Australian Journal of Teacher Education

Volume 17
Issue 2 *Competency-Based Standards in Teaching*

Article 7

1992

Never Mind the EDU, What about the CATE? The Background to Current Developments in English Teacher Education

Tony Becher
University of Sussex

Follow this and additional works at: https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte

Part of the Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons

Recommended Citation

Becher, T. (1992). Never Mind the EDU, What about the CATE? The Background to Current Developments in English Teacher Education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 17*(2).
http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.1992v17n2.7

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol17/iss2/7

NEVER MIND THE *EDU* -, WHAT ABOUT THE *CATE*?: THE BACKGROUND TO CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION

Tony Becher
University of Sussex

If anyone were misguided enough to offer a prize for the sector of English education most subject to government intervention, the institutions concerned with initial teacher training would win it hands down. The intervention (a less polite word would be interference) has, over time, taken three main forms: alterations to the structure and organisation of provision; attempts to match student numbers to subsequent demand; and control over curricular content.

This paper is an attempt to take a relatively long-term view of relevant developments, setting the present situation in its historical context. It will thus necessarily adopt a broad-brush rather than finely detailed approach. It will also focus on the scene in England. What has happened in Wales and Northern Ireland is broadly similar but Scotland has its own independent (and to envious southern eyes more congenial) system.

It is perhaps convenient to begin, by way of scene-setting at least, with the publication towards the end of the Second World War of the McNair Report (Board of Education, 1944). This touched on issues of initial teacher training and qualifications (and hence indirectly of curriculum), but its most disputed recommendation dealt with the way provision should be organised. The McNair Committee was itself equally divided between regrouping and consolidation of the existing Joint Examining Boards and creating new university-based Area Training Organisations. Eventually, the argument was settled in favour of the ATOs, and these were set up between 1947 and 1951. The result was to link the many small, single sex colleges more closely with the universities, with a consequent tightening of standards and increase in public confidence (Gosden, 1989). By 1960, the case was successfully made to extend the basic course from two years to three, heralding a phase of rapid expansion.

Meanwhile, teacher supply had become the province of the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers, set up in 1949 to advise ministers on *"national policy on the training and conditions of qualification of teachers, and on the recruitment and distribution of teachers in ways best calculated to meet the needs of the schools or other educational establishments"* (Ministry of Education, 1949). The Council's Eighth Report (Ministry of Education, 1962) is of particular interest in its concern to look ahead "at least 20 years". Many of its recommendations anticipated those of the Robbins Report (1963). It called for a further increase in the length of courses to four years, which *"should culminate in the award of a degree or of an equivalent qualification"*. It suggested a merging of some colleges with universities and other institutions, and the expansion of others to take on general degree work. It proposed the chartering of selected institutions or groups of institutions outside the universities to award their own degrees. And perhaps most significantly, *it coupled these suggestions with a reference to "a grave and persistent shortage of teachers"* as far ahead as 1980; with the assertion that *"the crucial shortages will be in the primary schools"*; and with the prediction that *"the shortage ... is not merely a present but a chronic disability"*.

In the following year, Robbins, alongside its advocacy of a large expansion of higher education as a whole, advanced the proposal for a four-year B.Ed degree to complement the three-year Teacher's Certificate. The government of the day accepted this recommendation and also symbolically renamed the training colleges as colleges of education. It was not however until some twenty years later that all those entering teaching would acquire a degree as well as a professional qualification. Robbins also advocated the notion of mergers and the idea that colleges should provide *"courses ... for entrants to various professions in the social services"* and *"general courses in arts or science subjects"*.

There was relatively little alteration to the structure of the system during the next few years, though expansion continued throughout the 1960s. One fashionable change occurred in the curriculum, which was looked on with approval by HM Inspectorate at the time, but which sprang from academic rather than governmental initiatives. This was the movement to separate educational theory, as a field of study, into its "founding disciplines" - held at the time to be history, philosophy, psychology and sociology (Hirst, 1966). The result was a tendency in colleges and university departments to appoint specialist lecturers in the fields concerned. Perhaps predictably, there were not nearly enough well-qualified candidates to go round, and many institutions made do with second-best substitutes. The movement towards disciplinary fundamentalism died a slow but relatively painless death in the 1970s, partly at least as the result of adverse reaction by students to what they saw as meaningless and irrelevant theorising.

At more or less the same time as this was happening - in 1967 to be precise - a small-scale experiment (later to prove highly significant) was launched in the newly-established University of Sussex. This involved a mainly school-based PGCE programme in which the students spent three days each week in their 'partnership' schools and the remaining two in the university working on curriculum planning and reflecting systematically on their classroom experience. In some respects the Sussex scheme could be said to have anticipated the findings of Donald Schön (1983, 1987) in relation to 'reflective practitioners'. It remained the only programme of its kind until Oxford, in the mid-1980s, initiated a closely comparable course in a blaze of publicity.

The next milestone along the tortuous route taken by English teacher training was the publication of the James Report (1972). The preceding Committee of Inquiry was set up in late 1970 by a Secretary of State who would subsequently come to be even more notorious than she was then - Margaret Thatcher. In characteristic style, she demanded that the Committee should make its recommendations within 12 months. In the event, its report was published in less than 14 months. The recommendations included the division of the teacher education programme into three cycles. The first, 'personal education', entailed academic study for a new two-year qualification, the Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE); the second embraced initial training followed by a year of induction; and the third constituted a minimum entitlement for all serving teachers to one term of "substantial courses" in every seven years of service, in addition to "shorter-term third cycle activities".

The Committee had been invited to consider, among other issues, whether a larger proportion of intending teachers should be educated with students who have not chosen their careers or chosen other careers. Within the Department of Education and Science, opinion had been hardening against 'monotechnic institutions', on the grounds that they could not easily absorb fluctuations in demand. The Report came out instead in favour of acknowledging *"the enhanced status and independence of the colleges"*, and argued for the abolition of the Area Training Organisation in favour of a system of regional councils in which university departments of education would participate but not predominate, under the overall authority of a National Council for the Training and Education of Teachers.

The James Report was given a mixed reception at best. The proposals for a third cycle of inservice education were widely welcomed, but many teacher educators in the colleges strongly opposed the move towards a consecutive, as against a concurrent, pattern of academic study and professional preparation. The proposed maintenance of teacher education as a third distinct sector, alongside the universities and the polytechnics, was not what the Department's civil servants had wanted or expected. In retrospect, although it helped in certain respects to modify - or at least to stir up - professional opinion, the Report must be deemed to have been a failure in policy terms.

In any case, it can be said to have been overtaken by events. The fall in the national birth rate, starting in 1964 and continuing well into the 1970s, meant fewer pupils for the schools, and hence fewer teachers. Eleven months after James, in December 1972, the government published a White Paper entitled *Education: A Framework for Expansion*, which was aptly retitled "A Frame-up for Contraction' by the teacher education community. While the expansion of in-service training was accepted as national policy, and the DipHE actively promoted as a free-standing award not necessarily tied to teacher education, the White Paper's central concern was to accelerate the reshaping of the system by mergers to form larger institutions, amalgamations with *"polytechnics or other colleges of further education"* (not with universities), or by closures.

A year after this warning shot, the process of retrenchment and reorganisation began in earnest. This continued all the way into the next decade, resulting in the outright disappearance of a quarter of the colleges in the 1970s and finally, by the 1982 round of cuts, of nearly a half. Despite the confident numerical projections of 10 years earlier, the numbers of places for initial training were cut from 114,000 in 1971-2 to 65,000 in 1973; a second tranche of cuts announced in 1977 reduced this in stages to under 47,000 by

1981. Only a society now hardened to massive redundancies and persistent unemployment can look back at these events with equanimity. The financial arrangements for severance of employment were relatively generous, but the costs in terms of human misery and blighted careers were high.

The government's concern to disengage initial teacher education from university control was signalled in 1975 by the abolition of the Area Training Organisations and the reassertion that *"outside the universities, teacher education and further education should be assimilated into a common system"*. The alternative to the ATOs was to be a network of 'Professional Committees' organised on a local or regional basis: but these were not given any real functions to perform, and were for the most part inoperative until some ten years later (see below).

Meanwhile, the National Advisory Council had gone into abeyance; it was replaced by a new Advisory Committee for the Supply and Training of Teachers in 1973. During most of the 1970s ACSTT's main concern was with questions of supply. Towards the end of the decade, however, stimulated at least in part by the decision to phase out the old Certificate in Education in the move towards a fully graduate profession, the debate returned to curricular issues. In 1978 a Working Group of the Council reported on

> *the extent to which the aims, nature and structure of the existing and planned new-style BEd courses [need] to be reconsidered in the light or recent developments ... which [have] emphasised the need for intending teachers to acquire a qualification which is both professionally adequate and marketable outside teaching.*
> (ACSTT, 1978)

Its report was critical of the wide diversity in the content and organisation of BEd courses, noting the reference in the earlier Green Paper, *Education in Schools* (DES, 1977), to the lack of satisfactory arrangements for *"the development of the content of teacher training"*. However, in reviewing the respective merits of concurrent and consecutive courses, the Working Group came down firmly (if uncomfortably) on the fence, noting that *"the arguments ... are fairly evenly balanced. It must be for the individual institution to decide which structure is the more appropriate for it"*. It also noted, however, that the proportion of newly qualified teachers with a PGCE (the main 'consecutive' route) would have risen from 24% of the total in 1974 to an expected 53% in 1981. The fragmentation of initial training programmes between educational studies (the general theory element), professional studies (the consideration of issues relating to school practice), subject studies (covering the aspects of required academic knowledge) and teaching practice was one of the main curricular concerns at this time. Two particular issues - the problems of reconciling academic and professional goals and the difficulties of relating theory to practice in the secondary PGCE - were the subject of a timely publication by the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (1979). UCET, incidentally, has been an important moderating influence on official policy, representing a voluntary association of all university departments of education and playing an active role in shaping and not merely reflecting professional opinion. (It has in the past worked largely through informal channels, though recent events have forced it to adopt a more public and political stance.)

In retrospect, the 1970s may be seen as a high point of governmental intervention in reshaping the initial teacher education system. The earlier network of mostly quite small and often highly specialised colleges was replaced, in a more or less drastic manner, by a system in which much of teacher education was incorporated into the universities and polytechnics, or conducted in larger, amalgamated colleges of higher education or further education colleges which also provided a range of other degree and sub-degree programmes. Now that this change has worked through the system it might seem as if further large-scale structural reorganisation is not on the current agenda. Nowadays, however, to make any such assertion is to offer a hostage to fortune.

The reshaping process was in large part itself a consequence of manpower planning: as noted, the reduction in the projected numbers of pupils led to drastic measures to curb the numbers of teachers being trained. It was an ironic but telling demonstration of the inefficacy of such planning that it was not able to take into account the backwash effect on applicants. Much as the publication of electoral opinion polls can sometimes exercise a significant influence on voter behaviour, and thus falsify their own confident predictions, the measures which signalled a dramatic worsening of employment prospects in the teaching profession had the consequence of reducing applications out of all proportion to the intended decreases. By 1980 there was estimated to be a shortfall of just under 60% in the BEd places available - this being the

case even after nearly all the required reductions had been made. Perhaps not surprisingly, the DES Statistics Branch, which provided the data on which teacher projects were based, while continuing to publish periodic information on the supply position, appeared to lose any confidence it might earlier have possessed in specifying future needs.

The advent in 1979 of a government dedicated to the promotion of 'market forces' was in any case inimical to manpower planning - the recent tendency has been to allow for a relatively loosely controlled allocation of training places coupled with special incentives (in the form of bursaries) offered to applicants for subjects where there is thought to be a shortage of already qualified teachers. Even this policy has had its limitations, with initial employment rates in some cases lower for "shortage" subjects than for those which are thought to be better staffed. The government's line of argument, however, seems to be that graduates with a teaching qualification, even if not subsequently engaged in teaching, ought to be able to compete on the open employment market, and to that extent their higher education and training is not in vain.

The net effect of the government's withdrawal from manpower planning and of the completion of its programme of restructuring was to leave curricular issues as the most obvious remaining focus of attention. The initial moves in this direction in the late 1970s, to which brief reference has already been made, could be seen as stemming in part from the then current general concern for accountability in education, as signalled by a key policy statement set out in a speech at Ruskin College, Oxford, in 1976 by the Labour Prime Minister at the time, James Callaghan. But by 1981, with the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher well installed, the previous stress on accountability was coupled with demands both for 'quality' and for 'value for money'. Perhaps symbolically, ACSTT was replaced in 1980 - seven years after its creation - by a new Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers (ACSET), which was no longer seen as a partnership between the DES, the Local Education Authorities and the teaching profession, but as an agency of central government.

The first step in what now looks to have been a carefully orchestrated campaign was the publication by HMI (1982) of a survey of newly qualified teachers. If the definition of a pessimist is someone who sees the wine bottle to be half-empty, while the optimist sees it as half full, the Inspectorate erred on the side of pessimism. Instead of commending more than three-quarters of primary recruits and nine out of ten secondary ones for showing good competence, they condemned nearly a quarter of the former and one in ten of the latter for signs of *"insecurity in the subject they were teaching"*. ACSET was chosen as the unwitting agency through whom the subsequent corrective strategy was to be pursued.

Another key document was an HMI discussion paper, considered by ACSET in 1982 and subsequently published in the following year (DES, 1983). This argued that *"there is a widely recognised need for agreed guidelines on the content of training"*, and quoted an earlier survey as showing that in concurrent courses *"the time allocated to subject studies ranged from 22 to 50 per cent of the total undergraduate taught programme"*. It concluded by calling for *"a minimum standard of effective mastery of the main teaching subjects"* and *"an agreed minimum range of professional content, appropriate to the phase in which the student will teach"*. The apparent emphasis on agreement is ironic in the light of what followed - the proposals may have been accepted by HMI and acquiesced to by the members of ACSET, but there was a minimal degree of systematic or formal consultation with those groups and individuals directly concerned with initial teacher education.

ACSET's response to the HMI proposals was made public in 1983, as an annex to the White Paper on *Teaching Quality* (DES, 1983). Its advice to the Secretary of State closely reflected the ideas put forward by the Inspectorate. In endorsing these proposals, the White Paper itself suggested that various criteria of acceptability should be demanded of all initial teacher training programmes. Among the most significant of them were that at least two full years of the student's higher education programme should be devoted to relevant subject studies: that teaching method work in the main subjects, differentiated by age of pupils, should be provided at an adequate level; and that there should be closer links between training institutions and schools, involving the participation in the initial training process of practising school teachers. As a corollary, the staff of training institutions who were 'concerned with pedagogy' should have regular contact with classroom teaching. It was also recommended that procedures for selecting students should be strengthened, and should involve an input from the schools. The next step would be to require ACSET to work further on the criteria, which would then be published as the

starting point of a review of all existing initial teacher training courses. the implicit expectation was that DES approval would be withdrawn from those courses which failed to satisfy the conditions thus laid down.

In April 1984 the DES issued a circular which embodied a sharpened and amplified set of criteria (DES, 1984) and accepted a further recommendation from ACSET that a new Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) be set up *"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"*. The Council was expected to review all existing courses, and to scrutinise any proposals for new courses, within three or four years, after which its future would be reconsidered. It would need to take into account *"evidence based on any visits made by members of the Council ... and in all cases the findings of HMI visits"*. In the event, the Council organised very few visits to institutions (limiting them mostly to cases where there was a crucial ambiguity to resolve or a potential decision to close a significant area of provision); its reliance on HMI reports was in consequence extremely heavy, according the Inspectorate rather too much power for the good of the Council.

Among the requirements which went well beyond the 1983 White Paper proposals was one specifying a minimum length of 36 weeks for PGCE courses (many of which had previously been modelled on the undergraduate pattern of 30 weeks). The then Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, had apparently argued for 44 weeks, but had been persuaded by his DES officials to accept the lower compromise (Gosden, 1989). The semi-moribund local committees were also given a new lease of life, in that no course would be considered by CATE unless it had the blessing of a committee, meeting regularly, whose members must include local school teachers, members from the relevant local education authorities and individuals drawn from industry, commerce or the lay public. Another key requirement, affecting primary courses, was that there must be at least 100 hours devoted to the study of mathematics teaching and 200 hours to the study of English language teaching. Other, perhaps less demanding, specifications in the seventeen paragraphs setting out the criteria dealt with professional issues (including, predictably, *"understanding the economic foundations of contemporary society"*), entry requirements, and special shortened undergraduate courses for already partially-qualified applicants.

The Council's membership was appointed on a personal rather than a representative basis, and reflected the government's concern to ensure that teacher educators had only a marginal role. Admittedly, the Chairman, William Taylor, had had a long and distinguished involvement, including a Professorship of Education at Bristol University and the Directorship of the London Institute of Education - but he had then moved into academic administration, first as Principal of London University and subsequently as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hull. Other founding members of CATE included two businessmen and a journalist, two local politicians, two academics (not associated with teacher education), two teacher union officials, three local education authority officers, two heads and a senior teacher, three principals of non-university institutions providing teacher education, and one member of university staff (the present author) currently engaged in the process. (A detailed account of CATE and its activities between 1984 and 1989 is to be found in Macintyre, 1991).

In the early stages, several representations were made to the Council about the inequity or inappropriateness of particular criteria. For example, the requirement for 'recent and relevant experience' on the part of teacher educators was specific enough to demand the equivalent of one term in every 15 spent teaching in schools - yet no budgetary provision whatever was made for institutions having to face the consequent reduction of nearly 7% in their staffing resources. However, the Council's constitution merely imposed the government's criteria upon it, and left it no scope to alter them. This limitation was not always recognised by its critics, who were both numerous and vocal.

Once it go into its stride, CATE developed a method of working and a style of procedure which could be seen to be fair and reasonably rigorous without seeming punitive. To get through the very sizeable agenda that had been set, the decision was taken to divide the membership into three working groups, each of which was given responsibility for reviewing courses in particular institutions: the Council as a whole met periodically to consider the recommendations of the groups and to ensure an appropriate comparability of standards. Reviews took a more or less standard form: the working group would scrutinise each institution's documentation (which was necessarily quite extensive) in the light of the accompanying report of the required visit by an HMI team, and would itemise the issues which seemed to call for further exploration. It would then meet a delegation from the institution concerned to discuss these issues - and any others which came up in the course of the meeting - before deciding on the recommendation to main Council. In many cases, points for clarification were followed up in subsequent correspondence. The tone of such meetings tended to be professional and workmanlike but not inquisitorial.

The pace of work was heavy, with full-day group or Council meetings often as frequently as twice a week (perhaps partly for that reason, the industrialists and local politicians were sporadic in their attendance). Even so, the review of courses was not concluded within the stipulated three to four years, and the Council's first term of existence had to be extended until the end of 1989. By that time it had scrutinised 394 courses in 93 institutions. In only three of the latter had the Council considered it inappropriate to approve a substantial part of the existing provision - though a number of courses had had to be revised and resubmitted, and some individual programmes had had to be discontinued. The low failure rate could perhaps be seen as a vindication of the quality of the teacher education programmes which existed when CATE was set up - though the requirement of independent scrutiny certainly served to promote critical self-evaluation and to tighten certain procedures to the benefit of the system as a whole.

The outcome was that, when the question arose of a possible reconstitution and continuation of the Council, the teacher education community tended towards the conclusion that CATE had done more good than harm and had established a system of accountability offering a public assurance that proper standards were being maintained. A very different view was taken by the extreme right wing of the Conservative party, who had - in the absence of any direct knowledge about the subject - come firmly to the view that the teacher training system should be abolished, and that prospective teachers should learn their trade in the classrooms of specially-designated 'training schools'. The generally favourable judgements reached by CATE clearly smacked of collusion within what came to be termed, with happy imprecision, 'the education establishment'.

Vocal as they were, these critics were not to have their day until two years after the second-stage CATE was established early in 1990. The criteria which it was required to operate were not significantly changed, though some adjustments were made to the section on curriculum studies in primary schools, including a new requirement for the study of science teaching to be allocated 100 hours alongside mathematics and language work. However, as the intense pace of HMI visits in the first phase could not be expected to continue, the local committees - reconstituted where necessary to include more than one but preferably not more than three institutions - would be given the task of scrutinising new courses and reviewing those which had not been looked at for four or five years, and forwarding their recommendations to the Council. This would free CATE members to a certain degree, enabling them to give some attention to development work and the identification and promotion of good practice within the system.

The Chairman - by this time dubbed Sir William Taylor - was to continue, as were four other politically correct members of the original Council. Among the other 12 (the total of 16 being two fewer than before) were at least two of the right-wing opponents previously mentioned. The new CATE had a relatively low profile in the first two years of its existence. One might suppose that part of the reason was the need to work out appropriate relationships with the local committees, which themselves inevitably took some time to re-establish and get into action. However, the Council was doubtless also involved in the lead-in to the dramatic events in the first half of 1992.

The earliest intimation of yet another of the Tory government's steps towards the deconstruction of British society came in January 1992, when the then Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Clarke, mentioned in a speech that he intended shortly to replace the existing pattern of secondary PGCE courses with one in which the schools would take the dominant role. The change was to be implemented by September 1992. The government had in fact earlier introduced an experimental scheme under which school-based 'articled teachers' followed a two-year programme including some systematic course provision, but this had turned out to cost three times as much as the average PGCE course, and it had recently been discontinued at the secondary level. There seemed nonetheless to be no recognition that school-based courses were likely to prove more expensive. Instead, a straightforward switch of funds was proposed from training institutions to schools in proportion to the proposed 80%-20% balance of responsibilities.

Shortly afterwards, a consultative paper was issued spelling out the details and calling for responses from interested parties. In the last few years, the notion of governmental consultation has experienced a change under which those, however numerous, who responded by commenting on proposals are rewarded by seeing the original intentions faithfully maintained. This case offered a rare exception to the rule, partly perhaps because the consultation period was interrupted by a general election, followed by the appointment of a new Secretary of State. A face-saving modification of the original proposals proved possible, and was certainly desirable in the light of the overwhelming volume of objections, not only from the universities, polytechnics and colleges concerned, but from the teachers' associations and individual head teachers (who did not consider the schools equipped to take on the task) and from parents' groups and school governors (who did not want inexperienced teachers launched into taking classes unsupervised). Even within the DES, two senior civil servants were transferred from responsibility for teacher education to other duties because they were seen to be insufficiently enthusiastic about the policy that had been proposed.

The new Secretary of State's decision was not announced until the end of June. Meanwhile, in the expectation that all institutions would need to implement the change in a very short time-span, the higher education funding bodies called for each training institution to put in bids for a fund set aside to meet the transition costs from the existing to the new system. Given that no-one knew the ground rules, this was a spectacularly pointless exercise. The whole bidding process had to be repeated when the revised arrangements were announced, allowing a week for the necessary costings to be worked out and submitted. Even the normally moderate UCET Annual Report commented on the process as a whole that *"real problems have been caused by the speed by which it was supposed to be put into effect and the generally disorganised way in which it has been imposed"* (UCET, 1992).

In the event, the proposals for school-based training activity were scaled down from the original four-fifths to two-thirds - not far off the already established pattern of the Sussex and Oxford courses. The requirement for 24 weeks in school was also applied to two and three year secondary undergraduate courses; part-time PGCE courses had to allow 18 weeks, and four-year undergraduate courses 32 weeks. The necessary changes had to come into effect not later than 1st September 1994 - another significant modification of the earlier demand. At the same time, the system which CATE was instructed to operate was substantially altered. the local committees were disbanded: instead institutions were to be accredited in respect of all their courses every five years, on the basis of a development plan and full inspection. Under new terms of reference, and with in part a new membership, CATE had to advise the Secretary of State on whether or not institutions should be accredited; to *"identify and disseminate good practice"*; to keep the criteria under review and adviser on possible changes to them; and *"to advise the Secretary of State as requested on other matters relating to ITT"*.

The criteria themselves were completely rewritten, a number of them in the currently fashionable form of 'competency' statements. In the preamble to Circular No. 9/92 (DES 1992) which set out the new arrangements, it was noted that *"primary phase courses ... are currently under review"*. Their turn for massive disruption is expected to come early in 1993. It is also notewrothy that the only specific reference to the role of higher education institutions ascribes them an administrative rather than a pedagogic function: they are designated as *"responsible for ensuring that courses meet the requirements for academic validation, presenting courses for accreditation, awarding qualifications to successful students, and arranging student placements in more than one school"*. By implication, they are not actually expected to teach students anything during the 40 days in which they are not in one 'partner school' or another.

It remains to be seen how the new arrangements develop, as institutions make the substantial transition involved for many of them to predominantly school-based courses. Only a handful of teacher training departments are expected to begin new-style provision in the 1992/93 academic year, but many more will be gearing themselves for this change in 1993, while the remainder - if they are to survive - will have to fall in line the year after. Meanwhile, two observations on the present situation can be made with some confidence, the first concerning the recent past and the second the short to medium term future.

On the first, the government and its agents - the Higher Education Funding Council and the Department of Education and Science (now renamed, somewhat misleadingly in view of its record, the Department for Education) - have managed the events between January and June 1992 with a degree of ineptitude bordering on the spectacular. If a teacher training institution had shown anything approaching the same capacity to mishandle its affairs, it would certainly have been closed down without the option of an appeal. It seems clear, however, that in contemporary politics, the buck does not stop with the Minister, but is instead passed neatly back down the line. Demands for accountability are not taken to apply to Westminster and Whitehall.

On the second point, those who campaigned so strenuously to replace teacher education with teacher apprenticeship saw, under Kenneth Clarke's generally unloved leadership, their prize almost within their grasp. Although they must have felt some degree of frustration and disappointment at the turn events have subsequently taken, it should not be assumed that they have given up the struggle. Their campaign has never been one that paid needless or inconvenient attention to the facts, and it will doubtless be possible to convince their political masters in due course that things have not yet gone far enough. The longer the present administration survives, the greater the prospect of continuing future reform. UK-watchers should keep any eye open for yet another new dawn.

REFERENCES

Advisory Committee on the Supply and Training of Teachers. (1978). Report of the Working Group on the B.Ed. Mimeo.

Board of Education. (1944). *Teachers and Youth Leaders.* The McNair Report. HMSO.

Committee on Higher Education. (1963). *Higher Education.* The Robbins Report. HMSO.

Department of Education and Science. (1972). *Teacher Education and Training.* The James Report. HMSO.

Department of Education and Science. (1972). *Education: A Framework for Expansion.* HMSO.

Department of Education and Science. (1977). *Education in Schools. HMSO.*

Department of Education and Science. (1983). *Teaching Quality.* HMSO.

Department of Education and Science. (1983). *Teaching in Schools: The Content of Initial Training.* HMSO.

Department of Education and Science. (1984). *Initial Teacher Training: Approval of Courses.* Circular No. 3/84. DES.

Department of Education and Science. (1992). *Initial Teacher Training (Secondary Phase).* Circular No. 9/92. DES.

Gosden, P.H.J.H. (1989). Teaching quality and the accreditation of initial teacher-in training courses. In McClelland, V.A. and Varma, V.P. (Eds.). *Advances in Teacher Education.* Routledge.

Hirst, P. (1966). Educational theory. In Tibble, J.W. (Ed.). *The Study of Education.* Routledge.

HMI Inspectorate. (1982). *The New Teacher in School.* HMSO.

Macintyre, G. (1991). *Accreditation of Teacher Education.* Falmer.

Ministry of Education. (1949). *Education in 1949.* HMSO.

Ministry of Education. (1962). *The Future Pattern of the Education and Training of Teachers.* Eighth Report of the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers. HMSO.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner.* Temple Smith.

Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner.* Jossey-Bass.

Universities Council for the Education of Teachers. (1979). *The PGCE Course and the Training of Specialist Teachers for Secondary Schools.* UCET.

Universities Council for the Education of Teachers. (Summer, 1992). Annual Report No. 24. UCET.