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## **Australian Teacher Education Policy in Action: The Case of Pre-service Internships.**

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*Abstract: Studies on internships within initial teacher education have existed in literature since the early 1900s, they have espoused the benefits of experiential learning or critiqued the variance available in terms of structure, length of time and purpose. However, little research on teacher internships has been reported within a policy context. This study employs a modified 'policy trajectory' framework to capture the impact of teacher internship models emerging from policy reform in Australia driven by the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality Program (NPTQ). It highlights how policy contexts and practices are inextricably interconnected and influenced by key policy 'threads' related to people, philosophy, place, processes and power (5Ps). Significant benefits of internships are revealed. Variations in resourcing, influence and local conditions evidence enactment of NPTQ resulted in uneven and potentially inequitable outcomes. The authors call for more research, transparency and enhanced accountability for government investment for internships.*

### **Introduction: Improving Quality Teaching in Australia**

Teacher internship models have been employed in many countries to better prepare and enhance the quality of graduate teachers in the workforce. This study reveals policy processes in action within a national quality improvement agenda that led to the re-energisation of teacher internship models between 2009-2015. The paper employs a modified 'policy trajectory' framework to analyse the *National Partnerships Agreement on Improving Quality Teaching* (NPTQ) policy reform that led to the re-emergence of Australian teacher internship models. The study positions internships nationally driven by the NPTQ within a larger wave of international educational reform, particular influential educators and global trends.

Internships have been part of teacher preparation around the globe since the early 1900s (Darling-Hammond, 2012), they range from short to long term, unpaid to paid, non-assessed to assessed, non-mentored to mentored, technical to professional and have been described as having 'multiple faces' (Mayer, et al, 2004). However, despite their differences, internships tend to operate from the singular premise that experiential learning supports transition into the profession and increased graduate work readiness. From an epistemological point of view, the value of experience as a tool in the creation of knowledge was seen as early as Aristotle in the 4th century. In the early 1900s pragmatists' such as Dewey, Piaget and Lewin espoused the benefits of experiential learning, their theories and approaches are still reflected in the form of placements and practicums currently embedded in

initial teacher education (ITE) program designs. For the purpose of this study, the construct of *Internship* refers to a co-teaching experience between a pre-service teacher/intern under the tutelage of a teaching mentor for an extended period of time within the final year of an initial teacher education program (Broadley et al., 2012).

Variances in internship models are typically contextual, rely on partnerships and are influenced by local, state and nationally driven policy reform. In Australia, the legal responsibility for schooling, including the preparation of teachers, lies with the six States and two Territory governments. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum that leads policy reform in Australian education. This group, comprising the Australian Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association, established the *Smarter Schools National Partnership Strategy* in 2008. This significant policy reform targeted the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers within Australia and was designed to “improve teacher and school leader quality to sustain a quality teaching workforce” (COAG, 2008, p.1). The ‘quality teacher’ reform agenda generated a range of policy initiatives that were enacted within States between January 2009 - December 2013 and beyond.

Most education policy research, according to Ball (2012), rarely mentions money. However, in 2009, COAG signed off on over half a billion Australian dollars to support the NPTQ initiative over 5 years (2009-2013). More than \$400 million went direct to States and Territories, facilitated through a diverse range of policy agreements. These payments rewarded jurisdictions that delivered significant reform. The process was developed to increase transparency of government spending in this area (Council of Federal Financial Relations, 2015), yet some questions about decisions made during this time remain unanswered, including the perceived preferential treatment of the Teach for Australia model of internships (Ledger et al., 2014). Distribution of NPTQ funding was based on each State’s share of the national full-time equivalent of teachers. Table 1 indicates the distribution of funds by State over the five-year period NPTQ operated and points to a degree of inequity in resource distribution across the States.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2008-9</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
New South Wales	2	4	11	69	56
Victoria	2	3	9	55	44
Queensland	1	3	7	43	35
Western Australia	1	1	3	22	18
South Australia	0	1	2	16	13
Tasmania	0	0	1	5	4
Australian Capital Territory	0	0	1	4	3
Northern Territory	0	0	0	3	2
<b>Total in \$million</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>175</b>

**Table 1: Notional State and Territory National Partnership funding by financial year (adapted from NPQT Government Report, 2013, p.9)**

It is within this NPTQ policy context that new forms of teaching internships, extended placements and immersion programs emerged to provide a high-quality teaching workforce for the nation (Tindall-Ford, Ledger, Williams, Ambrosetti, 2017). Internships form the ‘case’ of preservice teacher education under investigation. This paper analyses how policy processes played out, particularly relating to how pre-service teacher internships were conceptualized and enacted across the States. The remainder of the paper progresses through five distinct sections specific to the policy processes and products embedded in the national initiative. First, teacher internships are described and positioned within global initial teacher education reform. Second, a conceptual framework for policy analysis is introduced. Findings

are presented according to a modified ‘policy trajectory’ framework: policy influences, policy texts, policy practices/effects and longer term policy outcomes (Ball, 1994, 2012; Vidovich 2012). Third, a discussion is presented focusing on key policy ‘threads’ related to people, place, philosophy, processes and power referred to as the ‘5 Ps’ (Ledger, Vidovich & O’Donoghue, 2015). Finally, a brief conclusion synthesizes the findings and offers suggestions for future analysis.

### **Teacher Internships: Background**

Teacher internships are not a new concept, they have been alternative options embedded in initial teacher education (ITE) programs since the early 1900s, yet there is little empirical evidence about how successful they are (Broadley & Ledger, 2012; Dinham, 2012; Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 2004; Mayer, et al., 2004; Ure, 2009). Historically, internships have been mentioned in educational literature since the early 1930s when Harvard University implemented graduate level MA Teaching programs with extended clinical internships (see Darling-Hammond, 2012). In 1948, the *Journal of Education Research* stated “much interest has been expressed in some sort of internship for teachers” (Bishop, 1948, p. 678). The United States and the United Kingdom contributed to the development of a range of internship models during this time. By the 1960s, internship models reflecting the *Elementary Internship Program* from Michigan State University were evident in Australia (Conroy et al 2013). This was followed by a wave of internship programs influenced by overseas models re-appearing between the 1980s and 1990s (Chadborne, 1995; Goody, 2001; Grant, 1993). Ongoing policy changes have impacted the use of internships within initial teacher education programs and as such its popularity has risen and fallen over the century. Yet, relatively limited research on their effectiveness or comparability between the variations has been presented, including analysis of the policy processes that drive them (Mayer, Apsland & Thompson, 2004; Le Cornu, 2015).

In Australia, major reports over the last five decades reveal a constant call to improve the quality of teachers, with the most recent being the *Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report* (2015). Internships are presented as one response to these calls. An overview of literature on internships or extended placements reveal a variety of foci: professional credentials and internships (Ingvarson, 1995); internships within a ‘Master of Teaching’ program (Hatton, 1996); reports on partnerships involved in rural teacher internships (Yarrow, Ballantyne, Hansford, Herschell, & Millwater, 1999); the use of technologies to support extended practicums (Rousmanier & Renfro-Michel, 2016); the role of school based coordinators (Dinham, 2012); rethinking the connection between universities and schools (Zeichner, 2010); and the multiple faces of internships in Queensland (Mayer et al., 2004).

Global to local reviews of the strengths and weaknesses of teacher internships are also evident in literature: Darling-Hammond (2010) reviewed a range of professional experience programs including internships; Ure, Gough and Newton (2009) overviewed practicum partnerships involving internships within Australia; and Hall (2013) was contracted to assess extended clinical experiences in Western Australian (WA). Research specific to one or more internship models or programs has emerged recently: Foxall (2014) presented a case study of a WA internship model; Harrington (2013) reviewed the NSW *Enhanced Teacher Training* scholarship program for teaching in indigenous schools; McConney and Price (2012) reviewed the *Teach for All* models in New Zealand; McLean, Dickson, Rickards, Dinham, Conroy and Davis (2015) reviewed clinical models of internships; and Broadley, Ledger and Sharplin (2013) analysed the effectiveness of the WA Combined University Training School

project (WACUTS). Le Cornu's (2015) review of current placement practices commissioned by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) highlights the effectiveness of internships in her future recommendations for effective professional experience based on a range of qualitative, anecdotal and survey responses. White, Tindall-Ford, Heck and Ledger (2017) explored the partnership relationships afforded when conducting internships.

In Australia, whilst literature on extended practicums and internships is increasing, (Broadley, Ledger & Sharplin, 2013; Conroy, et al., 2015; Dinham, 2012; Foxall, 2014; Hall, 2014; Jervis-Tracey & Finger, 2016; Scandlers et al., 2014; White et al., 2017), there are surprisingly few systematic reviews or policy analyses pertaining to teaching internships, or even a common understanding of the term 'internship'. The recent *Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study* (LTEWS) defined internships as a "near independent teaching experience towards the end of a teacher education program" (Mayer et al., 2013 p. 182). Yet, clearly there are internships operating around the nation that range in length, structure and purpose, not captured in the study. Professional experience data from *Studying the Effectiveness of Teacher Education* report (SETE, 2015) found that only 8% of graduates were involved in extended placements between 13 and 15 weeks, and the majority completed internships of only 4-6 weeks (63%), with no reference to internships beyond 15 weeks, even though they exist.

Although not fully defined, captured or researched, internships are valued by many in the profession (see Foxall, 2014; SETE, 2015). The results from SETE respondents included a cohort of principals who perceived interns to be far more prepared than those who did not complete an internship. However, as Mayer et al. (2015, p.423) suggest "this should be treated with caution due to the variation in duration and supervision of internships across teacher education programs". The *Multiple Faces of Internships Report* (Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 2004) noted that many internships "were designed on a selective or elective basis" (p.4), thus raising the question of equity and/or access.

Current research attempts to collect data on professional experience models, such as SETE, require further adjustments in order to capture and define the full scope of internships operating in Australian initial teacher education programs. Many programs are going unnoticed whilst more visible programs such as the *Teach for Australia* (TFA) model continue to gain attention and traction, using media to promote their product; arguably a visually appealing website and well-advertised television series, capturing the attention of the general public and also politicians.

Finally, given the variability surrounding internships and for the purposes of this paper, an *internship* refers to any co-teaching experience where a pre-service teacher or intern is placed under the tutelage of a teaching mentor for an extended period of time within the final year of an initial teacher education program. The range of internships under investigation in this study focus on those that successfully tendered for NPTQ-commissioned State level government funding between 2009 and 2013 and two years' post NPTQ funding.

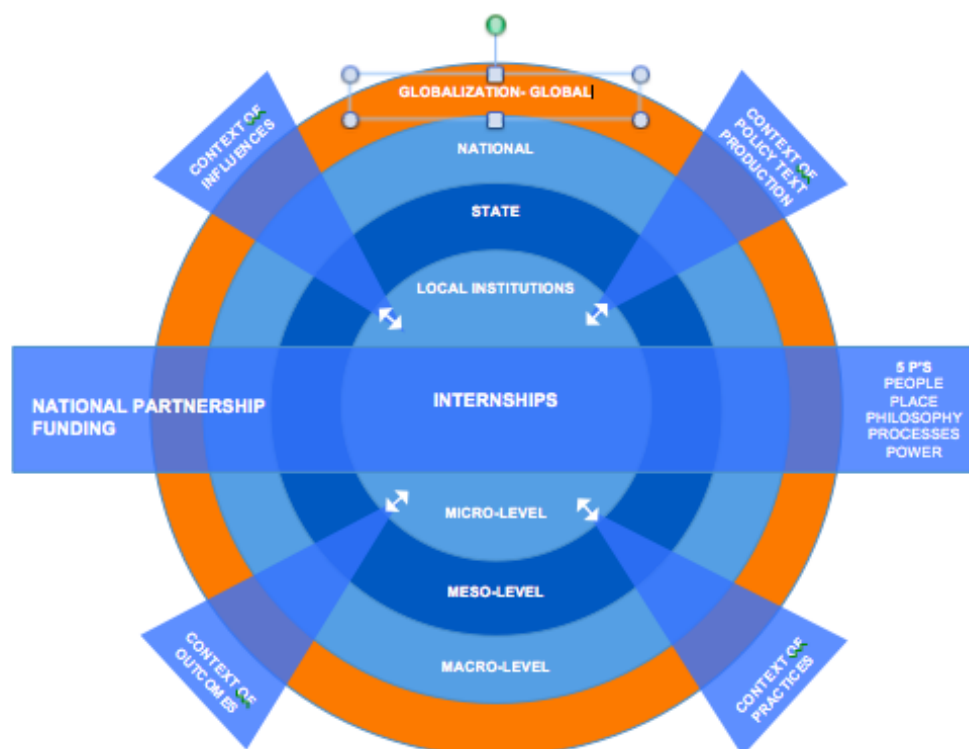
## **The Conceptual Framework and Methods**

This qualitative research is framed as a policy analysis study. It highlights the struggles between policy actors throughout the policy processes involved in teacher internships in Australian settings in the period 2009 to 2013, inclusive of two-years post NPTQ funding in order to capture the outcomes of the project. In particular, it interrogates how the NPTQ policy and associated internship programs played out across the States. On this, it recognizes the importance of localized contexts in the enactment of education policy

(Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011) and the importance of partnerships within policy enactment (White, et al., 2017).

A policy trajectory approach originally conceived by Ball (1994, 2012), and further developed by others including Vidovich (2007, 2013), outlined five “contexts” of the policy process: “policy influences”, where key factors trigger a new policy; “policy text production”, the characteristics of policy texts and how they are produced; “policy practices/effects”, policy enactment within institutions which may involve considerable transformation from the original policy intent; “policy outcomes”, the impact of policies on existing social inequities; and “political strategies”, designed to overcome inequalities. In this analysis of teacher internships, the latter two contexts have been conflated under the context of longer term “policy outcomes” as both are related to issues of social justice and power (see Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Vidovich, 2013).

Modifications to Ball’s original policy trajectory by Vidovich (2007, 2013) centre on the addition of “levels” to the analysis due to accelerated globalization where key policy processes are no longer confined within national boundaries. More recently, Ledger, Vidovich and O’Donoghue (2015) presented a multi-dimensional interconnected policy trajectory analysis model as shown in Figure 1. Empirical research by Ledger et al. (2015) identified key enablers and constraints along the policy trajectory and classified them in terms of people, place, philosophy, processes and power (the ‘5Ps’). A visual representation of the framework (Figure 1) guides the analysis of NPTQ policies and practices relating to Australian teacher internships to follow. The framework captures the messiness of policy processes in contrast to more linear, rational policy enactment processes and highlights the interconnectivity of processes across levels, contexts and the ‘5Ps’.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework employed in this policy analysis (adapted from Ledger, Vidovich & O’Donoghue, 2015, p. 701).**

The following research questions, derived from the four contexts embedded in the conceptualization of policy trajectory analysis framing this study (Figure 1), were used to

explore internships in Australia stemming from the NPTQ policy initiative (2009-2013) and two years' post:

1. What are the global to local *influences* impacting the adoption of teacher internships in Australia?
2. What are the key Australian *policy texts* relating to teacher internships?
3. What are the commonalities and differences in the *policy practices/effects* (or enactment) across different internships?
4. What are the power inequities and social justice *outcomes* of teacher internships?

The research questions above guide the analysis that follows. The process of analysis is based on Kitchenham and Charter's (2007) six step process for conducting systematic reviews: 1. identify the purpose of the review and research questions, 2. conduct a literature search to identify range and scope, 3. screen for inclusion, 4. assess quality, 5. extract data, 6. analyse and synthesise data. The method consists of three phases outlined and elaborated on below **Phase One**. Steps 1-4 (Kitchenham & Charter, 2007) framed the contextual background, identified the context and guided the analysis.

1. **The purpose** of the study and research questions are clearly defined in relation to a policy trajectory analysis of NPTQ-related policy processes in Australia.
2. **A literature search** involving the identification of key policy documents associated with the NPTQ policy reform, along with subsidiary policy ensembles including State and institutional (e.g. university faculties of Education) policy responses to the NPTQ initiative was conducted using common educational databases including ERIC, Proquest and Google scholar. Documentary searches were also conducted of government and NPTQ annual reports, conferences and publications using the terms *national partnership funding, teacher quality, internships* and *extended placements*. Furthermore, a review of literature focused on: teacher internship models – international, national and state; initial teacher education practicums; and policy trajectory analysis.
3. **Screening for inclusions and exclusions** was conducted, based on chosen time frames and types of documents. The identification of the specific time period of the NPTQ implementation (2009-2013) and two years' post NPTQ funding was used to capture the policy processes and outcomes after program implementation. Peer-reviewed journals, government reports and State-based policy texts were included in the study whilst initial teacher education programs were excluded.
4. **Quality** was assessed based on the inclusions above and clear definitions of core understandings embedded in the study, including the terms internships, experiential learning, extended placements, initial teacher education and graduates being classroom ready. Quality also involved rigour, relevance and methodological coherence of the six interconnected steps (Pare et al., 2015).

**Phase Two**. Steps 5-6 (Kitchenham & Charter, 2007), employs a policy trajectory analysis model presented by the authors in Fig. 1 to reveal the policy processes involved in implementing the NPTQ, namely policy influences, policy text production, policy practices and outcomes

5. **Extracting Data**. Data was extracted according to various policy contexts, levels and outcomes. The levels extended between international, national, State and local policy arenas, with the latter being the specific internship programs developed in response to the NPTQ policy and funding. Data was also extracted based on key policy threads, historical timeline, sequence of events, internship types and financial components.
6. **Analysing and synthesising data**. The data analysis involved analyzing relevant policy documents and internship programs in terms of the research questions derived from the 'policy trajectory' framework (Ball, 1994, 2012; Vidovich, 2013):

influences, policy texts, practices/effects and longer outcomes as outlined in Figure 1. The first layer of analysis identified key enablers and constraints along the NPTQ policy trajectories across the States and institutions. The second layer was a synthesis of the findings informing the discussion section in terms of five key policy threads, known as the 5Ps, (Ledger, 2017): people, place, philosophy, processes and power. This approach rejects a linear conceptualization of policy but rather highlights dynamic interrelationships, interconnectivity, and ‘messiness’ throughout the processes of policy production and enactment. Viewing the findings through the additional lens of ‘5P’ adds another layer to the policy analysis and reveals who, where, what, how, why, as well as the power inequities inherent in the NPTQ policy processes.

**Phase Three.** The final phase was a synthesis of the findings and recommendations to emerge from the analysis. It makes reference to financial dimensions of NPTQ policy in response to Ball’s (2012) concern that money is rarely mentioned in education policy discussions.

## Findings

The findings that follow are presented in four sections paralleling the research questions derived from the ‘policy trajectory’ framework. However, it is important to highlight that the teacher internship policy processes are closely interconnected across contexts, levels and the ‘5Ps’ as outlined in Fig. 1.

### Research Question 1: Context of Influences

The NPTQ policy reform and subsequent resurgence of teacher internships in initial teacher education programs in Australia were influenced by a complex combination of global/international, national and State factors, including ‘5Ps’; people, places, philosophies, processes and power (Ledger, et al., 2015).

*Global/international Influences.* The teaching profession remains, as Furlong (2014, p.182) suggests, “at the epicentre of global policy”. Over the years, national level policy changes around the globe have been influenced by international education movements, initiatives and ongoing trials. The current market-based global education reform movement described by Sahlberg (2014) as the *Global Education Reform Movement (GERM)*, pushes for quality assurance and standardization of education systems around the world based on a business model that encourages competition, tests and reward for performance. Sahlberg points to an accelerating climate of testing regimes and competition within teacher education as threatening to the teaching profession. The role of universities in initial teacher education is challenged within this context, with alternative programs moving from the realm of university-directed courses towards more school-based teacher education approaches. In many countries, an increasing volume of internships or extended experiences in schools have been promoted and trialed including: Scotland’s ‘Clinical’ models; the United Kingdom’s ‘School Direct’, ‘Graduate Teacher Program’, ‘Oxford Internship Scheme’, ‘School Based Initial Teacher Training’ and more recent ‘University Training Schools’; the United States’ ‘Professional Development School’, ‘Boston Teacher Residency’, ‘St Cloud State Co-teaching’, ‘Urban Teacher Residency’ and ‘Teach for All’ models; as well as borrowed versions of the ‘Professional Development Schools’ model in Australia and New Zealand (Grudnoff & Williams, 2010). Clinical practice and extended placements are embedded



within many of these internship programs (McLean et al., 2015) and have been influential in the design of many Australian internship programs (Foxall, 2014).

The global push for 'clinical' models in initial teacher education sees a re-emergence of clinical terminology infiltrating current literature within the profession, for example: *A 'Clinical' Model for Teacher Education* (Conroy, Hume & Menter, 2013); *Teaching as a Clinical Profession: Translational Practices in Initial Teacher Education – an International Perspective* (McLean et al., 2015); *Transforming Teacher Education through Clinical Practice* (NCATE, 2010); *Towards Research Based Clinical Practice in Teacher Education* (Menter, 2015); and *Demystifying Clinical Practice in Teacher Preparation* (Robinson, 2015). In 2012, James Conroy from Scotland presented the *Glasgow Clinical Model of Teaching* as an exemplar of good practice to an audience of Australian policy makers and educators which linked into the Australian national policy and practice agenda. However, there are growing concerns for the limitations of 'clinical' approaches and calls for further research in the area (Broadley et al., 2013).

**National Influences.** Australia witnessed a suite of education policy reforms over the last decade triggered by the influence of international comparative standardized tests, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's *Program for International Student Assessment* (PISA) and *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* (PIRLS). Australia's international comparative positioning in PISA was beginning to decline in 2008, the Council of Australian Governments released the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality*, with a strong emphasis on 'improvement'. The 2008 COAG agreement stated that:

*The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership aims to deliver system-wide reforms targeting critical points in the teacher 'lifecycle' to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in our schools and classrooms. (COAG, 2008, p. 4)*

After this time, the NPTQ policy became the change agent for national reform in teacher education in Australia. The States were provided with funding to manage and implement related policy.

**State Influences.** State governments have been under intense pressure during the last decade of accelerating education policy reforms in Australia. The *National Assessment Program* (NAPLAN) initiated in 2008 highlighted differences in student performance in literacy and numeracy testing across the States (Lingard et al., 2016). In addition, States were grappling with how to implement a new national curriculum and reforms to the teacher registration process. State governments, under the auspices of the NPTQ policy, called for tenders from providers of initial teacher education programs to address teacher quality. It was during this call many internship models appeared. However, the localized contexts and key policy threads related to specific teacher training institutions and programs influenced how these initiatives were constructed and enacted.

In summary, many Australian initiatives within initial teacher education programs reflected global movements and trials including business attributes inherent in GERM, testing, accountability, competition, clinical models, and school based programs. A combination of these factors played a significant role in influencing the policy texts produced during NPTQ policy processes in 2009-2013 and thereafter.

## Research Question 2: Context of Policy Text Production

Significant policy texts relevant to teacher internships in Australia established between 2009 and 2013 were characterized by a quality assurance and standards driven discourse. COAG (2008) established policies to address: improving teacher quality; education in low socio-economic status school communities; and literacy and numeracy. This series of government initiatives known collectively as *Smarter Schools National Partnerships*, were managed by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Work Relations. The policies contributed to reform targets outlined in the NPTQ policy. In addition, the NPTQ was constructed to address the participation and productivity agenda, the *National Education Agreement* and the *National Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians* (COAG, 2008). On analysis, the discourse within this ensemble - focusing on quality, improvement and evidence-based education - parallel US initiatives, nomenclature and policies (Ledger, 2015).

The NPTQ Agreement provided a multi-lateral framework for improving teacher quality in Australia. The major areas of reform related to: improving the quality of principals to better lead schools and improve the performance level of students; attraction, retention and rewarding of quality teachers from a diverse range of backgrounds and pathways; national professional standards and consistency in pre-service teacher education programs; national consistency in registering and tracking graduate teachers; and national mapping of performance management and continuous improvement of schools (COAG, 2008). The NPTQ investment contributed to the following group of closely related policy texts and practices spanning all phases of education:

- a. Development of the Teaching Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG).
- b. Emergence of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).
- c. Frameworks to guide professional learning for school leaders and teachers: *AITSL Professional Standards for Principals* and *Professional Standards for Teachers*.
- d. Recognition and reward programs for quality teaching.
- e. National accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses: *AITSL Professional Standards for ITE programs*.
- f. State-based Teacher registration boards.
- g. National accreditation/certification of *Accomplished and Leading Teachers*.
- h. Improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce.
- i. Joint engagement with higher education to provide improved pre-service teacher education; new pathways into teaching; and data collection to inform continuing reform action and workforce planning.
- j. Improved performance management in schools for teachers and school leaders.
- k. Enhanced school-based teacher quality reforms.
- l. *National Quality Framework for Higher Education* (NQF).
- m. *The Australian Children's Education and Care Authority* (ACECQA).

In summary, the suite of policy texts related to NPTQ reforms, outlined above, direct current and future teacher education transformation in Australia. These are positioned within and reflect the current *GERM* push underpinned by accountability, competition and testing regimes. Gore (2016) highlights the need for this rigorous approach involving data collection, analysis and strong statistical support but cautions us to question, reconcile and embrace different approaches. But in so doing, she also argues that “we must reconcile differences among educational research traditions if we are to strengthen the field and make a more profound impact on schooling” (p. 368).

### Research Question 3: Context of Practices (enactment of NPTQ)

Although there are differences across the States in how NPTQ policy was enacted, each program that emerged addressed workforce readiness of pre-service teachers, quality placements in schools, and professional development of teachers and principals. States and Territories established decision-making groups to provide recommendations to State Governments on how to enact the NPTQ. Queensland used its existing *College of Teachers* to guide reform. South Australia established a *Teacher Education Task Force* comprising representatives from all universities and each of the schooling sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent). The Australian Capital Territory established a similar collective group entitled *Teacher Education Committee* and, like other States, they also established *School Centres of Excellence*. The focus of many reforms rested on quality placements for pre-service teachers and a focus on professional development for school leaders.

One of the initiatives emerging from the NPTQ reform was a series of teacher internships, immersion programs and school based initiatives offered across the States (Tindall-Ford, Ledger, Williams, Ambrosetti, 2017). Examples of programs offered include: the *West Australian Combined Universities Training School Program* (WACUTS) which continued as *Murdoch Internship Models* post NPTQ; Melbourne University's *Clinical Model* and the *Teach for Australia* (TFA), although it is currently managed through Deakin University(2015-18); LaTrobe's *Teaching Schools Model*; Edith Cowan University's (ECU) *Teacher Residency Program* currently in hiatus; the Catholic University of Australia's *Learning in Schools Initiative*; the New South Wales program *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* internships; and the *National Exceptional Teachers for Disadvantaged Schools* developed at Queensland University of Technology, now operating in three States; and the University of Southern Queensland's rural internships. Each of the internships investigated in this study, revealed commonalities and differences in regard to: key stakeholders; the selection, placement and assessment of interns; and the nature of partnerships. Features embedded in NPTQ policy enactment practices are briefly outlined below.

**Key Stakeholders.** Internships rely on the interconnectivity and contribution of key stakeholders from universities, schools and peak sectoral bodies. Kemmis et al. (2014) refer to these external elements as 'practice architectures'. Each stakeholder, and the relationships between them, contribute in different ways to an ongoing and evolving integrated community of practice considered essential for the success of the programs. However, as previous studies show, there are inbuilt points of contestation and vulnerability for different stakeholder groups. Grossman (2010) highlights the relationship between the intern and mentors as the most vulnerable element within the internship model. The nomenclature used to describe five key stakeholders differed slightly across the programs however – preservice teachers, mentors, school coordinators, university coordinators and sector personnel and their equivalents were considered essential drivers of the reform.

**Selection Processes.** A range of selection processes identified suitable interns, mentors and school learning environments. In most cases interns were selected on their academic standing and disposition towards teaching or what Darling-Hammond (2012) calls the two dimensions of teaching: 'intellectual professional' and 'pedagogical disposition'. Different cohorts of students were targeted across programs. For example, WACUTS targeted final year Bachelor of Education primary and secondary students, whilst the Clinical Model, Residency Model and Teach for Australia targeted Graduate Diploma or Master of Teaching Secondary cohorts and Central Queensland University targeted candidates for rural contexts in their Master of Learning Management program.

**Placement.** A range of internships were organized around a school calendar year causing some implementation challenges to traditional university calendar years. In some

cases, interns were placed in schools at the end of the previous year so that they could get to know the context and spend time during the holidays in preparation (WACUTS & TFA). Most placements, including Monash's Advanced Placement were a combination of distributed and block placements. The majority combined short and long term block placements with distributed days in schools, one day a week (Residency), two days a week (WACUTS), and five days a week (TFA). Over the year, the amount of time in each school differed across the programs; the shorter placements were typically scheduled in the final semester of study. Of the 12 month programs, the Residency model had a minimum of 60 days across two school sites; WACUTS no less than 140 days; and TFA as well as Melbourne's Clinical Model involved up to 200 days, with time assigned in both school and university contexts. However, the TFA model did not incorporate an in-class mentor, responsibility rested on the intern and external supervisor.

**Assessment.** A range of feedback strategies were embedded within internships, including feedback loops, self-regulation and formative feedback aligned to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* [Graduate level], (AITSL, 2011). Professional Portfolios were a common assessment tool across the Australian internships. WACUTS interns provided weekly reflections against the AITSL Standards, identified a 'Critical Learning Incident' and contributed to an online community of practice for discussion and reflection (Tripp, 1993). The Residency, WACUTS and TFA conducted face-to-face reviews each week. All programs employed site-based support for interns, in addition to the mentors for external feedback and moderation. Some programs, including the Australian Catholic University model, trialed the soon-to-be implemented teacher performance assessment model (TPA).

**Partnerships.** Significant strengthening of what Fullan (2009) refers to as 'tri level partnerships' between schools, universities and peak sectorial bodies occurred during NPTQ enactment. Grudnoff and Williams (2010) suggest that these partnerships are more evident in extended practicums and are of benefit to the profession. This systems-based partnership resonates with comments by the TEMAG Chair (Craven, 2015, p.4) who supports "integrated delivery of initial teacher education". Although not a new concept to the policy arena, the fact that it is embedded in AITSL *Initial Teacher Education Program Standards* (2015) implies compliance rather than an ideal.

In summary, variance exist in time, structure and purpose across internship practices in initial teacher education (ITE). Australia targets key stakeholders, selection processes, placement options, assessment methods and partnerships in an attempt to improve practices as mandated by ITE accreditation standards and professional standards for teachers. However, these elements, although essential to ITE reform, continue to reflect compliance-based models inherent in 'GERM' reforms across the globe.

#### **Research Question 4: Context of Outcomes**

Outcomes of the NPTQ need to be considered in a longer time frame, but a key issue is the degree to which the intended outcomes of teacher internships were achieved. As an outcome of meeting the original remit of the NPTQ policy, reward funding was offered to the States (COAG, 2008). Many internship programs continued for an additional year after the original five-year time period (2009-2013) because of this additional funding. By 2015, most short-term programs continued, but only a few of the long term (12 month) internships remained. Some internship programs re-emerged as re-invented versions of the NTQP models during this latter time period responding to State workforce planning directives and alternative funding opportunities. In WA, the WACUTS – NPTQ program was renamed as

Murdoch Internship Model (K-12) and the State invested in secondary Science, Technology, Engineering and Math internships. Similarly, the *New South Wales Great Teaching, Inspired Learning Internships* continued and highlights the investment NSW offered to attract people into the teaching profession, including entry scholarships; indigenous, rural and remote cadetships; and internships with guaranteed funding and permanent teaching jobs on graduation. In Victoria, State money was provided to Melbourne University's clinical model as well as Victoria's school leadership initiative which is trialing internships of up to 60 days in schools for aspiring leaders. Monash's long standing internship model from the 1990s (Dyson, 2010) continues in the form of an Advanced Placement immersion program. Queensland continues to offer a variety of programs; it has online coaching modules and a preferred pedagogical framework as key policy initiatives in schools, including the immersion programs designed to improve teacher quality and rural student achievement. For example, the Bachelor of Learning Management at Central Queensland University is designed to target the needs of regional schools by offering 87 days in schools for final year preservice teachers.

Inequalities were highlighted during the enactment phase of the NPTQ policy reform. Some programs and universities were privileged over others, including Melbourne University's Clinical Model and the Teach for Australia model, with both securing further financial support from Australian and State governments as well as philanthropic organisations. Programs such as the Murdoch Internship Model, Monash and Griffith models became self-funded, sustainable programs. The *Teach for Australia* (TFA) franchise, originally partnered with Melbourne University's Graduate School of Education received \$8 million worth of Federal Labor government funding during 2009-14. The Federal Coalition Government increased their investment in the TFA adding \$22 million in 2015. The Victorian Government, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory Education systems offer additional support to TFA. Western Australia recently developed a partnership with Shell Australia to support TFA expansion and offers it as the preferred internship model within its State education policy document *Focus 2018*.

Although the Australian Council for Education Research and Assessment recently evaluated TFA and suggested that it is an effective program to attract candidates into the workforce, the program continues to raise concerns for some about the retention of candidates and their outcomes. The ex-Deputy Chair of AISTL, Bill Loudon, in the *Conversation* (Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014), described TFA as a "very small scale and expensive intervention to recruiting high quality graduates to the teaching profession". He cites costs of just under \$AUS 100,000 per graduate compared with an industry average of \$23,000. Arguably, with large government investment in the program, more research and accountability of the TFA franchise is required. Similar concerns have been expressed in the *TFA Program Evaluation Report* conducted by Dandolopartners (2017). The executive summary reveals: TFAs higher unit cost than any other ITE teacher education program; only 50% of TFA graduates are still in the workforce after 3 years; only 30% of TFA graduates are in low socio-economic schools after 2 years; and TFA graduates are fast tracked into leadership roles. The Australian government is the largest funder of TFA, accounting for 75% of funding for each associate investing approximately \$100, 000, 000 to date. TFA is an example of Ball's (2012) concern that "policy itself is now bought and sold, it is a commodity and a profit opportunity... policy work is increasingly being outsourced to profit-making organisations' which bring their skills and discourses to the policy table" (p. 23).

In summary, the planned outcomes of NPTQ centred on increased classroom-readiness of interns, professional learning within the schools and graduates who addressed workforce planning shortages. Unplanned outcomes related to increased preference for interns in the workforce and the development of strengthened communication channels

between universities, schools and education sectors specifically targeting State level workforce-planning imperatives (Foxall, 2014). Strong integrated partnerships have allowed sustainability of internship programs post NPTQ funding (White, et al., 2017) and empirical data is now mounting that highlight the classroom readiness of cohorts graduating from internship programs (Broadley et al., 2013; Foxall, 2014; Ledger & Durrant, 2015; WA Department of Education Principal Survey).

## Discussion

The Australian Government's desire to improve the quality of teaching and initial teacher education programs has led to an environment of rapid change attempting to counter "reputational negativity" of the profession (Bahr & Mellor, 2016). Over a period of five years (2009-2013) it provided the States with a blueprint for reform and directed AUS\$550 million Australian dollars to support its implementation (see Table 1). However, only limited evaluation of the program has taken place. The conceptual framework of a policy trajectory adopted for this analysis identified five core policy threads embedded within NPTQ policy processes. Ledger et al's (2015) '5Ps'; people, philosophy, place, processes and power are used here to synthesise the findings and reveal both enablers and constraints identified in the production and enactment of teacher internships resulting from the Australian Government policy reform.

**People.** Influential individuals and groups have been instrumental in the production and enactment of the Australian NPTQ policy process, including leaders from schools, universities, education sectors and emerging national systems for accreditation, professional standards, curriculum and assessment. A review of literature reveals global and Australian policy elite influencing policy reform in initial teacher education and the quality teacher movement. These include, amongst others, Linda Darling-Hammond (US); Andrew Hargreaves & Michael Fullen (UK); and John Hattie, Stephen Dinham, Stephen Kemmis, Tony Mackay, Bill Loudon, Diane Mayer, Geoff Masters and Barry McGaw (Australia). These influential educators have become powerful voices impacting initial teacher education policies and in turn, the teaching profession in Australia.

Deans of Education have provided opportunities for creative solutions to address classroom readiness and high quality graduates with many universities advocates of internships, extended practicums and immersion. The Federal Coalition Government, through the Minister for Education, has also been influential supporting the *Teach for Australia* model over local internship models, almost trebling government investment in the program from \$8 million in 2008 to \$22 million in 2015 totaling \$100 000 000 over the last decade. It could be argued that the current wave of internships was pragmatically driven by a small band of university personnel responding to NPTQ funding opportunities with some more influential and privileged than others.

**Place.** The importance of 'context and setting' was highlighted in the findings. Place-based history, geography, culture, economic and workforce planning issues impacted structure, time and purpose of internships. Internships specific to 'hard-to-staff', remote schools, English as a second language students, multi-age groupings and variations in school and university settings and technologies are significant in determining the way policies play out at the institutional level, confirming that 'place' does matter when implementing policy reform (Bradford, 2004; Braun et al., 2011). The 'place' of an internship could account for why internships in some areas (e.g. rural localities) have been more problematic (Broadley & Ledger, 2012). Although diverse, it is argued that the NPTQ policy reform was predominantly metropolitan centric in regards to internship models.

**Philosophy.** It could be argued that without a shared philosophy it is difficult for all parties to be engaged in reform (Ledger, et al., 2014). The national push for quality teaching reform and desire to be international leaders in education were fundamental drivers behind the NPTQ policy. It brought with it a distinct set of standards and vernacular embedded in Australian educational discourse. Similarly, the internship programs established with NPTQ funding (2009-2013) shared a desire to link theory and practice and develop classroom-ready graduates. Epistemologically, the findings reflect that internship programs typically employ a philosophy that supports acquisition of knowledge over an extended period of time through learning, doing, reasoning and reflecting insitu and in partnership employed through a 'gradual release of responsibility' model (Fischer & Frey, 2008).

**Processes.** The processes involved in enacting NPTQ in Australia revealed parallels to US and UK national reform processes that scrutinize the teaching profession, provide standardized compliance measures and focus on evidence based quality assurance. Curiously, policy texts are not scrutinized as much as the people charged with enacting them. A move to school-based provision of initial teacher education and the re-emergence of internships and clinical practice were revealed. Economic imperatives varied across the States, processes differed; programs, place and people needed to be 'fit for purpose' at the school, systems, State and national level (Broadley & Ledger, 2012).

**Power.** Economic and social imperatives impact on the power inequities and micro-politics involved in educational reform at global to local levels. Significant points of inequity and vulnerability were identified. Imbalances of power existed in relation to financial support at the State level and mentor support at the local school level. The power of discourses related to workforce planning was a key factor impacting policy reform within the States. Media played a powerful role in featuring preferred models and practices, including the *Clinical* and *Teach for Australia* models. Funding also differed between programs with some being well funded whilst others relied on creative solutions for sustainability of programs.

The '5Ps' embedded in the NPTQ reform highlight the interconnectivity and complexity of policy production and enactment in relation to teacher internships. It recognizes that increased international and national policy influences and borrowing have had a powerful impact on policy text production and practices in Australia. However, concerns have been expressed about the appropriateness of this policy borrowing from other countries (Goodwin, 2012; Ledger, 2015) on the grounds that it has the ability to fracture and disrupt local practices (Phillips, 2005) with programs that are not place-appropriate or evidence-based.

## Conclusion

Schools of education within Australian universities have been at the forefront of engagement with the NPTQ policy reform (2009-2013). During this time, there was significant differentiation of programs and practices developed to accommodate the diversified clientele and contexts within Australia. Many programs and policies were borrowed or adopted from other countries and these were reflected in the policy texts and practices produced. However, little evidence of impact and return for investment has been forthcoming from government or research findings. This paper goes some way towards providing an overview of influences, policy texts, enactment and outcomes of the variety of internship programs in Australia within the last decade. The analysis highlights the key policy threads of people, philosophy, place, processes and power, referred to as the '5Ps', (Ledger, et al., 2015) and recognizes both enablers and constraints associated with internship programs post NPTQ funding.

Interest in professional experience and internships within the sector continues. The Australian Council of Deans of Education established an inaugural national forum of *Academic Directors of Professional Experience* (2016); the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership recently released a discussion paper on *Successful Professional Experience Practices* highlighting the effectiveness of internships (Le Cornu, 2015); and Bahr & Mellor (2016) presented a comprehensive review for the Australian Council for Education Research on teacher quality in Australia. The term 'internship' is increasingly referenced in major education reports, discussions, and graduate and principal surveys taking place across Australia (Mayer et al., 2014). According to Foxall (2014), teaching internships in all of their shapes and forms, are producing work-ready graduates sought out and valued by principals. Evidence is mounting that these graduates are better prepared and classroom-ready than their mainstream counterparts (Bullough et al., 2004; Conroy et al., 2013). However, the variations in internships is under-researched and under-utilised within initial teacher education programs and studies. Further large-scale and multiple site research, as suggested by Bahr and Mellor (2016), is required to support claims of the strengths of teacher internships and to reveal any challenges and inequities.

The authors conclude by raising concerns about the accountability associated with government investment in educational packaged programs such as TFA and in so doing call for evidence of return on investment especially in a context of increasing demands on increasingly scarce resources in education.

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