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themselves and cashing in on new developments.

Part of Fielding's argument is for flexibility, for extension of the individual teacher's ability to cope with widening demands despatched by powerful role-senders. It is obviously beneficial if teachers can be helped to adapt creatively their personalities in the manner Kelly (1955) proposes as they come to grips with such personal and professional challenges. But the emphasis on choice and autonomy is important. Counselling services for teachers under stress often seem to encourage their tense clients towards a submission to central norms : change your life-style - don't challenge the system. The counsellors become the ambulance men of a none-too-moral society. There is a respectable alternative tradition which sees education as a process preparing to set people free, as emancipatory, even if freedom has fears, anxieties and responsibilities too great for some to bear. Fielding's views are in this latter tradition. It means that whilst pursuing their personal and professional development, they must not lose sight of the social, political, and economic conditions in which their occupational group has to make its way.

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THE MOVE TOWARDS THE ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

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Introduction

In recent years there has been a significant change in the nature of Government (as mediated by the Department of Education and Science - DES) involvement in initial teacher training in England and Wales. Traditionally government has rightly concerned itself with the "manpower problem" of ensuring that the numbers of teachers in training relates to the demands for new teachers by employing authorities and with the "institutional problem" of determining the types of institutions which exist to provide teacher training, how they are organised within the higher education system, and how they are financed. The content of teacher training curriculums and the validation of courses has been seen as the proper responsibility of the qualified, professional staff working in the field of education and teacher training. However, Government has now become interested in the content and quality of the teacher training programmes themselves. This critical concern has been expressed in official publications emanating from the DES such as Department of Education and Science (1982) and culminated in 1983 with the publication of a White Paper entitled "Teaching Quality" (1983). In their efforts to improve the quality of initial teacher training the Secretaries of State for England and Wales announced in the White Paper that they intended to establish criteria against which all future proposed teacher training courses would be assessed and that they would review all existing courses in the light of the criteria. Without going into the details of how it has been accomplished, the upshot has been that the Secretaries of State have established a Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) which has the following terms of reference:

"to advise the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales on the approval of initial teacher training courses in England and Wales".

It is important to note that the membership of CATE is made up of people

appointed by the ministers on a personal basis and that they serve to advise the ministers. CATE does not include persons nominated by the training establishments and who serve to represent the interests of teacher trainers.

In conjunction with the establishment of CATE the DES published the criteria against which CATE must assess initial training courses, *Circular No 3/84*, (1984). Thus, in sum, Government has expeditiously established a system of accreditation in the field of teacher training. This innovation will have dramatic and far reaching consequences and introduces a system of audit or monitoring which is foreign to higher education in England and Wales. The aim of this paper is to describe something of the accreditation process which is emerging and to identify some of the problems which teacher training institutions are encountering as the accreditation process becomes established.

The Accreditation Process

The manner in which CATE will proceed is at present being established and all parties are, to some extent, still finding their feet. CATE is issuing "CATE notes"² which explain to institutions precisely how accreditation will work but the general principles are as follows:

First, the course³ must gain *administrative course approval* by which is meant that the appropriate body (University Grants Committee in the case of University courses and National Advisory Body in the case of public sector institutions' courses), acting for the Secretary of State, specifies the number of students on the course and the pupil age range it will prepare them for. This stage is a pre-requisite for academic approval.

Second, the course must gain *academic approval*, that is the validating body (typically a university senate or The Council for National Academic Awards) must ensure that the course meets the standards of the relevant academic award.

This stage is a pre-requisite for Schedule 5 approval.

Third, *Schedule 5 approval* is the stage at which the Secretary of State approves the course as being suitable for the professional preparation of teachers and the award of qualified teacher status. It is at this stage that the Secretary of State is advised by CATE that the course meets the criteria.

In addition to proceeding through these three stages the process of accreditation involves two further hurdles. The first is inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education, which should take place early on in the accreditation process. The second is gaining the approval of a "local committee" upon which members of the training institution, local education

authority, practicing teachers and individuals outside the education service are represented. This is the forum by which the training institution establishes links with and responds to its local community. Local committee approval is likely to be sought at the time when courses are being validated.

The crux of the accreditation process is approval by CATE in the light of the criteria and because of their importance these must be described briefly.

The Criteria

The criteria which are described in full in "Circular 3/84" are grouped under four headings; these together with the central features of the criteria which pose problems for teacher training institutions, are listed below:

Links between training institutions and schools.

Training institutions and schools must develop close working partnerships. Experienced serving teachers must share responsibility for students' school experience and the assessment of their practical performance and they should be involved in the training of students within institutions. Teacher training staff concerned with pedagogy should have recent and relevant classroom experience and maintain regular and frequent experience of classroom teaching.

Subject studies and subject method

Students are required to study an academic subject at a level equivalent to at least two years full-time higher education, in effect the first two years of a university course. This holds for intending primary as well as secondary teachers. But for the primary teacher part of this programme may include the application of subjects to the learning and developmental needs of young children. The staff must be equipped to educate and train students at a level appropriate to higher education. There should be adequate attention given to the methodology of teaching subjects. The curriculum for intending primary teachers must include a minimum of 100 hours each for the study of language and mathematics.

Educational and professional studies

Practical experience must include both intermittent and block practices and encourage students to be mindful of the diverse ability, social background and ethnic and cultural origins of their pupils. Attention must be paid to the wider aspects of the teacher's work and role within society and they

must acquire an understanding of the "values of a free society and its economic and other foundations".

Selection and admission to initial teacher training courses

Institutions must assess the personal and intellectual qualities of candidates and experienced teachers must be involved in the training process. The personal qualities institutions should look for are described and their basic academic qualifications prescribed. Mature applicants who lack conventional entry requirements may be considered but at least 75% of students entering a course must possess the normal qualifications for entry to a first degree.

Emerging Problems

The accreditation process is a radical intervention in a well established and institutionalised national pattern of teacher training and as such is bound to create considerable problems for individual teacher training institutions and their validating bodies. In what follows I attempt to identify the major problems which are emerging as the accreditation process becomes established and express them in general terms so that they may be of interest to educationists in other societies who may, at some time, be confronted with similar policy initiatives by government.

The scale of the task

Eventually CATE must accredit over 600 separate initial teacher training courses in some 85 institutions. This inevitably means that the accreditation process becomes a highly bureaucratic and formal one. It is a "paper exercise" requiring considerable data and documentation. CATE have let it be known that they will not normally visit institutions. Hence particular, local issues cannot be attended to and there is no personal contact between teacher trainers and members of CATE. The process is impersonal. Moreover, considerable institutional resources must be allocated to both the routine production of the information required by CATE and, more importantly, to the process of curriculum revision and consultation with other parties such as HMI, validating bodies and local committees.

Lack of resources

Teacher training in England has suffered dramatic cutbacks in recent years consequent upon economic decline and demographic change. Institutions have been in a state of flux since the last white paper issued in 1972 which

signalled the period of retrenchment in higher education. The accreditation process requires that institutions must continue to respond to a new set of challenges at a time when their resources will continue to deteriorate. In particular DES manpower planning requires staff/student ratios to worsen during the next few years at a time when sensible responses to CATE indicate that colleges may need to appoint new staff. To take two key illustrations. First, in recent years a number of innovative teacher training programmes preparing students to teach younger age ranges have abandoned the traditional specialist teaching of "main" subjects such as English or science so as to provide students with a range of academically rigorous and professionally useful curriculum options covering the whole primary programme. These courses have been well received by the teaching profession and academic educationists. Now the institutions offering such courses are being required by CATE to provide the equivalent of two years university education in subject areas for their students but in order to do this they require staff. Second, arrangements have to be made for staff teaching "pedagogics" to acquire recent and relevant experience in the classroom and CATE has indicated that this must be substantial yet additional staff cannot be appointed to cover for those gaining their school experience.

More generally, the time, energy and commitment of staff is an essential institutional resource which is being dissipated. Established and respected courses must be reorganised to meet the CATE criteria; this saps energy and affects morale. This is not to say that teacher training courses should be set beyond examination but change should be gradual and based upon informed, professional scrutiny; it should not be brought about simply to conform to a DES blueprint.

Serving many masters

In order to achieve accreditation training institutions must satisfy different representative bodies who do not always agree about what they require of the institution. The process can become extremely time consuming and demoralising as colleges seek by patient negotiation to satisfy different parties who include:

- (i) Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) who, when they visit an institution, are often concerned to ensure that their specialism or special interest is attended to and who often lack an overall view of the training process.
- (ii) Local Committees who are concerned, in particular, with the more practical and professional side of courses.

- (iii) Validating Bodies who are concerned with the academic quality of courses.
- (iv) CATE who seek to ensure that courses meet the criteria.
- (v) In some cases there are professional bodies who demand that a course must meet certain requirements if it is to count for professional recognition (for instance teacher training courses which include a "Youth Work" element).

Interpreting the criteria

It is not impossible that "interpreting the criteria" will become a new area of academic expertise. Many of the criteria are expressed in vague terms which permit alternative interpretations and institutions are uncertain of what they have to do in order to meet them. This can be illustrated by reference to a key criterion. What exactly is meant by "the equivalent of at least two full years' course time devoted to subject studies at a level appropriate to higher education"? The hard or academic line which seems to be favoured by the DES is that whenever possible teacher training students should study alongside or do courses directly comparable with university students following degree courses in the subject in question. The more professional interpretation favoured by many teacher trainers is that such courses should include substantial elements examining, say, the "structure" of a subject and the manner in which, say, cognitive psychology can be invoked in order to facilitate learning the subject. For example, students should study "mathematical education" rather than "mathematics".

The primary stage problem

A central issue which has aroused deep feelings and reaction against CATE concerns the training of the primary school specialist. While the criteria may be appropriate for training secondary specialists in subject areas they cannot be so easily applied in the primary sector where the teacher must teach across the curriculum. The special requirements of intending primary teachers are at present catered for by courses which have the approval of the teaching profession but which often do not have provision for two years specialist subject study. A pressure group, the Undergraduate Primary Teacher Education Conference (UPTEC) has recently been established in order to challenge the criteria and promote the case for primary teacher training which they feel will deteriorate if forced into the constraints of the criteria. UPTEC argue that students do not require advanced, specialist knowledge in a subject area, rather, as class teachers, they require expert

knowledge in understanding the developing child and how he or she acquires information in different curriculum areas.

Threats to autonomy

The accreditation process is seen by many educationists, especially in the university sector, as a threat to professional autonomy. At worst CATE can be seen as an example of an arm of the state interfering in the content of a professional training programme - decisions about which should be based upon informed professional judgements rather than influenced by the opinions of those who hold political power. For instance, the role of HMI causes particular concern. HMI have always had the right to inspect teacher education institutions in the public sector but typically, in the past, their visitations have been something of a "courtesy call". Now the public sector colleges are being subjected to full blow inspections (similar to the way in which schools are inspected) and as a consequence of a recent government edict the reports of inspections are published and open to public scrutiny. But it is in the university sector that the threat of inspection is most keenly felt. The universities are jealous of their independence and autonomy and HMI have no legal or constitutional right to inspect their departments of education. However, if universities wish their teacher training programmes to be accredited by CATE they must, at some stage, invite HMI to visit and report upon their teacher training programmes. This is seen as a disturbing precedent by many university academics since it opens the way for the inspection of the university sector by the DES. Moreover, the universities must comply with the CATE criteria and the nature of the university reaction can be seen by citing one seemingly reasonable and innocuous example. The typical university year comprises three ten week terms i.e. thirty weeks in total and the vacations, in part, provide the time for staff to engage in their contractual obligations to undertake advanced study and research. However, CATE has made a specific requirement that postgraduate teacher training courses must be extended from thirty weeks to at least thirty six weeks. No additional staff or resources are to be provided to cope with this burden. Hence university educationists are becoming concerned that their workloads are being increased and that they are disadvantaged compared with their colleagues in that there is less time available for them to undertake the publishing and research which is necessary if they wish to advance their careers. The central and general point to emphasise is that a body outside the university sector, namely CATE, is able to impose itself upon universities in a way which has implications for the working conditions of staff and finance and resource allocation within the universities.

Prospect

At the time of writing it is known from reports in the educational press that nine institutions have been examined by CATE for accreditation and that only one, Exeter University, has been recommended for approval by the Secretary of State for Education. Four other institutions have been given a year in which to meet a variety of conditions and the remaining four have "failed" in various respects, the major two being that they have not met the requirements for (a) providing two years' full time study of a subject at a level appropriate to higher education and (b) recent and relevant school based experience for staff.

Thus institutions who, for many years, have provided acceptable teacher training programmes and whose courses have been approved by both their local professional committees and their validating bodies and who have made every effort to interpret the criteria correctly have been turned down by CATE.

The future is clearly uncertain and institutions await the call from CATE with trepidation; at present the strategy is to attempt to get to the back of the queue. Institutions are unsettled and devoting considerable energies and resources to the accreditation process, a commitment which could be better expended on getting on with the job of training teachers. This state of affairs will continue until "CATE case law" indicates to the teacher training community by its rulings what has to be done to pass this crucial test.

The somewhat bizarre situation in which teacher training finds itself at present is illustrated by a final observation. The government's first duty is to provide and regulate the supply of beginning teachers into the schools and this is dealt with at the initial stage of the accreditation process when the University Grants Committee and the National Advisory Board determine the numbers of teacher training places to be allocated to the universities and public sector institutions respectively. Life will become particularly fraught if, at the final stage of the accreditation process, another body, CATE, fails to approve the self same courses which students are being recruited for!

Footnotes

1. In part, the nature of this change is highlighted by the use of the term "teacher training" rather than "teacher education".
2. The emergence of a "lingua franca" among the cognoscenti testifies to the impact of the new policy upon teacher trainers, eg. "CATE Law" or "being CATED".
3. It is specific teacher training *courses* which are the subject of accreditation, not institutions.

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