
Institutional and school-based training

Introduction

The term institutional means here a place of higher education which provides education and training for the preparation of future teachers. Such institutions invariably provide continuing education for those already in the teaching profession. School-based training is not a new concept. In the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of this century in Britain, most primary school teachers learnt the skills of their art on the job as pupil teachers. It was only when teachers' colleges and university faculties were set up for the specific aim of training teachers that teacher education became institutionalised.

The process of institutionalisation eventually led to teacher education being included within the formal structures of higher education alongside law, medicine and engineering. Apart from some differences amongst European and American systems of teacher education, institutionalisation in terms of higher education has provided both the training and means of accreditation for teachers in primary and secondary school. In developing countries, institutions of higher education such as university faculties or institutes act as loci for the training of secondary school teachers, while primary school teachers are trained in government colleges. This situation is changing slowly as more primary teachers are being trained in affiliated colleges and institutes.

However, the process of institutionalisation of teacher education has come under attack from the teaching profession as well as government. It has been felt that students spend too much time out of school during their training period and too much time studying theory at college and university. In England and Wales, institutionalisation of teacher education has been halted since the early 1980s for both political and professional reasons. From the political standpoint, moving more of teacher education to the schools would provide for greater accountability and may even be more cost effective. From a professional point of view, more time spent in school during training would mean that teachers would derive better experience from being on the job. What follows is a brief discussion of the changes that have taken place in England and Wales over the last ten to twelve years, in which progressively more time has been spent by students in school as part of their preparation for teaching.

The system reformed and still changing

In describing the pattern of teacher education in England and Wales, it is important to stress from the outset that this is an area of rapid change. Thus this description concentrates on the reforms that have taken place since 1984.

It is only now that most of the reforms have been completed and it is likely that more changes to the system of teacher education will take place during the decade. The Secretary of State for Education (i.e. the Minister of Education) has the power to approve modes of entry into the teaching profession for state schools in England and Wales. Since 1984, successive Secretaries of State have used this power to control and monitor the content of teacher education courses. In 1984, the Department of Education and Science (DES), now the Department For Education (DFE), and the equivalent of a Ministry of Education in other countries, set down tight guidelines for both PGCE and B. Ed. courses. The DES specified that a degree awarded to students must be relevant either to the secondary subject which they intended to teach or, in the case of primary teachers, to an important area of the school curriculum. Whilst this specification might seem uncontentious, it has had the effect of reducing, in particular, the number of social science and other graduates eligible to become teachers. In the case of B. Ed. courses, the DES specified that at least half of the course should be spent on degree level subject studies related to subjects in the school curriculum. In the case of courses for primary school teachers, this was later changed to allow more time to be spent on the application of subject studies to the primary curriculum.

The detailed stipulations by the DES in 1984 about the curriculum of higher education courses was a marked change from previous policies and practice. It is worth specifying some of the details of these stipulations. All tutors involved in the education of student teachers were required to spend the equivalent of half a day per week teaching in school themselves. The amount of time that primary students should spend studying English and mathematics was specified, as was the minimum amount of time they should spend in schools. The ways in which schools should be involved in course planning and in the arrangement for admission of students to courses were also specified.

In addition to these stipulations on courses, the DES set down new arrangements to formalise the Secretary of State's powers with regard to the official approval of awarding Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This involved the establishment of a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation (QUANGO) called the Committee for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE). The members of CATE are appointed by the Secretary of State. The Committee is responsible for advising the Secretary of State as to whether specific courses should be approved as being allowed to award QTS. There followed an extensive monitoring exercise whereby all teacher education courses in institutions concerned with teacher training had to be submitted to CATE for approval. This monitoring was all the more rigorous in that each submission to CATE had to be previously approved by a local sub-committee of CATE. (This procedure was discontinued in 1992.) Furthermore, every institution submitting its courses to CATE had to be inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and their report was considered by CATE alongside the institution's submission.

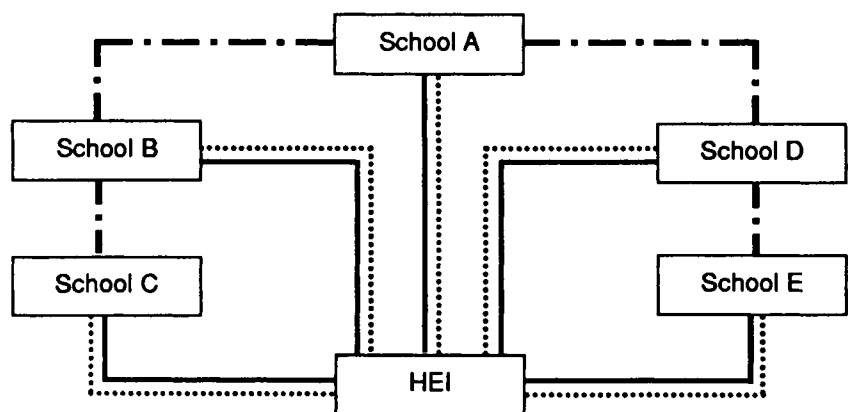
The moves made by the DES in 1984 had two key outcomes. Firstly, it led to a much greater uniformity among teacher education courses in England and Wales. Secondly, it increased the power of the Secretary of State over the curriculum of teacher education.

The CATE criteria and the CATE apparatus remained unchanged until 1989, when the DES brought in changes which were eventually to lead to initiatives in shifting much of teacher education from universities and colleges to

primary and secondary schools, thereby reducing the role of higher education in the training of teachers, (DES 1989). The DES in 1992 issued directives for this shift to take place at first in secondary teacher education only. Parallel changes for the primary phase have now been introduced. It is the intention of the government to shift all secondary teacher education to being school-based and this is virtually complete.

Many institutions are already attempting to make their courses more school-based. This involves not only more time spent on school practice but also teaching activities 'on site' that had previously been offered within the teacher

Figure 13 A five school cluster and relationships within the cluster and with the higher education institution (HEI)

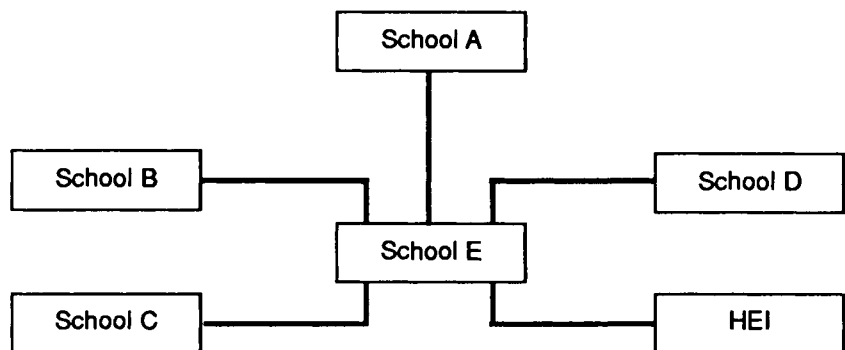


Source: Thomas, E. (1993)

Key

- Flow of student teachers and HEI staff into schools from HEI
- Use by schools of HEI services and facilities
- - - Reciprocal use by cluster schools of their services and their facilities

Figure 14 School E of a cluster used as a venue for some aspects of school-based training involving student teachers from all five schools with possible inputs from HEI



Source: Thomas, E. (1993)

Key

- Flow of student teachers and HEI staff to a cluster school for some aspects of training

education institutions. For example, a group of four primary schools might be clustered within an area; five or six students are then placed within each school for various forms of teaching experience (see Figures 13 and 14).

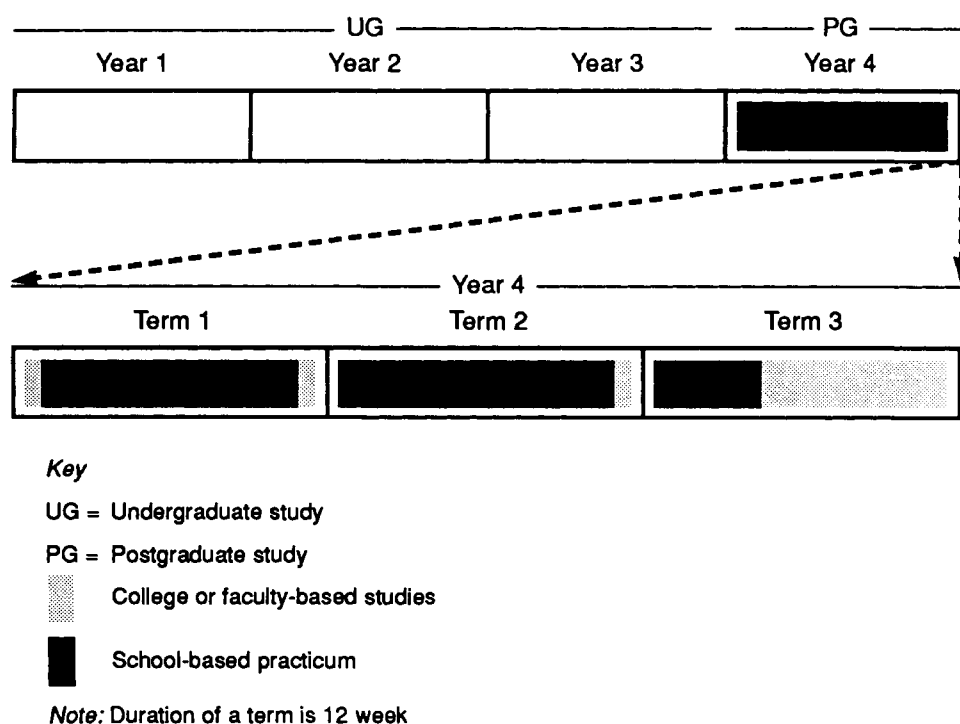
It is then possible to locate the students together in one of the schools or at the higher education institution for instruction. Tutors from the schools and the higher education institutions could then hold seminars and more formal discussions. In this way, the education of teachers is increasingly taking place in schools. As this partnership between schools and institutions develops, a larger proportion of the responsibility for the teaching and assessment of the PGCE course will shift to the schools. Schools receive additional resources for this provision.

For the last 30 or so years, the PGCE for secondary school teachers has been a one year course, run and validated by either a university or by the Council For National Academic Awards (CNAA) now defunct, which validated teacher education courses in polytechnics or colleges. The broad outline of the secondary school PGCE course has remained substantially unchanged. It has been school subject-based in the main, meaning that the principal focus of the course was on how to become a teacher of a secondary school subject. Figure 15 below shows the organisational structure which most PGCE training courses follow.

In broad terms, the 36 week PGCE course has consisted of three main elements:

- Supervised teaching practice (variously known in other countries as teaching practice [TP], school experience, practicum)
- Methods or curriculum element, relating to the teaching of the chosen school subject

Figure 15 Mainly school-based postgraduate initial teacher training with 70% school practicum allocation in Year 4 (projected below)



Source: Thomas, E. (1995)

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- Foundation or education element, relating to broader educational issues and sometimes studies of the educational disciplines, for example, psychology, philosophy.

Although methods of assessment varied considerably, most courses had at least two elements in the final assessment, namely a formal assessment of teaching practice and an assessment of a range of written work done in relation to the other two elements of the course. Up to the present, higher education institutions develop and use their own modes of assessment for teaching practice and course work.

There has never been a consensus amongst teacher educators in England and Wales as to the optimum time allocation of teaching practice. Although there is a statutory minimum time of 15 weeks of supervised teaching practice, this may occur in four six weekly blocks or even a 12 week term block. Some teaching practice is from Monday to Friday and some takes four days of a week with the remaining day being spent in the teacher training institution.

During teaching practice the student observes lessons as well as teaching, and in most cases is involved in the total life of the school, for example, taking part in school in-service education and training (INSET) days or working in the pastoral care system of the school. (Most secondary schools in England and Wales have two parallel administrative structures, each headed by a deputy head. The first is an academic structure, based on subject departments and the second is a pastoral care structure, based on a house or year system. In practice, a major preoccupation of the pastoral care system is discipline.) The lessons that the student teaches are observed by teacher trainers as well as by the teachers in the school. The final report on the student is a joint product, both the school and the training institution giving judgemental reports. Students who are clearly failing are given considerable support by both school and training institution but if success seems unlikely the student will be encouraged to withdraw, avoiding formal failure.

The other two elements, curriculum and educational studies, used to take place mainly within the teacher education institution but are increasingly becoming school-based. Curriculum studies concentrate on giving students, with a formal academic background in their chosen subject, further skills that will enable them to teach the subject in a secondary school. Thus, for example, intending English teachers would deal with issues such as teaching children to read, meeting the needs of bilingual learners in the classroom, studying how children develop language skills and looking at the wide range of children's literature available for use in the classroom.

Education, foundation or professional studies are some of the names given to the third element in the course. Some foundation studies include philosophy of education, psychology of education, comparative education and so forth. However, many institutions prefer a more issue or thematic basis to the study of the Foundations. Issues such as intercultural education, teaching and learning and inner city education could be among those issues being studied by the students.

In the new school-based model all three elements are merged in the course, with the aim of making a more coherent and relevant whole. Much of the content of the older style of course is likely to remain, but there is a major restructuring in course delivery. In addition, the parties to that restructuring have changed; the schools are now formal partners in the process. Of course,

schools always were in partnership with teacher education institutions, but it was an unequal relationship, in which the partnership was mainly controlled by the higher education institution. Now, it is a more equal and formal partnership, with the likelihood that schools will be the senior partner in the future. The key to the partnership is, of course, resources. Unless the nature and distribution of resources both human and material are properly financed and planned, any form of partnership will suffer. The concept of partnership involves a number of key changes. These are discussed below.

1 Partnership and course structure

Negotiation of the school-based course is between the schools and the teacher training institution. Some of the possible consequences of this institution-to-institution negotiation will be discussed later. What it currently means is that the methods and foundation elements of the course are within the constraints set by government (CATE) guidelines. This is increasingly being set as a result of lengthy discussions between teachers in schools and staff in ITE institutions. Seminars and investigative work are now more often than not, done in the school, often with school staff participating.

2 Partnership and teaching practice

Although the model of supervised teaching practice remains, PGCE students are in school and classrooms for much longer periods of time, not necessarily teaching their subject[s] but producing materials, assisting children with learning difficulties, assessing whole school policies in relation to computer use or equal opportunities, engaging in discussion with staff and other students, preparing assessment assignments and so on.

3 Partnership and assessment of beginning teachers

More flexible modes of assessment are evolving to meet the changing nature of the courses.

4 Organisational and administrative aspects of partnership

In the near future schools will be responsible for most of the training, and may 'buy in' courses and other expertise from teacher education institutions. The latter institutions will still validate the qualification, though validation without academic control is likely to be problematical.

It is clear the developments discussed above are dramatically changing initial teacher education institutions, and will, in the long run, change schools as well. It is likely that this period of profound change and its effects will last for the foreseeable future.

Current and future issues

There are at least five main issues which preoccupy those given the task of administering and planning teacher education in England and Wales in the next few years. These are discussed below.

On the surface, it might appear that what is happening to initial teacher education in England and Wales is that changes which were already taking place, as a result of initiatives taken by the training institutions and schools, are now being speeded up by central government. It would appear, from this perspective, that all sides want a closer relationship between the schools and higher education institutions and that the best type of training is one that is well structured and school-based.

This may not be strictly the case. There are differences between government policy and the thinking of many teachers and teacher educators over the content and perhaps the very purpose of teacher education, and the motives behind schools and higher education institutions being brought into a closer partnership. In the Government's view, teachers should be experts in their academic subject and learn how to teach 'on the job'. Thus, universities should give intending teachers academic expertise in their first degree, with the 'on the job' training being done in the schools. Only academic validation and some professional assistance would come from the teacher education institutions. If schools are given responsibility for educating teachers, they will ensure that classroom and subject related training is provided. If the school requires any extra expertise they would contact a higher education institution and 'buy in' the services they need from the higher education institutions. The system already operates in relation to INSET and other forms of professional development for teachers.

The teachers' and the teacher educators' view is that they also want a closer relationship with schools, but in their case, it is to provide a more coherent course that brings educational theory and practice into a mutually illuminative relationship. Thus both sides want more school-based work, one to make it more practical and less theoretical, the other to seek a more productive unification of theory and practice.

How this will be resolved is not yet certain, for although the Government is clearly in control of teacher qualification, the teaching profession as a whole is wary of any initiative which they see as de-professionalising their work.

This is because many teachers will find the loosening of the links with higher education in their training to be a downgrading of the qualification, given the status of universities within education in England and Wales.

2 The school as a venue for teacher education

A further potential issue that relates to this is that although schools will be given a major responsibility for educating, there is no strong feeling that schools want this role or have the resources adequately to fulfil it. Thus, that which is a major professional concern of teacher educators can never be of equal concern to a school, whose primary mission is the education of children.

3 Financing the partnership concept

In relation to finance, the intention is to channel the majority of the finance for ITE to schools, although whether it is administered from the school or the ITE institution remains to be decided. The issue for both sides is that the real cost of educating teachers has always been hidden. If training is to be done

at full cost, the amount of government resourcing is not sufficient. For example, an ITE institution has normal academic running costs, such as libraries, which take a considerable portion of the student's fee. If 80 per cent of the fee goes to the school, as has been suggested, how can libraries, of importance to all in education, be preserved? Similarly, as a result of the financial delegation of budgets (LMS), schools are now having to cost activities which were previously uncoded. (LMS – Local Management of Schools which involves the devolution of finance and general administration from LEAs to schools. This was a major element in the 1988 Education Act.) For example, a teacher observing and commenting on a class taken by a student may now need costing, particularly if the commenting part takes place after the lesson has ended. If the more senior staff, such as heads of departments or deputy heads are to spend more time on teacher education, who will pay for this? Even if the student fee covered the real cost of these people's time, which it would not, schools may argue that such senior staff have other more important things to do with the time that is not spent teaching children.

Even if this broader staffing/resource issue is resolved, the teachers in charge of students will need their involvement in ITE costing, as doing this type of work can take up a lot of expensive time. If the member of staff is senior enough to do this job, they probably have other skills which the school is much more keen on using, for example in staff development. Yet a school can see real benefit in relation to staff development which is less obvious in relation to ITE. In other words, benefit to the education service generally, and benefit to an individual school are two different things from the perspective of many schools.

4 Partnership and school management issues

The issue of responsibility is equally complex. Changes in education and especially school management practices consequent upon the implementation of the 1988 Education Act have meant a decline in the autonomy of curriculum departments in schools. In addition, because of the funding issues involved, school management increasingly takes a major part in school-based teacher education often giving responsibility for this to a member of the senior management team. This is leading, in turn, to an erosion of the dominant position of curriculum departments in initial teacher education institutions. The effect of these changes in the long term for the future of the curriculum departments in ITE institutions remains obscure at present.

5 Partnership, course validation and accreditation issues

Mention should again be made of issues of validation and accreditation, and decisions about which partner is responsible for working out the overall framework of the course and its validation. Unless the issue of validation and accreditation is resolved, the whole concept of partnership is seriously threatened. The danger is that schools may control the resourcing of ITE but only colleges and universities control the course approvals and the awards.

Implications of the British reforms for the CARICOM advisory task force

SELECTED ISSUES

The CARICOM advisory task force set out a number of advantages in having most of ITE switch from colleges to schools along the lines that are outlined above for England and Wales. The task force listed seven key advantages were ITE to become a mainly school-based model. These appear below:

- (i) Schools will not have to find substitute teachers in order to release teachers for training.
- (ii) Student teachers will be able to attend classes at the colleges during vacation time and avoid any disruption at the school.
- (iii) Teacher training will be taking place in the same context in which the teacher has to operate.
- (iv) More teachers can be trained since a training environment will be created within the school.
- (v) The teacher trainers would be assisted by experienced teachers in the school who can serve as master teachers and by the principal and education officers who can assist with the supervision of trainees.
- (vi) Trainees will be challenged to evaluate their own performance and so will be developing skills that are necessary to monitor their professional development after the training period.
- (vii) Trainees would be able to develop research skills since their interactions with supervisors and teacher trainers will be based on data collected by them using the classroom as a laboratory.

However, it would be worth the task force bearing in mind that if school-based ITE is to be adopted as a model of Caribbean teacher education, a number of cautionary points need to be taken into account by those who make the final decisions about using the model.

- Epistemological considerations related to training teachers mainly in schools raises serious questions about the capacity and expertise of school teachers to carry out the so-called educative role of teacher training. Unless there are well planned strategies for sound liaison between higher education institutions and schools to maintain staff expertise and awareness in fields such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, subject knowledge and up to date research findings, newly trained teachers will be the poorer. It is not sufficient for school-based training to focus only on day to day school teaching and learning tasks, teachers need to be stimulated to think above the level of the classroom as well.
- Pedagogical practice in general benefits from trainees being in day to day contact with classroom teaching, although the quality of this contact does depend on the motivation, commitment and competency of a particular school staff. However, unless school-based ITE is organised in such a way that trainees and their mentors have the opportunity to widen their experience by sharing expertise and being exposed to new ideas about delivery and communication, like epistemology, pedagogy will be limiting and too narrow. School cluster arrangements with inputs from higher education could be a way of overcoming this problem.
- Accreditation is clearly a very sensitive issue and it is unlikely that in developing countries certification decisions will be left entirely up to

schools. However, it is important that the views of experienced school staff concerned with ITE are represented on whatever awarding body is chosen for accreditation. A committee of senior teachers and school principals of ITE schools needs to be set up and have strong representation on the main accreditation agency.

- Financial incentives are an extremely important part to any ITE scheme. Unless those staff responsible for training are remunerated for their role as trainers, the system will not work effectively. Similarly, school principals will need to have additional finance to cover extra expenditure relating to training. In some situations in the United Kingdom, staff are offered time off from their duties in lieu of extra salary. This time is usually spent in following in-service courses or in marking and preparation.
- Training for both mentors and principals would be essential if the system is to work successfully. For mentors, continuous and up-to-date training in monitoring, assessment and supervision would be a necessary part of any programme of ITE staff development. Principals would also need training in management training, budgeting and developing expertise in training trainers.
- Organisation and management of school-based ITE is probably one of the main keys to the success of the scheme. This is especially the case when schools are liaising with higher education institutions, other schools and, where necessary, regional and national education offices and personnel.