET. We know the average age of teachers around the district we are in is about 50. It has dropped a little bit because of a few young ones coming in, but there is a huge number of people 55 to 60 who are about to go out. A lot of them are in primary schools, and there are plenty of replacements around, but the secondary ones are the biggest worry, particularly in maths/science/TAS. We are training at the moment probably about 20 in each group per year, which will not be enough.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: When we were talking before about recruiting or graduate teachers going into the schools and the difficulties between the private and public sector, should principals be able to employ their own teachers for their own school?

Mr FERRY: Yes, I think most principals would want that.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you think it is a good idea?

Mr FERRY: Well, if you think about it, take a high school example, if you think about a high school, it is a large multi-million dollar business with a large staff and the principal is responsible for 56 staff, 1,000 students and big plant. If they are not capable, through an interview process or whatever other process they are going to use, of judging who is the best member of staff to fit the needs of their school along with other members of their community, well, why are they in the job? I think it is actually an insult to a principal not to be able to make that decision.

CHAIR: Where does that leave the hard to staff schools?

Mr FERRY: The hard to staff schools definitely need incentives for teachers to go out there, but many teachers will go to hard to staff schools if they feel that they are valued. They are going to need more support, they are going to need more professional development. They are going to need to be recognised that they are at a school where they need that sort of support. Certainly I can

go back to my previous experience in another life where I was in a school that was a little bit more difficult and I know that the teachers who stayed at that school and worked at that school had a huge commitment to it and would be dragged kicking and screaming from it because they had learned to work in that environment, they had had a lot of professional development, a lot of resources put towards it and they could see the success they had made. It is not going to happen if you just throw a body out there and say: Well, this is where you're going to teach, make the best of it.

CHAIR: Was this the school you mentioned before which had the eighteen first-year-out students that you were mentoring?

Mr FERRY: Yes. It needed a whole team approach and I think you would have to give credit to everybody who was there at the time, they all put a lot of effort into helping each other. Schools that are often having difficulties go one of two ways: They fall apart to some extent and need extra support or the staff will pull together and really support each other, and when that happens they actually end up achieving a great deal. That is what tends to happen, they get to a certain stage and people will pull together and do a great job.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Should teachers be remunerated according to their abilities?

Mr FERRY: A very vexed question.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Should they be given financial incentives and a structure in which they can achieve a career ladder or career path other than the traditional ones?

Mr FERRY: I would agree with that. I think that one of the positive things that I hope will come out of - it is not the role of the Institute of Teachers, but one of the positive things that the Institute of Teachers has done is actually identify the four levels of accomplishment that they are looking at and the criteria for that, and the college I know supports that move. The structure to allow teachers to actually get salary increases in recognition of those achievements is something that needs to be built in. If you look at, say, the university sector, after you have satisfied certain criteria that has been judged by your peers, you move from say lecturer to senior lecturer, you get a salary increment, which is not large, and then every year it moves up subject to you meeting extra criteria, which allows you to progress up the salary range. Now that is not recognised. What happens now is that teachers get to the top of the range and that is it. That needs to be in place and I think it is a weakness in the current system and when the Institute of Teachers comes in it is important and I hope governments will take on board the idea of tying some sort of incentive in with it.

CHAIR: You said a little bit earlier about rural and remote areas. Did you want to say more than you have about the importance of career flexibility to the teaching profession?

Mr FERRY: Yes, I think it is important to recognise these days that teachers who actually go, who actually come back in, add a richness to the profession. It is not necessarily that somebody who went to school, left school, went to a bigger school or university and then went back to school is going to be the best teacher forever and ever. It is very important for teachers to go out there in the real world, including university personnel I might add, because that gives them a richer perspective on the community around them, particularly I think in secondary schools. Sometimes you have to think to yourself, to give another example, and I do not want to be too critical here, but if you have been a secondary career adviser and the only career you have ever had is as a teacher, how much experience have you had in your variety of careers?

CHAIR: So to make the career flexibility work the salary system needs to be adjusted?

Mr FERRY: Yes. Well, at the moment you can bank up an extra year by taking salary sacrificing, maybe early access to long service leave, accumulating other sorts of leave so that it can be used for that purpose, leaving the school, taking a period of time off without penalty - whatever that may mean - would be a great thing. In terms of my area, in teacher education where I am working now, it is wonderful. We can get teachers to come out of schools to work with us, to provide wonderful current role models of current practice in our institutions working with potential young

teachers, but there is a limit to the time you can keep them out before they will lose their right to return to the school and that becomes an issue. You really want people to continuously keep coming out at various times.

CHAIR: Without it meaning a sacrifice?

Mr FERRY: Yes, or being penalised in any way in their career path.

CHAIR: Yes, promotion and so on?

Mr FERRY: Yes.

CHAIR: That is about it, I think, except a wish list, if you want to tell us something?

Mr FERRY: There is one recommendation I would really like to say because I know the Institute of Teachers are here now, so I am going to say it from the college point of view: We think - and this is from the college and from universities I have been speaking to - that the Institute of Teachers has the potential to create standards that are really going to be very useful to teachers in the future and we think that the approach that they have taken is a very good one. The thing that we would like to see happen is that the standards that we have in New South Wales and the approach we have be meshed with what is happening nationally so that we do not end up with two conflicting accreditation type standards. It would be great to be able to say that a beginning teacher in New South Wales is equal to a beginning teacher in West Australia, South Australia or somewhere else, and the same with people with different levels of competency. In terms of the college, I know the college wanted me to make the point that it is important that whatever is brought in meshes with what is happening nationally so that we end up with a common set of standards, if you like a one gauge railway line rather than multiple gauges. I guess that is probably the last thing I would like to add at this point.

[Documents tabled]

(The witness withdrew)

JIM McMORROW, Chair, New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 15-19 Bent Street, Sydney;

TOM ALGEOUNARIAS, Chief Executive Officer, New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 15-19 Bent Street, Sydney, and

BRUCE MOWBRAY, New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 15-19 Bent Street, Sydney, sworn and examined, and

JUDITH PAGE, New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 15-19 Bent Street, Sydney, and

JULIENNE LEATHART, New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 15-19 Bent Street, Sydney, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: Dr McMorrow, did you want to make an opening statement before we look at the questions that the Committee sent to you?

Dr McMorrow: Yes, just a short one. I thought that we might layer it a bit to help get through some of the key aspects of our work. I would like to make a short opening statement in general. Then I am sure you will be wanting to know a bit of the detail of the background to our work program in the four areas that are in the submission, firstly, the work that has led to the development of a statement of professional teaching standards; secondly, what we need to do about initial teacher education and, thirdly, the accreditation of teachers at all levels, including a minimum competence, and finally professional development. I suggest that we might make a brief statement at the beginning of each, so that you have the information.

CHAIR: Yes, I think that is sensible.

Dr McMorrow: My general opening statement is to thank you very much for inviting us here. It is of course dear to our heart, the subject of your inquiry. Quality teaching, of course, is at the heart of good schooling and education. In a way, the establishment of the institute complements or completes the policy reforms that have taken place in this State over the last decade in curriculum and assessing, and it is really good from our point of view to get this connection right from the broader policy sense. Our charter is to advance the standing of the teaching profession. We want to do that by blending good teaching practice with research to improve standards.

In the preamble to our submission we have set out some of the context. It is a critical time for the profession. You can see what we have said in there around demographic trends, the first time trend to decline in school enrolments but at the same time an expected turnover of experienced teachers over the next five to 10 years. We know that there will be increasing pressures on teachers, as other professionals, for public accountability. There are changes in skills, knowledge, technology, and we need to think about retaining teachers, not just recruiting but retaining teachers, good teachers. In the face of economic change, in the face of the pressures they experience, there are too many young teachers who are leaving in the first few years of service. Some of the things we want to do are to help them to cement their careers in the teaching profession.

Without being too pompous, I guess, the starting point is the essence of the profession is that the members take responsibility for their standards for entry and for progression. We recognise, as you have in setting up this inquiry, that the community through Government has a right to high standards and the protection of those standards mainly for the children and young people in our schools.

The institute is both a professional body, we will be largely self-funding in a few years, and also a statutory body, which is the only way we can mandate the protection of minimum standards. We have to get the balance right between professional self-regulation and public accountability.

To be successful at this point we have to build public confidence in the quality of the standards we are applying. That has to start with teachers themselves. Teachers need to be confident

that what we are doing reflects their understanding of good practice and that we are there to help them to improve that practice, so a lot of energy is going into consultation with teachers to get that right and there are, to count all the casuals, 100,000 teachers in New South Wales that we need to engage with increasingly over time, but not just teachers, the community more generally, parents more broadly. That is vital. From our point of view, we want to build community confidence from the substance of our work, not just some kind of publicity campaign. The advantage of the approach which is set out in our legislation, that we are phasing it in, where mandatory accreditation is required for what is called new scheme teachers only. That has the advantage that we can really put our resources into getting those criteria and processes right. The alternative would be something more superficial, which would only lessen community confidence.

The third and final thing I wanted to say is what might be called political confidence, in that we take heart from the discussion that occurred in this Parliament about the establishment of the institute from all sides and we see that as providing a strong platform of support, and as well, expectations, so I guess from our point of view, what we would like, amongst other things to get out of this Inquiry, is to get some building of that support and good will from government to define more broadly. That would send a very strong message to teachers and to others that we need to engage with.

That is in the broad what we would like. There are some recommendations which we will mention on our way through.

CHAIR: Do you want to say anything more specifically about the first section?

Dr McMorrow: On professional standards?

CHAIR: Yes.

Dr McMorrow: Well, we are in your hands, but I thought it might be helpful if I just made a couple of very quick points and then perhaps ask my colleagues to explain to the Committee the way in which the standards were developed, mainly by my predecessor, the interim committee over the last three years have been developing statements of professional standards. It is really the substance of the way in which the institute will go about its business to recognise and support good practice.

A starting point is that if you do not have explicit standards of practice, there is no way of consistently judging teacher quality in ways that are publicly defensible. We know that. The sort of advantages of the statement of standards as set out in our submission I think on pages 13 and 14, I will just say two things here, from the teacher's point of view, it gives the chance to provide teachers with some common language before explaining the richness and complexity of their work, both for each other, for their own professional enrichment and for others, for parents, the community and employers.

The second thing, it does provide a bit of a structure for professional growth and leaning, for example, for our work in endorsing and recognising teacher education and professional development programs. That is a quite ambitious agenda to do that but it is really essential to get that right because most teachers want to engage in improving their practice and they want some assurances that the quality of what they can access in terms of professional learning is good.

There are some dangers or limitations to statements of professional standards. The most obvious one is they can come across to teachers as a bit of a check list that you have just got to add them all up or get the majority. That debate rages within this whole area. We know that teaching is more integrated and holistic than that and we have been up front about that in our support material for the standards, to try and avoid that. It will be an ongoing discussion. It is not unrelated to what happens in curriculum from a student's point of view but we have got to be wary about that.

The other thing is that a list cannot be everything we know about good teachers and nor is this list the only one that is available. I can say this, that the New South Wales framework,

developed, as I said, by my predecessor and the interim committee over a period of nearly three years, in itself that was a process of engaging with teachers and with researchers and with others to get a New South Wales voice on what those standards look like from a New South Wales point of view.

There are probably questions you have about it in relationship to other things and the national standards, which we might talk about later. Do you want to just briefly outline and do we want to distribute copies.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: I have here copies of the standards. As Dr McMorrow has indicated, the standards are the foundation of our work and it is worth taking just a moment of your time, Chair, to indicate the process of development and their nature.

CHAIR: We need to be on top of that too.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The premise upon which the work was begun was that it was possible to describe teachers' work in a way that was valid for the profession and informative and useful for the profession and also was transparent and had face validity for the community as a whole. The same document serves both purposes. The artificial distinction between the professional instrument and something that makes sense to the community was that, an artificial distinction.

We began by convening a couple of groups of teachers, cross-sectoral groups across school sectors, urban, rural, regional, teachers, primary, secondary and so on and made available them the work that had been undertaken to that point nationally and internationally. That included the work of the Association of Mathematics teachers, Australian Association of Teaching Power of English and Australian Literacy Education Association, Australian Science Teachers, Australian College of Educations and particularly, the National Board of the United States work and other work. We worked in the beginning with other States as well.

We identified the common elements and we found that around eighty to ninety per cent of what was described as requirements in a particular subject were common with other subjects, so that the first realisation we came to was that it was possible to describe generic standards across subject areas. That work was developed further and at the same time as we were evolving that, TEQLET, the Teaching Quality & Educational Taskforce of MCEETYA, the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education Training and Youth Affairs, was working on a national framework for standards that we were having an interest in, as were other States. They were developing simultaneously.

We took our work as it was evolving to particular experts. They included Lawrence Ingleson of the Australian Council for Educational Research, Elizabeth Klinehens of the same organization, Dr Angelo Collins, the Director of INTASK, Science Standards of the United States that have done some pioneering work and Charlotte Danielson who is the lead developer of educational teaching service of Princeton University. They were here and we also worked over telecommunications to evolve that work.

Teaching working groups continue to evolve the material both as standards and as separate independent working groups on the assessability of the standards, can you come to judgments about the capacity of teachers to achieve these elements? That work was taken to focus groups, specific and independent focus groups around the country. We then went on a public consultation, included sixteen public meetings advertised in local press, people to come along and get copies, tell us what they think, of course website consultation, schools, etcetera. Thirteen of the sixteen public meetings were in regional and rural areas.

In 2003 MCEERYA established its national framework. I have the document here for you. The page that is tabbed indicates the framework as such and it is consistent, if not in effect the same as our framework. So we are consistent with the Ministerial Council endorsed by all States and Territory and the Commonwealth Minister. Our framework is consistent with that. Ours has the standards written in, the national framework is the actual elements of the framework and I will come to that now if I could.

In this document you will see on page 2, this glossy document, is the best outline of the actual standards. The standards exist at four levels, graduate teacher, professional competence, which is mandatory, professional accomplishment and professional leadership and we may have a chance to discuss those more completely but for each of those standards you will see on page 2, under the heading Domains in the first column, there are three groups of standards. They are professional knowledge, professional practice and professional commitment, which seem to us to be common-sensical organizations of what teachers should be able to do.

You get to the end of that section and there are the elements and again there are statements which we feel, and all the feedback universally I have to say, has been making sense to teachers and the community generally. Statements such as "teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students". It may seem common-sensical, but in fact it is the common sense statements that this work has lacked for very many decades.

It is there now, it is on paper. We have had - and I could count on one hand the individual responses that have been critical in any way of this standards work. Very well received indeed, the statements included in this document that teachers are saying are useful for them, will be useful for them and as indicated by their statements, have validity in the broader sense, that can make sense to a parent and student and a member of the public to understand the quality of teaching.

They form the foundation of the range of policy work that we can move onto when you are ready.

CHAIR: This may be the wrong place, but it might be worth mentioning it now because it may affect some of the other answers. Our previous witness, Associate Professor Ferry, said that the college believed you should also have a provisional level of accreditation and he was saying this particularly in relation to such groups as, say, Aboriginal teacher aides or people coming in from some background, a fair amount of knowledge and in the process of becoming teachers. That would not be the only group, but he specifically wanted to raise this issue of a provisional level. I do not know if you would call it an apprenticeship. If you prefer we can come back to it later, but I thought it may be worthwhile putting it on the table as you explain the process you went through in developing these.

Dr McMorrow: We actually do have a concept of provisional registration, but from a different angle. It is from those who wish to seek employment into teaching in New South Wales, but without formally going through university education.

CHAIR: Which might include, say, overseas trained teachers?

Dr McMorrow: It is more an interesting idea I think of what might be called associate membership, if you like. It is not on our agenda at the moment, but I think it is quite an interesting idea, but we might need to explain some of the differences within the Act around conditional and provisional registration as we go through this.

CHAIR: Yes. As I said, it may be something we come back to, but I thought it was worth mentioning because if we are talking about stage one, in a sense it is a stage prior to that or attached to that. Anything else at this stage?

Dr McMorrow: I probably just want to make some point that the four levels, which as Tom has mentioned is now being endorsed by all ministers, Federal and State, as the framework for it nationally, really in a sense three of them - the professional competence, professional accomplishment and professional leadership - were as recommended by the review of teacher education in New South Wales several years ago by Gregor Ramsey. I know Gregor has moved on to other things.

CHAIR: We had him here this morning talking to us as well.

Dr McMorrow: We have essentially taken that advice, but added a dimension for graduate teacher. This came out of work I was involved in several years ago in consulting on Gregor's report

to say that there is actually a difference between the knowledge and skills that a student has on emerging from an initial program of teacher education and what you need to demonstrate in schools and in classrooms after some induction and mentoring and support. We do not expect graduates to come out with minimum competence - there is that difference - and I think that is happening around the country as well, the recognition of that, so we added this level of graduate teacher. Some other States in their processes might call that provisional registration. We think a properly endorsed program of teacher education should entitle the graduate to some status in the institute as a graduate member that still has not achieved the minimum standards that the community would expect, and we might come to that in a moment or two about how we would accredit programs. As I said, if there is anything else on that on which you would need follow-up information we would be very happy to answer that.

Should I move on to initial teacher education?

CHAIR: Yes, I think so.

Dr McMorrow: I will just say a couple of brief things. This will be a vexed area and of course what I have just been talking about is what it is about. The column in here for graduate teacher, we know that most new teachers will continue to progress into schools through initial teacher education programs, mainly in universities but also in other institutions of higher education, so from our point of view it is essential that we guarantee the quality of those programs and we do it against the standards we expect of graduates such as those set out in this document. Those standards are the sorts of things, we want to be sure that graduates have the knowledge, skills and values needed to be effected in New South Wales schools. They are realistic in that we do not think they are minimum competence, there is a difference between that.

I mentioned that the institute will need to endorse teacher education programs in universities, but also in any other non-university providers of teacher education, which potentially will happen. There are already some, mainly supporting employment in the non-government sector, these are colleges which have achieved a status of higher education but are not universities and therefore not self-accrediting under national guidelines.

CHAIR: So they would be like the smaller church--

Dr McMorrow: There would be some, yes.

CHAIR: Seventh Day Adventist, for instance?

Dr McMorrow: Yes. Well, Avondale College is not a university, but it provides teacher education. There are some church-based institutes of teacher education and changes in Federal Government policy will make it easier for those students to gain access to income contingent loans. There is a policy milieu nationally about increasing the diversity of higher education provision and I am not sure if it will happen in this area, but we need to expect that there will be international interest in more diverse forms of higher education. Some of this is happening in the UK and I would expect some of it might happen here, including for profit bodies. There are over 100 institutions of higher education that are not university across Australia and more than 40 are in New South Wales and are expected to grow, so from our point of view, from a teacher education point - and they are not teacher education, there is only a handful that are teacher education - we need to be ready to deal with that possible phenomenon. Most will still go through formal universities.

CHAIR: Presumably there is room for possible conflict where an institution may be being funded to provide teacher education, for instance, but the institute may feel that its courses or something else about it are not adequate?

Dr McMorrow: That is quite possible. Most other professions have some kind of regulation from a professional body of programs in higher education. It is a natural occurrence in most other professions and we need to get teaching to catch up with that in a way, but yes, you are right, it is potentially the case that we would not recognise a program of teacher education in a certain

program, that is quite possible, in which case their graduates would not be eligible to teach in New South Wales schools. That is the worst case scenario and, of course, the universities themselves would want to be sure that their graduates achieve this accreditation.

CHAIR: Well, the same thing applies.

Dr McMorrow: Yes.

CHAIR: The notion that someone may not be accredited is built into the whole setting up of the institute.

Dr McMorrow: Our interest is to get the quality right and to get them engaged in things like, for example, on page 3, that their students actually know their stuff, know the content of what they are teaching, and more particularly as in 1.1.3, know what it means in terms of New South Wales curriculum. The Board of Studies syllabuses are pretty important in this State to what goes on in schools and it may sound a pretty obvious thing to say, but it is not necessarily the case that there is a focus on that in any particular teacher education program. This actually requires it in a way. It does not require that they are expert in it, although by the time they get to minimum competence they have to be pretty expert.

We really have started a process of consultation. As you would imagine, the universities and teacher educators have mixed feelings about being regulated in this way. They are used to complete autonomy. It is not entirely true that they are completely autonomous. Most programs of teacher education in New South Wales universities have for many decades been in negotiation mainly with the Department of Education and Training through what that department requires for its recruitment strategies and we will be not ripping that up, we will be building on that to move from there and the Minister has made it clear that when our processes are in train we will merge from that into this framework.

This is somewhat more generally expressed than some of the requirements and we need to talk with the department and with universities about how detailed and how specific some of them might be, but our starting point is the standard set out in the graduate teaching column.

CHAIR: Presumably you also need to be talking to the Board of Studies?

Dr McMorrow: Yes, and we are.

CHAIR: It is always a two-way or more process, isn't it? There may be areas where the answer to a problem may be for the Board of Studies to make changes in some of the curriculum areas, for instance.

Dr McMorrow: Absolutely.

CHAIR: So there are universities, the board, the department and I guess the profession?

Dr McMorrow: Yes. The board has been involved very much in the development of this statement. They have a nominee on our governing body when that is elected and appointed later this year.

CHAIR: In terms of the process you have gone through and are going through in talking to the universities, lots of comments have been made to us expressing concern about the practical teaching side of university training and clearly it has all sorts of difficulty just in terms of administration and logistics, and there have been other problems raised as well, but to what extent has the institute been taking a major interest in the practical side?

Dr McMorrow: It is a vital part of what you need to do. My colleagues might comment on it, but my initial thought on that is that the essence of what we are asked to do is to assure the world, the profession and the world, that graduates have the knowledge and skills and values set out here and

to do that we need to know what the teacher educators are saying they are going to teach their students, their curriculum to their student teachers, but we also need to know the way in which they are going to assess whether those students have achieved those standards and a fundamental way in which that will happen is through practice teaching. Many of these standards, particularly the second element about professional practice, are obviously going to happen in classroom settings. Others may wish to add to that.

CHAIR: In terms of the institute's obvious interest in the practical teaching side, how far into that do you go? If you are talking to a particular university, for instance, about its program, do you only need to satisfy yourself that they have a practical teaching component or do you need to get involved in knowing how they do it, the kinds of schools that they operate in and what kind of variety there is or how many weeks are done? How far down into the detail of what universities are doing does the institute itself go?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Ultimately, on the practical side, the question needs to be resolved at the point at which the supervising teacher can attest to the capacity of the individual to continue in their teaching program or to go on and complete being a graduate. One of the issues that has been raised with us consistently by teachers is that they do not have confidence that their views about the effectiveness and competence of students are taken adequately into account by the initial teacher educator, the universities.

One approach is to describe a length of time for practicum. That has clear limitations. It is a direct function of the amount of resources that are available, which is largely a Commonwealth Government issue and therefore our leverage over it is limited, but the level of competence that a student can show in the practicum and on all other aspects of the graduate standards - and they do go largely to other aspects - is the key issue. Is the student showing that they are capable of running a class? At the competence level our feedback is - we knew it was largely anecdotal, but through large scale consultations - that there are some obvious cases where individuals are not suited to teaching and they themselves realise they are not suited to teaching, but the structure of the teaching program either leaves that too late, so you are in your third or fourth year of study before that emerges, or there is a reluctance to take the word of the supervising teacher into account.

The other side of that ledger is that teacher educators will tell us that schools do not have realistic expectations of what it is possible for an initial teacher education program to do. It does not actually complete a teacher and make them ready for full professional practice. It is the initial preparation that allows you to begin a process of induction to become a teacher and our policy framework is organised around that principle. You are a teacher and therefore need to be accredited necessarily at competence level. That is where your qualifications and your actual practical capacities come together. So we need to develop a policy over the next months that captures those elements, as Jim has said, the graduate standards are universally accepted by universities, as well as the beginning point. We can take a subsequent step, which is encapsulated in the principles in the recommendations that we put to you in our submission that teacher educators consider themselves and we consider them to be an integral part of the profession, so the dialogue is there. The teachers themselves are included through the Institute in the teacher educator programs, so that there is some confidence and knowledge that builds up both ways. What do you need to do to prepare teachers for practicum and other areas, and most fundamentally, that the curriculum is actually based on the graduate standards.

It is a pretty obvious first step but at this stage we have not got confidence, we cannot have confidence, there are not mechanisms to know. The universities are actually attempting to prepare teachers in the way that teachers would say they need to be. That is what the graduate standards are. Once we have that confidence, that the curriculum does map against those elements, then the subsequent step is, well, who makes the judgment of practicum and knowledge, syllabus, who makes the judgment at what point, on what basis, what is the dialogue involved.

CHAIR: How long do you think it is going to take to get to the stage where things have settled in, that everyone is pretty confident about the graduate teacher level?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: We will have a policy shortly, this year. One of the things we

have to take into account this year is the curriculum cycle of universities, which varies from a year to four years, but we think that pretty much immediately universities should be able to map the existing curriculum against the standards and we do not see why all new curriculum committees as they merge can't include practising, accredited, recognised teachers for the sake of transparency, if nothing else, in their curriculum process and that would help build bridges and professional infrastructure for teaching. People have the opportunity to go and see what is there, but also the universities benefit from the legitimacy that comes from having practising well regarded teachers on their committees advising them and assisting them to ensure practicality, and we think that should be able to happen from next year.

Dr McMorrow: I was just going to feed from the comment made about our expectation that teacher educators are integral to the profession. We know there is a bit of tension between some teachers and teacher educators about what some teachers think about the inadequacies of teacher education programs. That is a pretty consistent message we get and we really want to try and improve that.

I met with most of the deans of education at their conference earlier this week in Wollongong and commented that we expect that teacher educators will seek accreditation at the highest level. We would like to think that teacher educators are part of what we are describing as professional leadership or at least the leaders within that profession.

CHAIR: Would that apply to all levels from the dean and professors down?

Dr McMorrow: That is something I would need to stop and think about but it may or may not be practical to think in those terms because there is quite a bit of a hierarchy there but at least at the highest levels. The professional leadership column here is intended to be just what it says, it is where you have exceptional contributions to the advancement of the profession from both school leaders in administrative positions as well as in classrooms, teachers, as I said, teacher educators. To do that effectively it may require a bit of attention to the comments that are sometimes made, including in Gregor Ramsey's own review to this State that the status and standing of education and teacher education within some universities is not as high as it should be and there may need to be some attention paid within the universities if we are successful in getting, if you like, a climate round professional leadership or at least a leadership within the teacher education area that is recognised more broadly. That is a very ambitious agenda but I think it is pretty essential.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: You were talking about teachers having a view of the inadequacies in some instances of their teacher education and I was a little surprised in terms of feedback that some universities do not really get feedback from their graduating teachers six months in, twelve months in and therefore they really have no knowledge of how effective their training has been once the graduates are out the door and knowing the five year period of losing a lot of teachers, I just wonder how you see the Institute playing a role in that? Are you going to provide feedback to the universities?

Dr McMorrow: Yes, we need to develop a proper review and evaluation program around most of our work. My comment was really more about what existing teachers think more than what graduating teachers think. I know some universities do have follow up feedback. Do you know about some of this?

Ms PAGE: Well, my experience is they do not have a lot because we have been talking to them recently and that has been an issue that they have raised with us. In one university in particular they felt the did not have the resources to be able to do that and generally they gauge their success by the employment of their teachers in systems. So they will say, our graduates are snapped up, that is the sort of way they gauge the success of their program at the moment.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: On that point, we have also heard that a number of talented graduates are snapped up by the private sector, so is that how universities assess their success then, how many are snapped up by the private sector?

Dr McMorrow: Do you mean private schools?

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Private schools.

Ms PAGE: No, they were talking about employment broadly, not specifically where they gained employment but just the fact that they were able to be employed immediately from graduation and of course that is sometimes a function of the sort of teachers that they are. For example, in areas of short supply like maths, science and TAS--

CHAIR: It did not say primary, for instance, where there is an over supply.

Ms PAGE: Yes, that's correct.

CHAIR: The universities say, well if our graduates are snapped up, we must be doing something right.

Ms PAGE: Yes.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: They might be good graduates, it does not necessarily mean they are good teachers, surely?

Dr McMorrow: No.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: It does not necessarily mean they are good graduates either. It is largely a function of the employment market and there is no uniformly applied survey or measure, therefore relative employment rates are not open to analysis. So we don't know. The centrality of the position of the Institute now allows for that and a mechanism that we will be applying to our professional learning policy, which we can come to, will be suitable to be applied also to initial teacher education, where teachers can independently go on line and evaluate the extent to which and how effective courses have been in addressing the standards independently. That sort of thing is now available to us.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: What sort of ability will you have to accept evaluation from parents and community or children and young people, direct consumers?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The difficulty there is actually establishing a value of the mechanisms that are reliable about the causal relationship, that you are actually evaluating the right thing and coming to confident conclusions, but it is high on our research agenda that we can evaluate the effectiveness as perceived by students, parents, and then as shown up in learning outcomes data to pay that to the standards and then preparation for the standards. That is core aspect of our work program with regard to our self-evaluation, if you like and our evaluated mechanisms. They have to map in exactly what you are saying. In the end it will be the sorts of research that are traditionally employed by good researchers, we are going to have to go to cross-sections of individuals that have had the experiences and do some good qualitative research that is open to quantitative analysis to report to the community and to government and to the profession. We are able to do it, we have the capacity to do it, simply in the existence of the Institute that is on our work program to do.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Can you explain the process by which someone maintains their accreditation and what happens if they take a career pause or break and undertake other study or go overseas or go on maternity or some other sort of thing, do they attain their accreditation forever or what happens?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: No, even if you are practising you do not retain it forever. You have to be re-accredited every five years. We have currently developed an accreditation policy, which we are now implementing. We now have working groups of teachers and so on working on re-accreditation and working on accreditation of people who leave the profession for five years. Five years is the range of time that we have identified as the crucial turning point and then what will be required as re-orientation and re-accreditation for people who have gone through the fundamentals

but have been gone for a while. That policy is literally under development now.

CHAIR: This is the second area that you are going to get onto I guess. It is always my job to look at the clock and think we are not going to get onto it at all unless we move a bit. It may well be that some of these specific questions or puzzles we have, we might come back to at the end because you may be going to answer them in different ways. Perhaps we should get onto the accreditation area.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The accreditation process that we currently began is for the level of professional competence. The process broadly is this, the Institute identifies and appoints accreditation authorities who are responsible legally under the Act for making the decision. In the government sector that is delegated from the director general to school education directors. In the Catholic system it is education officers, diocesan level, the systemic level. In the independent sector it is a variety, which forms largely however at the individual school level. Those entities are formally appointed and have responsibility for making the decision. Our job is to assure the quality of that decision and look for patterns and discrepancies and ultimately we have the right to recommend to the Minister the withdrawal of a right to be an accreditation authority, which in effect means the withdrawal of the right to hire someone who has not been accredited elsewhere.

The accreditation process allows two broad pathways into teaching. The first and by far the majority of teachers are graduates of endorsed courses who therefore are accredited graduates and who at the point of employment are provisionally appointed, that is they are employed as teachers and are recognised as having achieved the graduate standing and on their way to competence.

The other path is conditionally accredited teachers, that is people who have an under graduate degree but do not have a teaching qualification. Either of those two paths have to come together at the point of competence. At the point of professional competence you have to have shown that you are actually practically competent and met those standards and have achieved a teaching qualification or the equivalent of a teaching qualification recognised by the Institute.

What do we mean by equivalent qualification? Again, a policy just formed is working out equivalents but I can say to you that discussions to this point on the interim committee have identified these issues, that the range of skills and abilities that we want from teachers is not to do with the formality of a bureaucratic hoop of a qualification as such. It essentially falls into three areas, the teachers have the knowledge, they have the content knowledge, they have the practical capacity to teach and there are also some areas of knowledge that have to do with the way kids learn and what works and what does not and universally employers want their teachers to have that.

If you are a conditionally accredited teacher, you will have the content knowledge in your degree. You will have the practice and the fact that you are being accredited as competent, you have been in employment. What is left to gain equivalence is actually that knowledge about how students learn and related factors, and as I say, universally employers as well as teachers and organizations think that is important to have.

So, the policy is about identifying what sort of professional development that is, what does it add up to and how do we recognise it so that equivalence can be achieved? It is about broadening the access to teaching for good, capable people who have a passion about teaching rather than narrowing it.

Having said that, universally our consultations tell us that employers want the Institute to assure that people to have these capacities. At the point of competence you have up to three years to achieve accreditation of competence. That may be at the one school, accreditation authority or any other moving along, but you have up to three years all up to achieve competence.

CHAIR: Does that apply to all teachers currently teaching or are we still talking about new teachers?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: All of this applies only to new teachers.

CHAIR: Starting from this year?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Anyone employed this year, but anyone who did not teach a single day before October 1 last year, so that is the cut-off.

CHAIR: Not teach ever?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Ever, over that period.

CHAIR: So therefore you could be 21 or 65. What about in terms of overseas trained teachers, someone who has taught outside Australia or outside New South Wales?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The competence accreditation still has to be achieved.

CHAIR: The same cut-off date still applies, so it is before October 1, 2004 in New South Wales?

Mr MOWBRAY: First employed in New South Wales after October 1.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: There is a re-accreditation process every five years. At any point an accreditation authority has a right, and we would say a responsibility, if a teacher is not consistently meeting the competency standards to take the action required to say that this person is not competent, and notify the institute. To be eligible for re-accreditation the current draft policy requires certain levels of continuing professional learning, and we will come to that in a moment. You do not get re-accredited on the basis of professional development, professional learning activities, but to be eligible for re-accreditation you have to undertake certain minimum amounts of professional learning over the five years.

CHAIR: To come back to the Honourable Robyn Parker's question about someone who leaves the profession perhaps for most of that time, is the five years set in concrete?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Well, it is the current draft policy that we are working to. It is in the Act.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: I am just thinking of the scenario of someone teaching in another State, how mobile people are, or teaching in another country. Is there an ability to get recognition for that work in that five year period?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Definitely other States and New Zealand, it is covered in mutual recognition arrangements. We are still working out the extent to which we are covered by mutual recognition arrangements. Our Act envisages that we would be covered by it, but we are still trying to clarify the exact circumstance with legal requirements. If we are not already completely covered by mutual recognition arrangements, we will be establishing those arrangements so that there is complete openness and appointability across States. Of course, the other aspect of that is that we are working very hard to ensure uniformity of quality across States as well and there is a lot of good work and positive work that is going on in that regard.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Do you believe in someone, if they achieve a certain level of accreditation, being remunerated differently from those who do not?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Our purpose - and within the confines of our legislation - is to achieve professional recognition that is highly credible. I think in principle you would have to say that teaching is a very important task in the community and if someone is very, very good at it then in principle we would say those people should be rewarded, but within our formal requirements of the Act our task is to establish and implement a highly reliable and credible recognition of good people. The implications that arise from that will be many and varied and I think probably we could be accused of naivety if we thought they did not go to issues of remuneration.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: Should that be a recommendation that our Committee might make?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: To be fair - and Jim should jump in and tell me if I am saying the wrong thing - my understanding of the Act and our formal area of responsibility would probably mean it is inappropriate for us to comment on whether you should or should not, but I think it reflects the weight of opinion of the profession generally that people who are good at the work, and it is important work, should be recognised in all sorts of ways.

The Hon. ROBYN PARKER: It is surely human nature to want to achieve and therefore an accreditation is an achievement and I would not have thought it was as much incentive to get another certificate on the wall as it might be to receive acknowledgment in other ways.

CHAIR: If it is not the institute's area--

Dr McMorrow: Well, it isn't. The Act actually defines us out of industrial stuff, so whatever I might think about that, on behalf of the institute, I cannot say. Without being naive, most teachers that I know first and foremost want to be good teachers and they will look at these things to improve their practice separately. Of course, we are going to hear a lot from teachers in the duration of salaries discussions with their employers, I know that, but on the ground, the starting point for teachers is: Are these helpful to make it better, to get the best thing you can for your students and the like? It is about getting standards right that help teachers do what they can for their own students while at the same time it may have implications for remuneration.

CHAIR: In our question 6 we wanted to clarify whether teachers would be accredited to teach specific subjects. Your element one is "Teachers know their subject content". What does that mean? What is your definition of "subject" and "content"? Is it narrow; is it broad?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: It is context contingent as in whatever the content you are required to deal with in the school that you are in when you are being accredited is what you need to know, but these are generic standards about competency based on the principle that emerged very early on in our process that there is about an 80 or 90 percent overlap in what teachers and their associations have identified as effective teaching. Whatever the content is, you need to be able to deal with it. There are issues about the transferability of skills, which is again a long-term issue for the institute to look into, but these are generic standards and it is the particular circumstance, that whatever content you are having to deal with in your employment context, your accreditation context, is what you are going to have to know to be accredited.

CHAIR: If I may say so, it strikes me as a slightly odd phrase for a primary teacher, "subject content".

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: I know it is a minor issue, but the principle is "subject/content" precisely for that reason. Maybe we have not carried that forward in the document, but in the introduction under "Elements", sometimes we say "content"--

CHAIR: Yes, I see the first one under "Elements" is "subject/content".

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Precisely for that reason.

CHAIR: I was looking at the chart.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: I took quite a few hours in the interim committee in that particular discussion and it is something we recognise. In fact within primary it will be substantially different for a kindergarten teacher than what it will for year 6, et cetera, which is one reason why the interim committee chose to go with general standards and the relevant content being defined by the context in which you are being accredited at the time.

CHAIR: If someone then does want to move, say, to teaching mathematics, they will go through the retraining courses that exist and then get re-accredited, or are you saying it is not really that specific?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: No, there are a couple of issues. Firstly, they have to be re-accredited every five years. If they have gone into an area in which they are generally, for whatever reason, not competent, then that will re-emerge at that point, but our instructions - and accreditation authorities also work within the management policy framework of the institute - it is inappropriate that you have been accredited with regard to this area and you go into a wholly different area. Whether it is appropriate or not actually depends on the subject area. You could, on the face of it, argue that you should not be able to go from mathematics to physical education or the other way around, but you could make a case that between English and history there is a lot of transferability. That is why I said earlier that there is a lot of research by the institute to actually come to some specific understanding of the extent of valid transferability of subject areas. There is no research that we have on that.

CHAIR: The same point has been raised with us in terms of, say, someone with primary training going into junior secondary and arguing that there is a fair degree of transferability there, but there are also issues perhaps.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: That is right, exactly the same issue. The transferability of competencies is a fraught issue that we want to make a substantive contribution to over time.

CHAIR: But you have time to do this.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Absolutely, yes.

CHAIR: Is there anything else that you need to run through about accreditation? We interrupted the exposition.

Dr McMorrow: Not at all, except that we are focusing our energies at the moment, at the implementation stage, around competence, that is the second column in this framework, having had a prior discussion about what we are doing for the graduate teacher endorsement of programs to achieve that. Our work program very importantly is to get on to the higher levels very shortly now so that we can have voluntary opportunities for teachers at these higher levels over the next few years.

CHAIR: It may be that we misunderstood the section in the brochure about someone not initially meeting an accreditation requirement and perhaps attempting to seek it at another school. Does that go back to the point you made about the accreditation bodies and so on?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Well, yes, it does, and it is within the maximum three years, whether it be within the one school or another school. There are circumstances in which teachers may find themselves in a situation where they have some sort of personal difficulty with the principal of the accreditation authority. There is no reason why they could not find another accreditation authority willing to take them through in that period, it is within that period and the accreditation authority is within the policy framework that is mandatory for it.

CHAIR: Will you be accrediting professional development courses and particularly the for profit sorts of courses?

Dr McMorrow: Yes, that is our next heading really. Do you want us to talk about that now?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The draft policy framework we have evolved is currently specifically related to professional teachers who are accredited professionally competent and the principles inherent in it will probably resonate for other work as we go along. What the draft policy

requires is a mandatory number of professional learning hours, an average over five years of 100 hours as a minimum. Those hours should include at least 50 hours of what we will call registered professional development courses. Registered courses are those courses that will be provided by endorsed providers, so the institute will be endorsing providers of professional development. They will be endorsed on the basis of their capacity to provide professional development to support the standards.

The other category, the non-registered courses, the other 50 hours, also should be against the standards but is an opportunity for teachers to engage in the broader range of learning which can be relevant but is not necessarily designed to achieve the standards. The example we often bring up is a teacher of legal studies in year 12 who finds that the introductory course of a law degree is actually quite useful. That introductory course was not designed for the institute's standards but nonetheless may be stimulating and informative professionally. They should have an opportunity to do those courses and have them recognised. To have them recognised their accreditation authority, that is their school and the supervisor at the school, will need to attest to and agree that this was in fact relevant professional learning for them.

Together registered courses by endorsed providers and other courses as I have just described need to add up to a minimum of one hundred hours over five years in order to be eligible for professional development or re-accreditation. There will be subsequent issues of professional development that buy into and relate to accreditation at the higher levels. They are the questions we need to ask, what sort of professional learning and development is necessary or should be necessary to be accredited at the higher levels. How does that fit into practice, what is the relationship between conceptual obstructed learning and the actual capacity to teach. Those issues are currently being looked at but the policy at the moment is, as I say, with regard to competence for all teachers and that, therefore, over time, is all teachers become accredited and it will not be a long period of time because of the rate of turnover, means, in effect, that there will be mandatory professional development along those lines for all teachers.

CHAIR: Presumably the Institute will get involved in any issues like who pays for teachers to do professional learning?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: No, we are not involved in that. Our structure as a professional body is the individual's professional responsibility. The requirements we place are on the individual. It is inherent in the policy, for instance, we do not require the employer, whether they be the Department or the Catholic Education Office or an individual school to tell us what professional learning the teacher has done. The teacher is responsible for keeping their professional learning log up to date. In fact, the policy is that in order to get credit for the hours of learning, you will have to have evaluated the course. That allows us to build an analytical tool for the effectiveness of professional learning and give us a data base to advise government and the profession about what sort of professional development is working and what isn't because it has been another point of feedback that teachers are not always happy with the professional learning opportunities they have.

The other point that is worth making is that the policy and framework does allow the Institute to provide advice to government about the spread and range of professional development. We will have for the first time a map of what is going on so that, for instance, we can tell government there is a lot or there is very little on content. There is a lot on change management in schools or little, the demand is not meeting supply in some areas or is in others. The nature of the data base approach, of tracking what all teachers are doing, allows us to analyse that and advise the profession and government.

CHAIR: In terms of say, people in rural and remote areas, is there room for some sort of special consideration or is the assumption that technological change has enabled the development of enough distance learning?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: It is an issue that has been brought up on the Committee and has been listed for ongoing monitoring and analysis. I would not go so far as to say it is an assumption that it is enough. I think there is a recognition that a lot of distance learning will help alleviate this

issue. There is also recognition that in government schools funding for professional learning opportunities is weighted to have regard to access issues. Having said all of that, it is an issue that we are going to have to watch and map to be able to advise on access and opportunity issues.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are you pursuing more?

CHAIR: The Institute is basically going through different headings and we are saying to ourselves, have our questions been answered or do we need to look at them. We might ask our witnesses first if there is anything more they want to cover in accreditation.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Because I have some questions from left field.

CHAIR: On accreditation?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: On the functioning of the Institute.

CHAIR: Maybe we will wait until later, because we may have gone through them, so if we have got enough time.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I would like not to be pushed out by lack of time.

CHAIR: Because you missed the first half, if our witnesses could stay a little longer. Is there anything more you need to tell us about the accreditation area?

Dr McMorrow: No. I feel I should comment on the issue of national accreditation and standards, given that it has come up a few times I see.

CHAIR: Yes, and as I said, we had Gregor Ramsey and Fran Hinton here.

Dr McMorrow: I am happy to do that now. Just in general terms I was noting in particular the evidence from I think the Teacher Education Council representatives, Professor Downes and Andrew Gonczi and I don't know what Gregor said today - we have taken the view that there has to be national consistency and collaboration. We mentioned that earlier and we have the start for that because all New South Wales, along with all other States and the Federal Government have endorsed this national framework which is out there, so we have assumed that any national level work in this area will reflect that framework and as I think Tom mentioned earlier, the framework is essentially ours. It happens to be that that development was about the time that the interim committee was getting its act together because this State is the only State registration or accreditation body that has taken a hierarchy of standards, as opposed to just one level and we have had several conversations with the national body and with other States working on that assumption that there will be national consistency, it will be around that framework and there will be a collaborative approach.

CHAIR: And that it will have four levels or multiple levels?

Dr McMorrow: Yes, that is our understanding. I understand the national institute, which is advising the Federal minister, is still working out its structures and functions, so we need to wait and see what that will be. The leadership have said that they will not be involved in accrediting at the minimum level of competence. They do not wish to cut across what State and Territory, or mainly State bodies are required to do under their various legislations.

The only other thing I could say, as I was saying to the deans the other day, is that for good or ill we have a Federal system of government in this country and all professional groups have to work around that, all professional groups have got a Federal structure of one kind or another and it comes down to the way in which the various subject matters of those professions, in our case schooling, is regulated and funded, particularly regulated, and at this point curriculum assessment credentialing and safety are regulated at State level. So at this point it would be a mistake, I think, to

separate recognition of teaching quality from the processes and criteria that are used for curriculum and assessment and credentialing. All the evidence is about integrating these things, but I think we can do both. I think we can achieve national consistency if we work within the framework. Some of the detail of it will be quite specific to New South Wales, such as the statements in here about implementing New South Wales syllabus documents, which will not be relevant in a national document in that form. I think we may have national curriculum one day but we haven't got it and I think that curriculum in teaching and assessment is vital to preserve. That is all I wanted to say.

CHAIR: So you don't see any necessary reason why there should be conflict between New South Wales or any other State?

Dr McMorrow: No. There have been prior attempts at national bodies - it has been a decade or more - mainly because that national body attempted to take over the responsibility at State level for minimum level accreditation and the current leadership is saying they are not going to do that, so I am more confident about that.

Hopefully we can work, if the national body gets involved, in developing criteria for the higher levels, I think we can work with that. They are at a stage of development, as we are. If we can keep talking about that we will get the act together. We do not want to confuse the universities or the teacher educators about giving pressures on them from various sources, so we are very in tune with that.

CHAIR: What other area haven't we covered?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: There is a current document out in schools, called Draft Accreditation Support document. What it does is it lists, amongst other things, what it looks like when a teacher is achieving the standards. You may be interested to have a look at that and the Draft Professional Development Policy I have just spoken to you about, you may be interested in that.

CHAIR: There might be a motion at the end to accept these various documents.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: For some years the Dip Ed was the only way you could teach in departmental schools--

Dr McMorrow: Secondary.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Secondary departmental schools and many good teachers were in the private system that could not ever get into the public system.

Dr McMorrow: Really?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is my understanding, is that not so, that is an opinion. There were certainly teachers there who could not get in because of the Dip Ed qualification which was regarded by some as a year's waste of time - that is an opinion again, I do not say it is right or wrong - when this legislation was mooted a few years ago there was quite a strong campaign against it on the basis that the independent schools were quite happy to vouch for the quality of the people they were putting up and did not want a bureaucracy which they feared would be an arm of the teacher teaching industry, if you want to call it that. The teacher teaching industry that we have seen here have been very keen to improve their courses and indeed the time their courses take, so why isn't this another bureaucracy this is going to exclude perfectly good teachers?

Dr McMorrow: We are not just another bureaucracy. The way in which the legislation established the Institute, really to find out an army of bureaucrats running around and stopping, the real functions are about supporting and guaranteeing quality and providing - I think you may have missed the earlier discussion we had about the way in which we can retain pathways into teaching other than through the normal university teacher education programs, while also guaranteeing quality, so there is built within our structures processes, as there are in the legislation, ways of dealing with that, and we did answer that earlier.

CHAIR: Arthur can look at the transcript and if necessary we can get back to you.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What I want to be reassured about is that there are not two or three pathways in all adding up to a year or eighteen months at a college and if you do not have those, like if you did not have the Dip Ed, that is it, we have accredited these pathways in, there are three of them, take one of the three or five or however many, in other words, few, and if you do not qualify that way we are the barrier or we have accredited only these things and do not look beyond that and we do not look at individual cases, because we are small or big or whatever we are.

Dr McMorrow: The essence is the standards set out here but we also need to be flexible in the way in which we apply judgments about those standards, particularly for pathways that are not formally endorsed. If you have a look at the Hansard, if there is anything else we can answer about that, I would be very happy to.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It was not clear from the Parliamentary Hansard I must say--

Dr McMorrow: No, no.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The Hansard of today, right. It was not clear from the Parliamentary Hansard certainly.

Dr McMorrow: What we said earlier today will hopefully answer your question.

CHAIR: In fact the other point is the flexibility to new teachers. We have got a long lead time in terms of what you are talking about.

Dr McMorrow: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The other question I was going to say in terms of standards and maintenance of standards, when you look at teachers' professional development, presumably they come forward with courses and I am impressed with your idea of having them evaluate the courses because in my own field of medicine many of the so-called professional development courses are Mickey Mouse marketing exercises - to put not a too fine a point on it. I am in glad in fact that the central body gets a feedback as to what it is handing out brownie points for, I think that is an excellent idea.

In terms of teachers and their ongoing progress, do they have to come up with their results, in other words, their students' results, is that going to be measured and monitored?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: We take this as our starting point. There is a body of research internationally that appears to be consistent and reliable on the types of teaching practices that are consistent with good evaluation of student outcomes. That research was fed into these descriptions of standards and was given to teachers and talked about. There is a subsequent issue about evaluating this work on an ongoing basis with specific regard to students' work. It does not work. We are asserting essentially that this is good practice, the proof of the pudding is student learning outcomes. We have to build that into our evaluation of the standards. In the meantime, the evidence that teachers will be providing as against these standards will include student work samples and references to student learning outcomes.

There is not a system that allows us to say reliably student learning outcomes have improved by such and such a point on a common whole of system scale because it is a value-added measure we are after rather than the gross outcomes. In some schools there is a 70 percent turnover of students in a year. In others there are socio-economic issues.

This issue of the relationship of learning outcomes to the standards is the core of our concern

and, as I say, we fed it into the work in the first place, it is the basis of our evaluation of the standards and in the meantime we want student work and references to student outcomes in the evidence provided to us and used to evaluate teacher competence. To that extent the answer is yes, but what we would like to have - all educators would like to have - is something that is both sophisticated, and having regard to value-added measures, and reliable, that maps reliably in a causal relationship to standards, but we are not there yet. The education community internationally is not there yet.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you look at medicine, for example, there are a lot of multi-variant analyses where you have people with a number of variables that are impinging on an outcome, and you have to say, well, this person had these kids for this exam from this demographic with these other variants. You must be able to get an idea whether that teacher is doing it well or badly. In a sense, if you have to sort out difficult multi-variables, the larger your sample size the better, so if you have a lot of teachers in a lot of different schools which you can grade on different criteria, you should be able to sort that out from the data if you are collecting it systematically.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: There are two elements of data there: The student outcomes data systems, which need to be uniform and reliable, and our data collection systems. As a point of principle, that is where we want to go, but that is an infrastructure that needs to be built up in not only New South Wales, definitely nationally and in fact internationally. The multi-variant analysis has occurred internationally on the basis of samples and there is a lot of published research and that research fed into this, as I say.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But you would have enough data in New South Wales presumably without getting national data, would you not, if it were optimally collected? Do I understand that you are agreeing with me but you are saying there is a long way to go to implement it?

Dr McMorrow: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is really what you are saying, is it?

Dr McMorrow: There is quite a lot of student outcomes data in New South Wales, but not necessarily for every single teacher because the assessments that are a range of basic literacy or school certificate or higher school are at various stages. But you are quite right, we are quite well placed to be able to do it if we can get the methodology right.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Would there be a student input to that? The question was asked this morning with regard to the Commissioner of Children and Young People.

CHAIR: I was going to come to that, we heard from Gillian Calvert this morning and she said she had spoken to the interim committee about the need for children and young people to participate.

Dr McMorrow: There has to be. I mean that is what we are here about in the end. You might like to just explain what has happened so far and what we are doing from here on?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: There were a number of meetings with the Office of Children and Young People in the formative stage of this fundamental work.

CHAIR: With officers from the commission?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Yes, and they gave us input and they have also given us input into work that we have done on building an evaluative mechanism and how we might use children in that. There is a lot of work that has been done. Frankly, we just have not got around to the implementation of that aspect yet, it is a very wide agenda with a lot of work to be done, but we

actually have quite a bit of work describing a project based on those meetings and as soon as we can we will be going back to the Office of Children and Young People and going into an implementation phase with them.

CHAIR: Would the same openness to community involvement apply to parents as well?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Absolutely. We adopted that broad principle in our consultations with not only formal parent groups but, as I mentioned earlier, a range of public meetings advertised publicly locally inviting community members to come to us and talk to us about it.

CHAIR: And you will go on with that practice?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: That is what we intend.

CHAIR: Could I come back to the other question I flagged before: Associate Professor Ferry made the point about the need for what he referred to as provisional accreditation. Obviously people are using terminology differently but, as we understood it, what he was talking about and the specific example he gave was the training of indigenous teachers and his comments related to the frequent pattern of perhaps coming to Sydney from a far-flung area, not being able to stay for the duration of the course and the advantages of such a person perhaps going back to their community, working in a school and then perhaps returning to a university later. It would be perhaps very useful if there could be some kind of system allowing such a person to be some kind of apprentice and recognised, even though everybody knew they had not yet acquired the relevant qualifications, and it may be that some of the same criteria apply to some overseas trained teachers or even to some of the arguments about brand new graduates needing a period of a lesser load. We have not actually asked you about the induction programs and mentoring and so on, but I suppose to put Mr Ferry's question for him, have you thought at all about whether there are groups that we want to recruit that may need some sort of level that is before your four levels?

Dr McMorrow: Yes. As I said, we use "provisional" in a somewhat different context.

CHAIR: Yes.

Dr McMorrow: I am very sympathetic to the idea of a notion particularly for indigenous teachers' aides and the like who may progress to teaching. Our current structure does not allow for that and maybe that is something we should look at more specifically, but it would not be provisional under our Act.

CHAIR: No. As I said, he used that word.

Dr McMorrow: It sounds more like I was mentioning earlier, something like associate member, which gives some recognition - and encouragement hopefully - but does not go the full hog.

CHAIR: But your Act does not allow for that either?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Well, the Act, as such, almost begs the question because the Act says a teacher to whom mandatory accreditation applies is defined in these terms, and then that raises necessarily - and it has been discussed quite a bit - the question about individuals who are undertaking teaching tasks but do not carry individual professional responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum managed assessment. That is an area that emerged initially, on my recollection at least, with the work that Jim did with the task force to implement Gregor Ramsey's review and has been a thread of discussion through our work. It just is one of those things that we intend to get to. If you define the profession in legalistic terms for the sake of accreditation it does necessarily raise the question about that other range of activities and we have not evolved a view on it other than I think what Jim has said, and my experience is as well, that it is regarded as a good idea that we establish some sort of broader infrastructure to support the associate involvement in teaching.

Mr MOWBRAY: The issues, were exactly as you are describing them, canvassed in the

Ramsey report. The accreditation structure as it exists does not stop it happening. It already does to some extent through the University of Sydney. The teacher aides are trained while they are working as teacher aides. When they finish their degree they straight into employment with the Department of Education and Training. The accreditation structure does not stop it, but it does not support it.

CHAIR: That is obviously something for the Committee to consider too. As I said, we heard this as a question or suggestion earlier this afternoon. There is a whole range of things that have been raised, which the Committee will need to consider, but with some of those I think we will perhaps need to get back to you afterwards because your advice and input on some of the questions raised by other people would be very useful.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: Of course.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: In medicine the accreditation of foreign graduates is a huge problem and, if one were again speaking bluntly, one might say that the tendency has been to accredit English language universities only and treat everyone else as too hard, so the question is does one then re-examine at almost an undergraduate level or does one go to a lot of trouble and expense to evaluate the course that the person graduated from, which is difficult if you do not have a lot of resources. Given that we appear to be taking more foreign graduates and there is a worldwide increased mobility where there are shortages, are you going to attempt to accredit foreign courses or are you going to attempt to examine foreign graduates as far as maintaining standards are concerned?

Dr McMorrow: My answer is that the foreign graduate seeking employment in New South Wales schools will be covered by our provisional accreditation requirements and they will be required after up to three years to demonstrate competence and that will include, amongst other things, those standards relating to communication with students, such as English language competence. All other States have the same.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You cannot set them loose for three years and then see how they are going, you are going to have to mentor them or find some feedback in the shorter term?

Dr McMorrow: Certainly, absolutely.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: And that is organised?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: In principle, that is an issue that applies for teaching at least for a graduate of a Sydney university. Some people just are not suited to teaching. The feedback we got with regard to overseas trained teachers was pretty pointed from teachers, but there was not a lot of clarity as to what exactly is the problem. Sometimes it is a communication problem as in a language problem. Sometimes it is a cultural divide, a culture difference, a discontinuity where there is a certain level of expectation by the teacher and the students. We worked very hard to capture in some detail in the standards what is required for effectiveness in communication precisely for that reason and, of course, in principle it is not a point for us whether they are trained overseas or here, and I think this is Jim's point. The standards are very pointed in that regard and our moderating mechanisms should ensure that people get accredited when they can teach notwithstanding the institution because it goes back to your earlier question as well about the pathways. We are very open about the way in and up to the three years you are under supervision, direct supervision. Someone else is taking responsibility for that learning and for you being there. To be accredited as competent you are going to have to meet those standards and they include very pointed and specific standards with regard to communication.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But you also need to know the knowledge base.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The concept of knowledge is captured by a national accreditation system, NOOSR, which is the National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition. Degrees that are

recognised by NOOSR nationally, we recognise as degrees here.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Because certainly that has been a problem in the medical area and it would be my opinion, again, probably not politically correct, that there are two standards in some universities, the ones that are going to stay here and the ones that are not. In the sense that you say it is all culture and language but often it is a fundamental flaw in knowledge.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: To be fair to our teachers, that is not the feedback we have got. In teaching we have had a lot of feedback but it has not been about the content knowledge, it is actually about being able to deal with students.

CHAIR: Do you have or are you going to have any role in induction programs, in either checking that they exist or advising?

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: The interim committee in its report to the minister had a large section on what characterises good induction and in fact it is built in, we think, to our structure. We do not provide the induction, we describe what is the nature of the induction and it goes to the issue of defining a profession. It goes to the issue that we think that the period up until competence is your induction period. The support material I gave to attempts to illustrate an effective induction process, as in it has clear examples of what is considered effective teaching, what it looks like and what the evidence for it is, and that is the basis - as we speak every school in New South Wales for every teacher, every new scheme teacher, every new teacher and their supervisor are sitting down and dealing with that document and saying, do you understand what this means? It doesn't make sense. Is there more of it that should be listed here to make it tangible and make the engagement with the supervisor about the professional practice rather than simply, you know where the staff room is and tell you where the toilet is and there is a key there.

In doing that we are attempting to shape the induction into the profession, not just induction into the job if you like. So we have influence over it but we do not provide induction and we do not describe the resource patterns that might apply to it.

CHAIR: I think we have probably covered our questions. Kayee, if you would move a motion that we accept the four or five documents that have been tabled?

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I second that.

CHAIR: As I said, it would probably be useful for us if we could contact you with specific factual questions, things that we are not clear on or we need to follow up.

Mr ALGEOUNARIAS: For the record Chair, may I on behalf of our Chair and everyone, thank you and invite you to make contact with regard to any specific issue that we can help you with on an on-going basis.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

ARTHUR RICHARD SMITH, Senior Lecturer, Koori Centre, University of Sydney, Manning Road, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: Are you appearing as an individual or on behalf of the Koori Centre?

Dr SMITH: I am appearing on behalf of the Koori Centre, in as much as I have consulted with other staff in the preparation of the responses to the draft questions that were sent to me. I have a typed up summary of those and seven copies if it is appropriate to distribute them.

CHAIR: Do you want to do that now or do you want to do it later?

Dr SMITH: I might do it now. I have read your guidelines and I do not propose to speak to all of these items. I will still just answer the questions verbally. I did consult with some of the other Koori Centre staff about a number of issues and my comments are as a result of that.

CHAIR: We have crossed out the first question because you do not have the information. Do you want to say something by way of an opening statement about your own background in the Koori Centre or do you want to go straight into the questions now?

Dr SMITH: Yes, that might be a good idea. I am a non-Indigenous person and I have been a teacher in New South Wales and Queensland in various contexts since 1962. I have worked in Aboriginal teacher education since 1982, so I am bringing to responses to the questions some experience in this area. I think it is an important area. There is no question that we need more Aboriginal teachers in New South Wales and throughout Australia. I think it is good that the Standing Committee is looking at this issue.

CHAIR: Can you tell us a little bit about the Koori Centre?

Dr SMITH: The Koori Centre was set up, I think, originally in 1972, and it was set up for the express purpose of training practitioners in schools who were known as Aboriginal Teachers' Aides at that time. I think it was part of Adult Education in those days. It then became a university conferred diploma, I think about ten years after that; a Diploma in Education (Aboriginal), and that qualification has prepared Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for working in the schools as Aboriginal Teaching Assistants (ATAS), as they are called now, and in other areas of education in the bureaucracy and so on, in Canberra. Some of them have been recruited down there.

Now we have a further two years articulated with that Diploma, that leads to a Bachelor Education in secondary education and those graduates qualify to teach Aboriginal Studies number one, Australian history number two, and Studies of Society and Its Environment (HSIE) as their third subject. We are also increasingly offering courses for non-Indigenous teacher education students in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, and in the Faculty of Arts. In that report I have detailed some of the statistics on the number of students who are enrolling. We have a recent increase over the last two years from international students who are interested in Indigenous Australian business - not business in terms of commerce, but in general issues, opportunities and what is going on.

The Hon. IAN WEST: How many of those students did you say from overseas?

Dr SMITH: I don't think I separated out the overseas students but in a group of about 150 I think there are 35 international students this semester.

CHAIR: We have got a group of questions about training, starting off with graduates, particularly Indigenous graduates who are entering the school system sufficiently prepared for life in the classroom. How could Indigenous teachers be best supported when they begin teaching? As I said, these are the written questions we sent you by Committee members, or you might like to branch out and talk about other things. So treat these as a guide. University graduates in general, do you think they are sufficiently prepared for life in the classroom?

Dr SMITH: I am not sure that they are. There has been some discussion for a number of years about moving teacher education to a six year degree or a four year plus two year Master of Teaching qualification. For later our and I think Sydney University Faculty of Education and Social Work is looking at that kind of pattern. The environment in which teachers work is a lot more complex than when I started teaching and so if I take my generation of teachers as a comparison, then it is much more demanding and there is much more expected of teachers in schools now, and the community itself is more diverse and teachers experience a good deal of stress and some degree of burn out.

One of the other questions was to do with why Aboriginal teachers either do not take up their profession or leave early and I think sometimes it is a bit of a culture shock for Indigenous students to go to some schools where they have been appointed. Some schools have very good mentoring programs for first year out teachers but I think it is variable throughout the system.

There are some examples of university based teacher education programs working in collaboration with schools or a cluster of schools. I think those programs have been quite successful, where there is collaboration between the pre-service teacher educators and other teacher educators who work with our teachers in the schools during their career.

CHAIR: I guess you could say that no matter how long you made the pre-service course, there is still a need for induction and mentoring and perhaps entering a teaching career more slowly, like a reduced teaching load. Some people would say those things are what perhaps makes or breaks a teacher or ensures that the teacher stays a teacher.

Dr SMITH: I tend to agree with that. There is quite a bit of research that has been done on the needs and interests of beginning teachers. I am not sure that there is too much that has been done on the needs and interests of beginning Indigenous teachers, but there probably has been some work done on it and it is a very important phase of induction into the profession. It is often, in terms of the clinical experience part of it, part of a internship now, for the last six months of the degree, and I know that medical students at the university who have engaged in that kind of professional training activity are paid for that internship, whereas teachers are not and, I am biased, but I happen to think that teachers, well potentially, are amongst the most important professionals that we develop in the universities because the quality and relevance of the education for the future generations of Australians depends on them. I know that just sounds like rhetoric, but I really think that you can substantiate that.

CHAIR: Are most of your Indigenous students on some form of scholarship or other financial help?

Dr SMITH: Most of them qualify for ABSTUDY or a proportion of ABSTUDY, depending on their age and how much their parents earn, if their parents are working. The ones who come in as mature age students, over 21, I think they automatically qualify as independent students. They are supported also through the Department of Education Science and Training in Canberra through the ITAP program, Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Program. Part of our work with students is to link them up with a tutor as early as possible, if they need one, especially if they are working in subject areas that they are not familiar with. We also run a tertiary preparation course for one year. It is not classified as a university course by the Commonwealth, it is defined as an enabling course, but that is specifically for students who, for whatever reason, have not completed formal schooling and they need to bridge the gap from wherever they left off to where they want to start at university. That runs for two semesters.

Most Indigenous students are assisted in their travel when they come down to the university for block release studies. The diploma of Education is run as a block release program, which is specifically designed for people in rural and remote communities who have community obligations and cannot leave for long periods of time. The Commonwealth pays the airfares between their place of home, community, and Sydney University, and we accommodate them for the weeks that they are down here for intensive study.

CHAIR: The University finds the funds to accommodate them?

Dr SMITH: We are provided with the funds for accommodation by the Commonwealth through DEST. There has been some talk about reviewing that kind of program. In terms of cost effectiveness analysis I expect is seen as very expensive, but in terms of cost benefit analysis the impact that the graduates have and the opportunities provided, they are mostly mature aged women who have families and other community obligations, it is virtually the only way that they can study. We do not have a high proportion of Aboriginal men coming into any of our teacher education programs and that has been a concern and I think it would be a good focus for further research.

CHAIR: Would that percentage be lower than the pretty low percentage of males who are non-Indigenous?

Dr SMITH: That is an interesting question because in the mainstream of teacher education , as far as numbers of non-Indigenous students in the faculty of education are concerned the male representation is actually higher in the Koori Centre. There is a higher representation of Aboriginal males in teacher education at the moment, in the primary program anyway, than non-Indigenous males. I have two tutorial groups in that program, all non-Indigenous students and international students. One group of 22 is entirely female and the other group has three males in it. For some reason primary teacher education is not attracting the number of males that it used to. When I was trained as a teacher in 1961-62 it was about 50-50.

CHAIR: We have heard quite a lot of witnesses say similar things. In terms of the kind of support that is needed for new teachers, do Indigenous teachers need more support or different forms of support from non-Indigenous teachers?

Dr SMITH: I think primarily in terms of culture they may need more. I have not seen any specific research on this, but from anecdotal evidence, if they are the only Aboriginal teacher in that school, they do feel fairly isolated, or if they are working in a school in a rural community where the first Aboriginal graduate of that school has come back as a teacher they find it pretty strange for a while, but I suppose that is also the case for non-Indigenous beginning teachers to some extent. What they have the most trouble with, and non-Indigenous first year out teachers have the same problem, is they often are asked to teach subjects that they are not fully prepared to teach because of teacher shortages in some key areas like Maths and Science and Industrial Arts, and other areas. They do not like that very much because that is an added stressor I suppose, but if there are other Aboriginal people in the school, if there is an Aboriginal Education Assistant there, or there is an active Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) working in that community, or if there is an ASSPA (Aboriginal Studies Support and Parents Association) because there is a significant number of Aboriginal students in the school and they feel a lot more comfortable. If there is a cohort group of three or four Aboriginal people on the staff, there usually are no problems at all.

CHAIR: And the Indigenous teachers have special appointment and employment rights, they are not just appointed to any school anywhere, are they?

Dr SMITH: Well, in a sense they are. The Department of Education and Training tries to appoint Aboriginal students to where they think they might be most needed, but typically Aboriginal students like to go back to their own community and in this report there are a few statistics on our graduations over the last three years and you will notice there are a couple of graduates from two years ago who are not yet employed full-time. In a field where we are desperately short of Indigenous teachers, that is a bit of a worry, but in a couple of cases I know from what the students have told me themselves, they do not want to move away from their town to travel to the next town if it is 60 kilometres away or sometimes further. One particular student waited for appointment to the school where she had been an AEA, but once she became a graduate, once she finished her Bachelor of Education degree, they could not afford to pay her because the numbers were dropping and they could continue to pay her a graduate. She had transformed herself into a four year trained teacher with a Bachelor's degree wanting to teach and the school appreciated her work there but could not appoint her and she was snaffled up by TAFE, which is good because she is working in adult education in TAFE now, but the New South Wales schools'system lost one of our best graduates.

CHAIR: But to have kept her, another teacher would need to have been compulsorily transferred out of that school?

Dr SMITH: That is exactly right. I think that if we are serious about having more Aboriginal teachers in the school it might be that we have to adopt some kind of a positive discrimination approach for a period of time and hope that non-Indigenous teachers will accept that, but it is probably a difficult issue for a number of reasons.

The Hon. IAN WEST: The woman did not work for any period of time as an AEA, did she?

Dr SMITH: Yes, she did.

The Hon. IAN WEST: After her qualification?

Dr SMITH: She may have worked for a short period of time as an AEA.

CHAIR: What about the career change, the accelerated teacher training programs and so on? Are they a good way of attracting Indigenous teachers?

Dr SMITH: Like the Master of Teaching program?

CHAIR: Yes.

Dr SMITH: The block program in a way is a type of accelerated program because the students are required to be on campus for three full weeks of intensive study during each semester, so they do six one-week blocks during the year and they do a lot of work at home and in their community, and with their ITAS tutor in between that is delivered through various forms of distance education mode, which we are planning to increase to improve the quality and reliability of that part of delivery. It is kind of classified by DET as accelerated, or probably compressed study mode, but no, I have not seen many Aboriginal students who have taken to the accelerated courses that have been offered in other universities, but I am not really conversant with the picture across the State on that.

CHAIR: We have asked other witnesses.

Dr SMITH: I know that we have not pushed it as a possible pattern or an alternative. We have been interested in trying to get some of the qualified teachers who are around the State and around the country who have been encouraged to leave teaching over the years and work in Aboriginal organisations like the Aboriginal Legal Service or the Health Service. We have found over the years that Aboriginal teachers are very employable in a whole range of fields. Many of them work in Canberra, many of them work in ATSIC, and in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, and they are usually good communicators, they write well, they have good planning skills, they usually have good people skills, so we have lost a lot of our best teachers because of the heavy demands in Aboriginal Affairs. We have thought about trying to entice them back with a crash course, but we would have to do better than the salaries they are getting in DEST or the National Library, or the National Museum, or wherever they are working.

CHAIR: I suppose you could argue that they are doing good things, so they are not wasted.

Dr SMITH: Yes, but I think that in terms of the future of Aboriginal education and the future of Indigenous business across the board, we would be better investing those human resources in education and training that is culturally relevant and appropriate because all the evidence points to Aboriginal students' attendance and graduation rates and participation rates in general, and academic performance, increasing if there is a competent Aboriginal person in the school - even one.

CHAIR: So have those teachers who have left teaching basically gone because the money is

better elsewhere or have they gone because teaching is a difficult and challenging profession for them or have they gone because of problems that are specific to Indigenous teachers in the New South Wales education system, or all of the above?

Dr SMITH: That is a good question. I will not try to answer that because I would just be giving you an opinion.

CHAIR: Well, even an anecdotal sort of view. You may be in a much better position to guess than we are.

Dr SMITH: There are lots of horror stories around and I think in the early days in Aboriginal teacher education, in the 1980s, we thought that some of the challenges in Aboriginal education would be addressed if we sent Aboriginal teachers out to places like Moree and Walgett and Brewarrina, and we did send young Aboriginal teachers out there, and some of them are now working in universities in teacher education and they had horrific starts to their career because not only did the non-Indigenous school staff and the Principal, and their own community, think that they were going to solve all the problems and address all the issues in Aboriginal education in one fell swoop, they also loaded the staff up with a lot of communication challenges and problem solving in general so I think that we expected far too much.

CHAIR: You are not talking about any hostility or things of that kind, you are saying they were sort of regarded as a miracle worker and too much was asked of them?

Dr SMITH: Yes, it was almost part of a celebratory kind of optimism that was there.

CHAIR: So they were burnt out.

Dr SMITH: A lot of well-meaning non-Indigenous people, including myself, thought that getting Aboriginal teachers out there was going to address all central needs and issues. They were expected to achieve too much in too short a time and I think that that process of establishing their credibility and their expertise in this field is still going on and yet there are some rather disturbing views around the place that it is time to mainstream Indigenous teacher education and that there is a diminishing need for support centres, Aboriginal Study Centres, around the country. I do not think we would want to do that too soon. In the Faculty of Education and Social Work at Sydney University, for the first time in the five years I have been there, we had six Aboriginal students enrol in teacher education courses straight out of the HSC this year with a high enough mark to get in. They do not want any support from us other than cultural support. They still use the Koori Centre. There is a bit of a wind change and I think it is a very positive one and we have more indigenous students coming to Sydney University now out of the HSC and other forms of preparation and I think there are a lot of very encouraging and constructive things happening, but I do not think we want to pull the scaffolding away too soon.

CHAIR: When you say the kind of cultural and other support that the Koori Centre offers is being questioned, do you mean by Government, by individual universities? Is it a cost-cutting type view or an ideological view about mainstreaming?

Dr SMITH: I am not sure, I think it is part of the cyclical kind of re-organization that is going on. Disbanding ATSIC, for example, I think it was almost as if it was inevitable that it was going to be re-jigged in some way, but the general view amongst Indigenous colleagues was that it was dismantled before there had really been a great deal of talk about what the replacement would be, and I think there is the same kind of talk going on about centres like the ones I have worked in in universities. In my view they should stay there, they need to change and evolve and refine their operations perhaps. I think we do this all the time, but I also think it is too early to take them away.

CHAIR: Just finally before I hand over to the others, the comment you made in the eighties about sending a brand new Aboriginal teacher to Brewarrina or Walgett and they were expected to work miracles and so on. Has that changed, like if one of your graduates now goes to a town like that, is there a much more sensible and genuinely limited understanding of what a new teacher can

achieve?

Dr SMITH: Yes, I think it has changed. I don't think that Aboriginal teachers arriving on the door step of a school is such a surprise now.

CHAIR: And therefore they probably cope better with the challenge.

Dr SMITH: They cope better. The word has gotten around that Aboriginal teachers are there and they have been successful, and they have been there now for a generation - and before that of course, but only in relatively small numbers. I don't think anyone is surprised when an Aboriginal teacher is appointed to a school. In fact, it is probably something that most schools are very happy about and I think the communities themselves, organizations like the AECG, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, are providing more support and encouragement of younger Aboriginal students to go to universities and TAFE colleges and complete school and so on. If there are other Aboriginal people in the school, it makes a big difference. I don't think they see themselves or experience that pioneering - that shock of the new that was there in the eighties, it is just accepted now and not only that, going into Nursing, Medicine, Law and we have I think within the State and within the country, made a lot of headway in the last generation and Aboriginal people themselves have made a lot of headway.

So, I am basically positive about the whole field. I hope I'm not coming across as being negative.

CHAIR: No, you are not. Just because we keep asking you questions doesn't mean that we are saying it is not working, it is trying to get your views. Finally in this section, do Aboriginal education assistants, do they provide a real pool of people to go that step further and get teacher training?

Dr SMITH: I believe one of the women I work with today who worked for the Department of Education until a short time ago, who is an Aboriginal colleague, said that there are about 200 AEAs in the schools in New South Wales and some of them do not intend to go any further than complete the two year diploma but more and more of them, especially once their children are off their hands and in high school themselves, are coming back to start the Bachelor of Education part of it, which is the last two years.

CHAIR: You said before that so many of them are older women.

Dr SMITH: Yes.

CHAIR: They are able to do that.

Dr SMITH: Yes.

CHAIR: Just a question that relates really to the Institute of Teachers. We heard before from Mr Ferry from the College of Education that he was suggesting in terms of the Institute that there might be a need to look at some kind of accreditation which would enable Indigenous people undertaking training courses to perhaps come and go from say Sydney University back to the community and perhaps teach or work more or less as a teacher, even though they might not have completed their training, because he was talking in relation to Wollongong of a pattern that being often very very difficult to complete a course in one go, that it would be perhaps useful for everyone if these students were actually able to do some teaching in a kind of provisional sort of way. Do you have a view on that sort of thing? Is it a problem of it taking longer to complete courses?

Dr SMITH: No, it becomes a problem if there has been a pattern of too many failures of units of study because of the HECS bill that some Aboriginal students have built up. Some Aboriginal students have built up horrendous HECS bills, so it depends on whether they withdraw from the course before the HECS census date and some of them forget to do that. So some of them who have come and gone through courses - there is a limit to how many times they can undertake one

unit of study anyway, as for all students in university do complete, and others do not.

Many of our students as a result of only being six months into the course, get a job as an AEA in a school, so many of them are actually working as AEAs either full time or part time and the course suits them perfectly because they have some spare time during the week to study and the school actually releases them on full pay to come to the block program. That has proved to be very successful. The Department of Education regards that as a very useful profitable investment in the future and we have just recently been able to negotiate with some of the Aboriginal students, if they are not an AEA, they get a job in a special education school where they are teaching children with learning difficulties, because often there are Aboriginal children in those schools and because that was special ed there was no funding to pay them to go to block programs but the Department has just agreed recently to fund AEAs in special ed the same rate as AEAs in mainstream primary and secondary programs. So, that was a breakthrough.

CHAIR: Ian or Arthur, would you like to look at some of the recruitment questions?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are the Departmental scholarships providing sufficient incentive to prospective indigenous students?

Dr SMITH: The Department scholarships?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes.

Dr SMITH: They haven't really taken off amongst Aboriginal students yet for some reason. We only have three students in our programs who are actually on scholarships.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does that mean that they cannot get those scholarships? You were talking about HECS debts a minute ago. That is quite the opposite of a scholarship, isn't it?

Dr SMITH: Yes.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is quite a powerful disincentive. Presumably someone that is going to be left with a HECS debt, they would be trying to get a scholarship.

Dr SMITH: I don't know how many have applied. It is an area that I haven't had much direct experience with actually. They have only been operating for a couple of years I think in the Faculty of Education and Social Work or maybe this is their third year. Initially Aboriginal students did not take that much interest in them and didn't think that they were appropriate and I don't think we were sure that they were appropriate because of the nature of our course. We thought they were primarily for mainstream students who were on campus full time, but I checked that out this morning with the student services manager in our department and she said there are three Koori students who are on scholarships now.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are they specific to Indigenous students those scholarships?

Dr SMITH: No, they are generic ones.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: They are competing against the most motivated, top end of the students to get those scholarships?

Dr SMITH: I don't even know half of what the criteria is for award of those scholarships is to be quite honest.

CHAIR: We can raise some of these issues with the Department. We will be getting the Department back to talk to us.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: They are not affirmative action scholarships so to speak.

Dr SMITH: I don't even know whether they are. Maybe the reason so few Koori students have taken them up might be simply because we didn't push it hard enough or we didn't understand what the eligibility criteria were and also the other thing is that there are a number of Aboriginal scholarships in the university already and offered by people like the ANZ Bank for example. Our community liaison person chases those up constantly and makes sure the students know about them and we have a very high success rate with some of those other scholarships. So there may have been a perception in the beginning that these mainstream scholarships aimed at attracting more teachers into the profession and supporting them in their training, Aboriginal students were not eligible to apply, so I think it has been slow. I think the three who have taken them up this year have been successful expecting competition with other students.

CHAIR: These three are young HSC graduates the people that you were referring to before?

Dr SMITH: Yes, and they are in the mainstream. When I say the mainstream, they are in the Faculty of Education and Social Work which is right next door to where we are but they are just becoming teachers through the programs that are there in New South Wales for all teachers.

CHAIR: Regardless of their Indigenous background.

Dr SMITH: Yes. They support us more than we support them sometimes I think. They say they don't need support, that if they want support they will get it within the Faculty that they are in, and through the Koori Centre.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What incentives could be provided to attract more indigenous students to the profession?

Dr SMITH: I was talking to someone from Aboriginal community radio yesterday about the extent to which they use the radio to run advertisements for Aboriginal programs and so on and they suggested that we could reach more people in the inner west area of Sydney anyway, using community radio and in rural and remote areas, the remote area broadcasting network. We send staff to all the careers market days in the schools and our AEAs themselves are good role models in the schools and often they recruit teachers amongst the year 11 and 12 students and amongst community people and organisations.

I think there could be some financial incentives perhaps - in these responses to the questions I have suggested some things like assistance with child care in the person's community. Often that is the only thing that prevents them from undertaking a block program, is lack of access to child care in their community. Sometimes the cost of buying a computer or to participate fully in the distance education part of our program is not possible for some Aboriginal families. We have investigated the possibility of signing up with one of the computer companies to hire a set of laptop computers that we can in turn, issue to the students for the time that they are on campus, and when they are studying from home.

So I think the program that I found worked best when I was at Wollongong University was a role model program where the Aboriginal students who were enrolled throughout the university in various programs went back to their school and actually met with the years 9, 10, 11 and 12 students and talked to them about survival and success at university. We found a similar program at James Cook University when I was at the Townsville campus that also worked. There where members of the University community, both staff and students, who were connected with one or another of the towns in the Cape and Gulf area who would go out and talk to students about coming to university. I think we could also produce some high-quality video material perhaps. Once again at Wollongong I can remember we produced something on audio tape and loaned them out to communities and to individuals and they all disappeared, and we thought that people were just abandoning them, there

was no value attached to them, but someone found a couple of years later that these tapes had been passed around amongst Aboriginal people at conferences and meetings and they were playing them on their tape deck in their car, and it was information on our courses at Wollongong University. We are not trained as marketers in higher education unfortunately, but I think we could really take some advice--

CHAIR: That is what universities are rapidly becoming.

Dr SMITH: Yes, well, we are in the process of transforming ourselves into business operators, but I think it would be interesting to come up with an integrated plan. There is a higher education network that operates in New South Wales where representatives from all the centres meet and it would be good for the higher education network, for example, to come up with some suggested strategies if there was going to be a concerted effort to recruit more Aboriginal teachers. I am very impressed with the primary teachers I am working with at Sydney University, and I am not saying this just as a promotional thing for the university, I am well past beating the drum outside the tent, but the quality of primary teachers coming into the universities now is very impressive.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Has it improved, would you say?

Dr SMITH: Yes. I think that the students coming out of schools in this State are much more capable than the students who came out in my generation and I think that the students who are choosing primary education are, as I said before, almost entirely female, and are excellent students. If Sydney University is any example of what pre-service teacher education are like around the State, I think the schools are in pretty good hands for the next generation. That is my personal view.

CHAIR: Is this because of the tendency over the last few years for the UAI for entry in teaching to go up or is it because schools are actually educating students better, or both?

Dr SMITH: Well, there still is some variability out there around the schools, but I think in general the schools are educating students better. The other thing that is happening simultaneously is that in my day you were often recruited by other teachers at school and many of the teachers were good role models anyway, but if they thought you might make a good teacher they encouraged you. You could apply for two scholarships when I did the Leaving Certificate, a Commonwealth Scholarship into mainstream university in a range of degree programs, or you could apply for a Teacher's Scholarship in New South Wales. If you got a Teacher's Scholarship you were bonded to the Department of Education and Training for three years and you could be sent anywhere once you graduated, and that was never questioned, you could appeal on very rare grounds.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Married.

CHAIR: I know a few women who got married quite quickly.

Dr SMITH: Yes, but one of the things that is happening now, which I am curious about, is that some students have told me that they were advised by their teachers not to become teachers, and that is a concern.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I wonder if the TER went down after Teacher's Scholarships ended because there was no incentive? The incentive to go in was taken out and the TER had fallen, and now it is rising again and this may be the cause of your joy as much as the improvement in schools generally?

Dr SMITH: Yes, it could be a range of factors.

CHAIR: Why did you specifically refer to people training to be primary teachers, because you know them better or you would not say the same about secondary?

Dr SMITH: No, the only secondary program I teach in is in the Koori Centre itself. Actually the secondary program for some reason has not made Aboriginal Studies mandatory yet.

The primary program, following State Government recommendations, has made Indigenous Studies mandatory for all primary teachers and early childhood centre teachers, and secondary have not picked that up yet. They say it is too difficult because they have such a range of subjects to prepare teachers for in the secondary curriculum and also that in Music and Art and Physical Education they get an Aboriginal perspective anyway, it is woven into the curriculum, but I think secondary teachers at our University anyway are not getting enough intensive Indigenous Studies, and particularly as we offer the advantage of that perspective being provided from an Aboriginal point of view. We have a number of Indigenous teachers who are highly regarded in the university as teachers of Indigenous Studies.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you think there are sufficient incentives provided by the department to teach in rural and remote areas, or would you suggest further incentives?

Dr SMITH: I would suggest further incentives, but I have always been a bit concerned about teachers only going to rural and remote areas on the basis of incentives because you could have teachers simply going there because there was an incentive. There were pay incentives in North Queensland when I was there to teach in the Cape and Gulf and Torres Strait, but it was often looked at as an opportunity by younger teachers, and this is not necessarily a criticism of younger teachers, I mean this kind of motivation occurs in a lot of aspects of life, but they had the view that if you went to the Torres Strait for a couple of years or you went up to Weipa or somewhere up in the Gulf you would save enough money for a deposit on a house and you could get back to Brisbane.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But on the other hand the department had had presumably reasonable teachers up there for those two years?

Dr SMITH: Yes, some of those teachers were I think excellent teachers, but I wonder about financial incentives and have tried to think of other forms of incentives. I have not come up with any yet.

CHAIR: A couple of people have put to us that the incentive that is built into the transfer points system produces teachers for rural and remote areas, but it also sometimes means that virtually every teacher in the school is a first year out teacher or first year principal. It works in terms of getting bodies into the building, but--

Dr SMITH: Yes, and that is a major problem. I mean there are some positions in North Queensland schools that are not filled every year. I keep saying to the graduates here who cannot get jobs: If you really want to teach and you don't mind where you go, just ring up the Personnel Officer in Cairns regional office and say you are prepared to go to a Torres Strait island and you will go probably to one because they do not always cover all the bases there. I think there needs to be more of a concerted push to train and educate teachers specifically for rural, remote and isolated Australia because one of the things that adversely affects Aboriginal opportunity for not only an education but access to the workforce and a whole range of other keys to quality life in this country is that the delivery of quality education in rural and remote and isolated parts of the country is not good and I do not think there is an excuse for that in an era where we have such sophisticated electronic means for communication and for teaching. I think there is a big challenge there for educators in general to provide a better quality and higher relevance of education for rural, remote and isolated Australians.

CHAIR: The man who spoke to us, whose name I forget, from Charles Sturt University Wagga campus, put a lot of emphasis on recruiting people from rural and remote communities to train to be teachers on the grounds that they were, more often than not, perfectly happy to be appointed to schools in those areas and that the department would need to change the appointment or transfer system to do that. There was always going to be a problem with city people expected to go bush, but there were an awful lot of people around who were perfectly happy to go bush.

Dr SMITH: Yes, well, I wouldn't mind speculating that that would still be the case.

CHAIR: He was certainly saying it as a current comment about the people at Charles Sturt.

Could I ask about new teachers leaving after a short time, particularly new Indigenous teachers. You touched on this before when you talked about the training enabling people to get jobs in the Aboriginal Medical Service or Legal Service, but do people leave discouraged and unhappy and dissatisfied with teaching as a job, particularly Indigenous teachers?

Dr SMITH: Some of them do. They find the challenges beyond their means sometimes as an individual to address and deal with and I think that a lot of teachers feel like that. I have quite a few friends and associates and family members who are somehow connected with education and the stories I hear around the dinner table or around the barbecue are - I don't know how widespread the views are amongst teachers - that they are dissatisfied with the profession. They are finding some of the students very difficult to deal with and I think classroom management is an issue and I think there is a lot of confusion out there about how a teacher deals with something like attention deficit disorder or Asperger syndrome and whether those characteristics of some students are on the increase or whether we are just better at diagnosing them now. We don't really know, but classroom behaviour and discipline is a major issue for a lot of teachers who I know have dropped out, and male teachers in particular, but not only male. Male and female teachers still have trouble with students who look them straight in the eye and dress them down with four letter words and stomp out of the classroom, and they can't do much about it. Aboriginal teachers sometimes go to schools where they have an enormous job just to get the Indigenous kids to school.

There is an interesting video that has been out for a few months now called Strong and Smart from Cherbourg Mission School in Queensland and it is worth looking at because there is an Aboriginal principal. Cherbourg has been a thorn in the side of the Queensland Education Department since the days when it was a mission, but the Aboriginal principal there has turned it right around and has the attendance, health and hygiene and the nutrition of the students up to a level where they are really learning and enjoying school. Some of the Aboriginal students find what he has achieved to be beyond what they are able to achieve, so they try something else. If someone offers them a job in the legal service or the Lands Council they are likely to take it.

CHAIR: Do you do specific follow-ups of graduating students?

Dr SMITH: No, we do not.

CHAIR: And try in any way to evaluate?

Dr SMITH: Not formally, but we should. It is one of the things we have talked about now for a number of years. Informally I have been mainly in an administrative role in the Koori Centre, but I try to keep in contact with as many students as I can. Other staff are much more effective and efficient at doing that because they are Indigenous and because they are more connected with Indigenous organisations than I can be, so there is an informal kind of sisterhood and brotherhood amongst the graduates. We are talking about getting an alumni association together, for example, of Aboriginal graduates so that they can support one another.

I was talking to someone from Wollongong University recently, and I was at Wollongong for 17 years, and the teacher education program that graduated the most Aboriginal students during that year was the Physical Education and Health Department. We actually produced about 15 physical education teachers during the 1980s and 90s. That was not my field, but there were people in that field who really strongly supported the Aboriginal education program and I was talking to one of those students recently who is now a lecturer at Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory and he was saying that they are talking about getting an Aboriginal physical education teachers' association going, that is a national association, so those kinds of things I think are very positive.

CHAIR: But you would agree that universities should formally evaluate, follow up graduates from teacher programs with a view to evaluating their own performance in training.

Dr SMITH: Absolutely.

CHAIR: How new teachers are going in their first year.

Dr SMITH: Yes, I think the first year is fundamentally important. There is a lot of work that has been done on the needs of beginning teachers, problems of beginning teachers. We know a lot about that, we should be doing more about it in collaboration with the schools. I think that in the old system, the binary system of CAEs and Teachers College and Universities, that CAEs probably had closer connections with the profession than universities typically did and once the binary system was abandoned and we put teacher education and nursing at the universities, I think we needed to work harder to re-connect with the profession. I think we have concentrated more on the academic dimensions of teacher preparation and the professional area, classroom management, curriculum development, community consultation, working more closely with parents. The pendulum has swung both ways perhaps too far at times in teacher education. It is probably an appropriate time to look at teacher education, put it under the microscope and work out hw we can attract better teachers who feel more confident and better about themselves and their profession.

CHAIR: I guess everything we hear about the problems faced by beginning teachers applies to all those other areas of management and discipline and so on. It does not apply to academic content.

Dr SMITH: No, the academic content is good. I won't say it is beyond reproach, but it is sound.

CHAIR: You do not hear anything about those problems in the first year of teaching.

Dr SMITH: There is not as much hands on. If someone is teaching a subject they are calling it craft knowledge in teaching and craft knowledge in teaching is probably like craft knowledge for lawyers and for nurses and everyone else, it is what goes on in the hospital or what goes on in the Court or what goes on in the surgery and so on. I have only just read the guidelines on the Institute of Teachers in the last few days but it seems it has the potential like the Board of Teacher Registration in Queensland, if it is properly planned and implemented, to lift the status of the profession and also engage in the kind of research that you are talking about, perhaps whole of career tracking of teachers, as well as the first year out, just to have more first hand information on what the profession and the career path looks like, especially in an era where a lot of adults are changing their careers two or three times during a life time. It might be that some of the burnt out ones need to be given a rest for a while and some new energy needs to be run onto the field, I don't know.

CHAIR: So you have a positive view of the Institute of Teachers?

Dr SMITH: Yes I do but I am basing that positive view primarily on one reading of the philosophy and guidelines.

CHAIR: Well, it has only been operating for three months I guess.

Dr SMITH: I think it has the potential to be very good. The Board of Teacher Regulation in Queensland was started by an educator I had a lot of respect for, Bill Bassett, who was Professor of Education of the University of Queensland and he really started off that Board of Teacher Registration as a way of professionalising teachers in Queensland and I think he was successful and I always thought when I was working up there, it was a pity New South Wales did not have something similar, but it should be better than Queensland.

[Documents tabled]

CHAIR: Once we have had time to digest this material there may be something we want to follow up and I hope you would be happy if Victoria, for instance, contacted you. Thank you very much for coming.

(The witness withdrew)

(The Committee adjourned at 5.05 pm)