Impact of Professional Experience

Reform Measures

Progress Report #1 to the

National Partnership Evaluation Committee

February 2012

The SiMERR National Research Centre
The University of New England
ARMIDALE NSW
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Progress Report #1: Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures
1 Preamble

1.1 The Smarter Schools National Partnerships

The Smarter Schools National Partnerships have been established to achieve the outcomes, objectives and targets for schooling arising from the National Education Agreement the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) participation and productivity agenda and the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.

Five high-level outcomes were identified by COAG as key to boosting Australia’s participation and productivity, namely:

(a) all children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling;
(b) young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving;
(c) schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children, especially indigenous children;
(d) Australian students excel by international standards; and
(e) young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study.

The Smarter Schools National Partnerships provide an overarching framework to support reforms in school education. They comprise four elements, the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership, the Low SES School Communities National Partnership, the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (ITQNP) and the Closing the Gap National Partnership. The Closing the Gap National Partnership is relevant only to Northern Territory.

The Smarter Schools National Partnerships were conceptualised as the vehicle for driving ambitious, nationally significant reforms in these areas. For this reason, all Australian governments have signed the Smarter Schools National Partnership Agreements. Total funding for the Smarter Schools National Partnerships is approximately $2.5 billion with total funding of $550 million, over five years from 2008-09 to 2012-13 being provided through ITQNP. Of these funds, $444 million is provided direct to States and Territories through facilitation and reward funding, with $106 million retained by the Australian Government ($50 million to support principals personal development and $56 million to support joint national activity). In addition, states and territories are required to co-invest a total of $29.6 million over this time.

1.2 The Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership

The ITQNP Agreement is designed to improve teacher and school leader quality to sustain a quality-teaching workforce. It 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 schools and classrooms. The Outcomes identified in the ITQNP are:

(a) attracting the best entrants to teaching, including mid-career entrants;
(b) more effectively training principals, teachers and school leaders for their roles and the school environment;
(c) placing teachers and principals to minimise skill shortages and enhance retention;
(d) developing teachers and school leaders to enhance their skills and knowledge throughout their careers;
(e) retaining and rewarding quality principals, teachers and school leaders; and
(f) improving the quality and availability of teacher workforce data.

Associated with these Outcomes, are Outputs to be achieved including:

(a) new professional standards to underpin national reforms;
(b) recognition and reward for quality teaching;
(c) a framework to guide professional learning for principals, teachers and school leaders;
(d) national accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses;
(e) national consistency in teacher registration;
(f) national consistency in accreditation/certification of Accomplished and Leading Teachers;
(g) improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce;
(h) 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;
(i) improved performance management in schools for teachers and school leaders; and
(j) enhanced school-based teacher quality reforms.

The ITQNP Agreement also set out a number of reform areas with related indicative actions. Reform areas relevant to the professional experience initiatives in ‘Centres for Excellence’ and other settings include:

- new pathways into teaching
- better pathways into teaching
- indigenous education pathways
- new professional standards to underpin national reforms
- joint engagement with higher education providers
- quality placements for teacher education
- Centres for Excellence.

Since the establishment of the ITNQP, National Professional Standards for Teachers and Principal Standards have been developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The former were validated by the SiMERR National Research Centre and subsequently endorsed by Ministers in 2011. Protocols and guidelines for assessing teachers and principals against the relevant Standards are yet to be developed. These Standards are being progressively implemented by States and Territories including NSW. Seventeen Pilot
Projects were undertaken by stakeholder organisations in 2011 investigating issues concerned with implementation of the Standards. SiMERR performed the role of research partner in the space between AISTSL and the pilot projects. SiMERR is currently preparing a report of the outcomes of the pilots individually and collectively.

1.3 Evaluation of Professional Experience Reform Measures

The Department of Education and Communities (DEC) contracted the SiMERR National Centre of the University of New England in August 2011 to undertake a review of Professional Experience Reforms occurring under the auspices of the Smarter School National Partnership. While SiMERR is the managing partner for the evaluation, the evaluation is being conducted by a team of academic staff from SiMERR collaborating with others from the Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the University of Western Sydney (UWS).

The Professional experience reforms in NSW comprise the range of activities designed to address the focus of ‘quality placements for teacher education’. Conceptually, at least in government schools, these reforms have been embedded within schools identified as Centres for Excellence (C4Es). This co-location of reforms places the reforms in contexts where improving the quality of teachers and teacher learning is a focus and priority. While C4Es provide a context for raising the quality of professional experience placements, it is the reform measures associated with the professional experience that are the subject of this aspect of the evaluation.
### 1.4 Content and Structure of this report

This document comprises the first progress report of the Evaluation of the Professional Experience Reform Measures (DET SSNP 1023), and responds to the undertakings set out for Phase 1 of the Implementation plan. These undertakings are set out in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Progress Report Content</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 1:</td>
<td>Refinement of Evaluation Plan</td>
<td>Contextual overview</td>
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<td>Jun - Dec 2011</td>
<td>Refinement of Sampling Frame</td>
<td>Rationale for site selection</td>
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<td>Scoping across the 3 NSW sectors</td>
<td>Refined data collection instruments</td>
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<td>Identification of participating sites</td>
<td>Refined protocols for gathering data for individual participants</td>
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This report sets out progress on the conduct of the Evaluation of the Professional Experience Reform Measures over the initial stages of the project. Activity within this initial period has involved:

- prioritising the evaluation questions;
- developing a cross-sectoral contextual overview to inform the direction and conduct of the evaluation;
- undertaking a desktop audit of NSW planning and reporting documents and school plans;
- developing a detailed plan for the conduct of the evaluation over the lifecycle of the project. The development of an implementation plan comprised the first Milestone for the Project. This plan was endorsed by NPEC in November 2011;
- refining survey instruments, interview protocols and protocols for communicating with participants;
- developing a website for the evaluation;
- initiating a review of research literature to inform judgements about quality professional experience programs;
- undertaking a preliminary audit of the priorities of principals and HATS government C4Es during the annual Teacher Quality Conference Attended by Principals and HATS; and
- obtaining ethics clearance.
However, since the commissioning of this evaluation a decision has been taken to expand the scope of the work being undertaken by SiMERR to include examination of the effectiveness of Centres for Excellence in raising teacher quality and the impact of the role of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs) and the effectiveness of paraprofessionals. The impact of this decision on the current evaluation is considered in later sections of this report.

Consequently, those Professional Experience activities planned for implementation early in Term 1 2012 have been deferred pending consideration of ways in which these additional elements can be integrated with the work proposed thus far. A prime consideration in merging the two projects is minimising the impact of the two evaluations on the work programs of schools and teachers. The planning for this additional work is to be finalised in March 2012.

What follows is a detailed description of developments and progress in each of the areas of activity associated with the Evaluation of the Professional Experience Reform Measures.
2 Progress to date

2.1 Prioritising the Evaluation Questions

An initial issue for the Evaluation Team was the establishment of research questions that expand on and give meaning to the broad questions set out in the proposal for the evaluation. Consequently, a range of research questions was developed to unpack the evaluation questions. The National Partnership Evaluation Committee (NPEC) Secretariat considered these research questions and modified and prioritised the evaluation questions. The prioritisation is set out in Schedule 2 of the Contract (p.38).

The priority is stated thus:

**Overarching evaluation questions**

1. Do Centres for Excellence prepare higher quality teacher education graduates who are better equipped and prepared to teach in NSW challenging schools such as those that are remote or which have high Aboriginal enrolments?
2. How cost effective are professional experience programs delivered through Centres for Excellence?

**Other related questions that are important to consider. These include, but are not limited to, the following:**

I. What are the training needs of new teaching graduates for successful teaching in challenging Schools?
II. What factors in their training lead to higher retention of high quality teachers in challenging schools?
III. What constitutes an effective relationship between schools, training institution and employers in the development and delivery of high quality professional experience?

**Other potential research questions of interest:**

a) What factors in the professional experience contribute to the attraction and retention of high quality mathematics and science teachers?
b) What are the particular training needs of teachers in schools with high Aboriginal Enrolments?
c) What are the variations across sectors in effective professional experience delivery?

An analysis was undertaken to ensure alignment between the evaluation questions and potential data sources to ensure adequate triangulation of evidence and thus reliability of any findings.
## Table 2: Alignment of Data Collection with Research Questions

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<th>Evaluation Question</th>
<th>Required Data</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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2.2 Understanding the Cross-sectoral context

Given that the evaluation was predicated on the belief that Professional Experience Reform Measures were associated with and arise from C4Es initiatives, these schools, at least within the Government sector, provide one context for the evaluation.

There are 47 C4Es operating across the three sectors. These include:

- 35 in government schools
- 11 in Catholic Schools
- the independent Schools Centre for Excellence ISCE, which is based within the Association of Independent Schools of NSW

Appendix A summarises C4Es established across the three school sectors. The particular C4E focus (where specified in school plans) and partnerships arrangements between individual C4Es and universities are also reported in this appendix. In Government schools, the focus comprises up to four goals that relate to professional experience reforms and which are detailed in the Centres for Excellence in NSW Government Schools Guidelines (2010, p3).

At the initiation of Professional Experience Reform Measures project the Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) Evaluation Reference Group briefed the evaluation team on the range of activities associated with the C4Es across the different school sectors. At this meeting, sectoral representatives made it clear that approaches to C4Es and hence the Professional Experience Reforms varied across government, Catholic and independent sectors.

Subsequently, the evaluation team met with representatives of each sector separately to develop a more detailed understanding of the initiatives for which they were responsible. Developing an understanding of the context was critical to developing the implementation plan for the evaluation.

Initial meetings with representatives of the Catholic Schools and Independent Schools sectors pointed to the need for on-going and multiple conversations with each sector to clarify further the arrangements in each sector. The more focused these conversations became around the issues of professional experience reform the more it became clear that professional experience initiatives within these sectors were driven both by sector priorities and the foci of individual schools.

In addition, the NPEC Secretariat directed the evaluation team to Annual SSNP Reports and other documentation describing C4Es implementation arrangements. This information was augmented by analysis of School Strategic Plans and annual reports on school websites.

2.2.1 Establishing Communication Channels with Stakeholders

Government Schools

Documentation reporting on Smarter Schools National Partnerships in government schools, indicate that currently there are 35 government schools operating as C4Es on a hub and
spoke model with each hub C4E working with a cluster of schools to enhance teacher quality through:

- coordinating professional learning aligned to teaching standards
- expanding partnerships with universities to improve the quality of the professional experience
- supporting beginning and early career teachers with quality support and supervision programs focusing on the achievement of accreditation at Professional Competence with the NSWIT. In addition to induction programs, ongoing structured supervision programs are provided
- supporting more experienced teachers to gain accreditation at higher levels with the NSWIT
- providing in class and out of class support to enable teachers to focus on teaching and learning

At the end of June 2011, C4Es were reported as supporting more than 450 spoke schools (Smarter Schools National Partnership, New South Wales Progress Report 2011, p. 29). C4Es are supported in this role through the appointment of Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs). As at the end of December 2011, there are 108 HATs in government schools within Centres for C4Es, and schools participating in the Low SES National Partnership and the Reform Extension Initiative. Whilst selection criteria for HAT positions are consistent across both Partnerships, expectations related to these HAT positions differ, with HATs in C4Es, for example, required to engage with a cluster of schools associated with their C4E, whereas HATs in the Low SES NP settings focus their activities within their own school.

C4Es are also engaged in partnership with universities to undertake a range of teacher quality initiatives including enhancing the professional experience, reciprocal professional learning and knowledge sharing, and building capacity to supervise and mentor teacher education students.

The C4Es in the government school sector have been established in two tranches aligned with the release of funding through the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership. Although initially funded for two years, the thirteen C4Es established in 2010 at the commencement of the partnership have been successful in applying for an extension of funding to continue C4E activities by a further year. A full list of C4Es including those in Catholic and Independent Schools is attached at Appendix A.

**Catholic Schools**

The initial meeting with representatives of Catholic schools noted the diversity of C4E established in the sector and pointed out that in general, Professional Experience Reform initiatives within the sector were not associated with C4E.

Consequently, the Project Team contacted the Catholic Schools Offices seeking their assistance in identifying schools that might participate in and contribute meaningfully to the findings of the evaluation. A copy of the correspondence, response sheets and advice on sampling issues is attached in the Appendices at B.
These communications were facilitated by the Catholic Education Commission through its coordination role and responsibility for coordinating involvement of Catholic systemic schools in the national partnership.

Responses from the Diocesan Offices provided to the Evaluation Team. The schools identified by Catholic Schools Offices were collated and added to the list of schools that could be sampled. These Diocesan schools and the other Centres for Excellence established within the Catholic sector are detailed in Table 3. Further CEO-facilitated discussions with Diocesan contacts would be advantageous to gather more information about characteristics of the schools nominated.

Table 3: Schools Nominated by Dioceses as potential evaluation participants

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Cluster/Linked Schools</th>
<th>University Partnership</th>
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<tr>
<td>Council of Catholic School Parents</td>
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<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
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<td>St Mary’s, Toukley</td>
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<td>University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Paul’s, Manly</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Cluster/Linked Schools</td>
<td>University Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter’s Catholic College, Tuggerah Lakes</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lismore Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>To be finalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAuley Catholic College, Grafton</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt St Patrick Primary School, Murwillumbah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady Help of Christians, Sawtell</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Carthage’s Primary School, Lismore</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s College, Casino</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter’s Primary School, Port Macquarie</td>
<td></td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maitland – Newcastle</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be advised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parramatta Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No schools specified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sydney Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be advised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wagga Wagga Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Primary School, Hillston</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Primary School, Nyngan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Patrick’s Primary School, Brewarrina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wollongong Diocese</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazareth Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour City</td>
<td>C4E Precinct</td>
<td>University of Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Paul’s Catholic Primary School,</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School | Cluster/Linked Schools | University Partnership
--- | --- | ---
Albion Park |  | 
St Peter and Paul’s Catholic Primary School, Kiama | C4E Precinct | University of Wollongong
Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour | C4E Precinct | University of Wollongong

Indicates detailed information is currently unavailable or Not Applicable

**Independent Schools**

The Independent Schools Centre for Excellence (ISCE) represents a different model for enhancing teacher quality. The remit of the ISCE, which is coordinated through the Association of Independent Schools NSW (AIS), includes the provision of professional development to enhance the strategic capacity of newly appointed and aspiring principals, to facilitate the sharing of quality teaching practice among independent schools and to support teachers applying for the higher levels of accreditation of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership.

Subsequently, a number of conversations were held with AIS representatives to identify schools where Professional Experience Reforms were occurring. A key issue in these discussions was the number and characteristics of schools to be identified. Consequently a sampling frame was provided to guide the identification of schools. This frame is described and discussed in greater detail in the section of this report relating to Sampling.

The schools identified by the Association of Independent Schools NSW (AIS NSW) were collated and added to the list of schools that could be sampled. These schools and the main Centre for Excellence established within the Independent sector are detailed in Table 4. Further discussions with AIS NSW contacts would be advantageous to gather more information about characteristics of the schools nominated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Cluster/Linked Schools</th>
<th>University Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Schools Centre for Excellence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Independent Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington Christian School</td>
<td>Support cluster: The Armidale School; Carinya</td>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimbah Aboriginal Primary School, Armidale</td>
<td>Support cluster: The Armidale School; Carinya</td>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Cluster/Linked Schools University Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Cluster/Linked Schools</th>
<th>University Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian School, Tamworth; Orange Christian School.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moree Christian School</td>
<td>Support School: Rouse Hill Anglican College</td>
<td>University of New England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Zahra College</td>
<td>Support School: Abbotsleigh School, Wahroonga</td>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinross Wolaroi, Orange</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redlands, Sydney</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Partnerships</td>
<td>Casino Christian School</td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heritage Christian School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richmond Christian School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summerland Community College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Andrew’s Christian School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nambucca Valley Christian Community School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coffs Harbour Christian Community College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicates detailed information is currently unavailable or Not Applicable

### 2.3 Evaluation Plan

The provision of an Evaluation Plan has been the most significant deliverable of the project to date. The Plan provides added specification to the initial proposal submitted to the NPEC. It responds to the contextual issues identified in the meetings with cross-sectoral stakeholders as well as those identified in the audit of state and school planning and reporting documentation.

A draft of the formal Evaluation Plan was submitted on 18th October 2011 for approval. The NSW National Partnership Evaluation Committee formally approved and endorsed it at its meeting of 22nd November 2011.

Specifically, the Evaluation Plan sets out the Study Design, Methodology and Management and Communication Strategies for the conduct of the evaluation. These set out expectations of what the Evaluation Team is to do and undertakings about how it will approach its task. The Study Design and Methodology deal with:

- Purpose of the evaluation
- Scope of the evaluation
- Methodological considerations
- Research questions
The Management and Communication issues clarified the roles and responsibilities of the Evaluation team, set out a timeline for conduct of the evaluation, established the basis for communication between the evaluation team and protocols for communicating with stakeholders. It also presented an analysis of risk to the project and set out quality assurance mechanisms. The Management and Communication section of the plan is concerned with

- The evaluation team
- Role of Consortium Partners
- University of New England Research Services
- SIMERR National Centre Services
- Collaboration and communication
- Timeline
- Evaluation deliverables – dates
- Dissemination of information
- Communication with the SSNP Teacher Quality Evaluation Committee
- Communication with Government, Catholic and Independent Sectors
- Communication with other SSNP Evaluation Teams
- Communication with Participants
- Communication with the wider education community
- Risk management and quality assurance

In summary, the Evaluation Plan establishes the scope and methodology for the evaluation and sets out what NPEC can expect in terms of the deliverables for the evaluation.

### 2.4 Data Collection

The evaluation is predicated on the triangulation of multiple forms of evidence to increase the reliability of findings and conclusions. As noted above, data analysis involves both quantitative and qualitative methodologies utilising document analyses including school and system plans and professional experience reports, survey instruments, and school site visits.

Although significant effort and progress has been made on the development of survey instruments and interview protocols appropriate to this evaluation (See Appendix D and Appendix E), a halt has been called to this work to assess implications for these instruments.
arising from the planned expansion of the scope of work to include evaluation of the effectiveness of C4Es, the impact of the HATs and the effectiveness of paraprofessionals.

This hiatus is to enable synergies between the two projects to be identified in order to minimise the disruption to schools and teachers where there might be the potential for multiple evaluations. The survey developed for HATs, for example, will be modified to look at other aspects of their work as well as their involvement in Professional Experience Reforms. Further collaborative discussions with sector representatives are needed to ensure that an expanded evaluation comprehensively takes into account contextual issues and acknowledges the various models associated with implementing C4Es, HATs/HATs equivalent and paraprofessional initiatives.

Nonetheless, consistent with the need to report on phase 1 undertakings, the progress to date on aspects of data collection is documented in this report.

2.4.1 Desktop Audit of School Plans and Reports

School Websites were examined as part of an audit of C4E school strategic plans to better understand the context of the evaluation and also to inform the sample of schools to be identified for potential site visits.

All members of the Evaluation team participated in this audit. The purpose of the audit was to identify schools with an explicit reference in their strategic plan to activities directed at enhancing the professional experience or on utilising partnerships with universities to enhance teacher quality within their cluster of schools.

The results of this audit (Appendix A) provided a salutary lesson to the evaluation team, indicating that professional experience reform has a variable priority amongst teacher quality initiatives within C4E schools. Implications of this mapping are discussed below.

The initial audit of C4E plans available on school websites was carried out using two criteria:

1. the extent to which C4E Aims were carried through into the plan; and
2. the type of activity detailed which related directly to professional experience initiatives/reforms.

The most readily accessible C4E plans were those from Government schools, and so the following commentary relates to those schools. The absence of similar documentation on Catholic and Independent schools’ websites raises planning issues for the evaluation, pointing to ongoing advice from the National Partnership Reference Group, word of mouth and anecdotal evidence to provide appropriate ‘filters’ to identify schools where professional experience initiatives are in place.

The set of Aims or Goals consistently referred to in the introductions of C4E plans was drawn from the C4Es in NSW Government Schools Guidelines (2011) and includes an additional area relating to initial teacher education students (No. 5). This set is detailed below.
1. Promoting and demonstrating quality teaching through classroom and school wide practice in improving student learning outcomes.
2. Providing quality supervision, mentoring and support to early career teachers.
3. Providing ongoing professional development aligned to teaching standards.
4. Assisting more experienced teachers to achieve voluntary accreditation at professional accomplishment and/or professional leadership.
5. Providing quality supervision, mentoring and support to initial teacher education students.
6. Demonstrating and developing strengthened linkages between initial teacher education programs and transition to teaching and teacher induction.
7. Working with other schools in the centre for excellence cluster to strengthen the quality of teaching to improve student-learning outcomes.
8. Forming part of the state-wide cross-sectoral team focused on teacher quality initiatives in NSW.

Four of these Aims were selected for their direct relevance to professional experience, namely, numbers 2, 3, 5 and 6, and the number of times these appeared in the elaborated plans was recorded. Figure 1 summarises the outcome of this scan that highlights quality supervision and mentoring of pre-service teachers as an area for further detailed consideration.

![C4E Aims](image)

**Figure 1 C4E Aims Embedded in Elaborated C4E Plans**

A closer inspection was made of the C4E plans to consider itemised Strategies relating to processes in place to support pre-service teachers and early career teachers. The number of strategies listed in plans ranged from none to twenty-seven and is summarised in Figure 2.
Clearly, some caution needs to be exercised when interpreting Centre for Excellence plans. These documents may not always convey the scope of contextual initiatives or the way individual schools detail the components of particular initiatives that can only come from conversations with school personnel and/or site visits.

Informal conversations that have taken place to date as part of gathering available information around C4E plans have provided some further insights. For example, the principal at one C4E contacted spoke at length about the detail around community support and local government initiatives for attracting pre-service teachers to a rural location – detail that did not appear in that school’s C4E plan.

2.4.2 Refinement of survey Instruments and Interview protocols

Draft survey instruments and interview protocols were developed for the evaluation and presented in the evaluation plan. The content of these instruments was informed by the audit of C4E plans available on school websites (in the case of Government schools), from material provided in meetings with the sectoral representatives, from documents available on the New South Wales’ National Partnership website, and from feedback provided in questions distributed to each of the Catholic Dioceses (Appendix B).

The surveys instruments for the project, which were submitted with the evaluation plan have been formatted and uploaded to UNE’s online survey tool (Qualtrics) in readiness for trialling in schools. The surveys are for:

1. Pre-service teachers
2. Beginning teachers
3. Highly Accomplished Teachers/Mentors
4. Principals (Initial Survey only)
Figures 3 and 4 provide two sample pages from the online surveys. Figure 3 is from the Pre-service teacher survey and Figure 4 is from the Highly Accomplished Teacher survey. One question appears per page and a progress bar appears at the bottom of each page. Copies of questions from each of the Surveys are provided in Appendix D.
Copies of Interview Protocols, included with the Revised Evaluation Plan have been developed for:

- Pre-service teachers
- Beginning teachers
- Highly Accomplished Teachers/Mentors
- Principals University practicum coordinators/Supervisors

These protocols are included in Appendix E.

**Trial of survey instruments and interview protocols**

As indicated in the Evaluation Plan, survey instruments are to be trialled in six schools. The six schools selected for participation in the Trial of survey instruments and interview protocols have been contacted by telephone to establish initial communication lines and to outline the scope of the evaluation.

*Figure 4 Screen shot from the Highly Accomplished Teacher Survey*
All principals have indicated their willingness to participate in the Trial of data collection instruments and to continue to contribute to the evaluation.

Table 5: Schools invited to participate in Trialling of Survey Instruments and Interview Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>ICSEA</th>
<th>Percentage Indigenous</th>
<th>Percentage ESL</th>
<th>School Sector / Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Professional Experience Structure</th>
<th>University Link(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxley HS</td>
<td>1024</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Gov: 7-12</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>UNE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epping Boys HS</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>1138</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Gov: 7-12</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>Macquarie Sydney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAuley CC, Grafton</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1017</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Non-Gov: 7-12</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Leo’s Catholic College</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Non-Gov: 7-12</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimbah Aboriginal Primary School</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Independent K-6</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>UNE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffs Harbour Christian Community School</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Independent K-12</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>SCU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revision of Survey Instruments and Interview Protocols

As noted above, these instruments are being reassessed in light of the need to incorporate additional evaluation questions and any associated focus areas to encompass variations to DET SSNP 1023.

In addition to the need to reconfigure these instruments, and seek NPEC approval for them, there is also a need to consider a revised timeline for their distribution, which is cognisant of the demands on schools both of their own work programs and the demands of other National Partnership evaluations. This timeline will be negotiated with the National Partnerships Evaluation Committee Secretariat.
2.4.3 Sampling

Sampling Frame

Within the context of reporting timelines and budgetary considerations, it is not viable for all schools to be included in the sample for the Site Visit phases of the evaluation. Where a selection of schools is necessary for the purpose of site visits, or surveying the following divisions of C4Es will be used:

- Newcastle-Sydney-Wollongong: comprising 13 Primary schools, 6 secondary schools, a vocational college, a learning centre and a learning exchange;
- North coast- Northern inland: comprising 1 primary school and 6 high schools
- Central inland-Riverina: comprising 1 primary school, a central school and 4 high schools
- South coast: comprising 4 high schools
- On-line learning: comprising 7 settings

The selection of schools will also be guided by four other considerations, the first of which relates to proportionality. Schools involved in surveys and site visits will be selected proportionally consistent with the 6:3:1 (Gov.: Cath.: Ind.) participation ratio. For the surveys there will be a minimum of 59 schools: 35 (Gov.) – 18 (Cath.) – 6 (Ind.). For site visits or case studies there will be 20 schools: 12 (Gov.) – 6 (Cath.) – 2 (Ind.).

Other considerations include:

- (i) when schools were included as part of the Centres for Excellence initiative;
- (ii) whether Centres for Excellence and other nominated schools are involved in the professional experience reforms; and
- (iii) the university with which a school has formal professional experience program links.

The subsequent sequencing of a particular school’s engagement with the evaluation through requests, such as those associated with data collection processes, is to be negotiated in consultation with the ITQ Evaluation Project Reference Group through the NPEC Secretariat. This will ensure that such requests can be timetabled to take account of a school’s planning schedule and any additional externally initiated evaluation and/or reporting requirements.

Sample of schools to be engaged in site visits

The list of schools to be visited in site visits was informed by the analysis of school planning documentation, the advice of sectoral representatives and the sampling frame issues discussed above. Schools to be the subject of site visits are listed in Table 6 below.

Schools to be surveyed

In addition to ensuring that this sample is adequate in size to enable reliable conclusions to be drawn, the sample of schools will capture the complexity of the environment by ensuring that participants in the evaluation represent:
the thirteen initial Centres for Excellence from primary and secondary schools in the Government sector (2010);
the twenty-two additional Centres for Excellence from primary and secondary schools in the Government sector (2011);
the twelve Centres for Excellence from the Non-Government sector, comprising a substantial number of online/virtual learning environments;
the spoke schools associated with each of the Centres for Excellence;
schools identified as being statistically similar to Centre for Excellence schools;
schools identified as being statistically similar to Cluster schools;
any additional Centres for Excellence designated during the course of the evaluation;
a range of geographic locations, i.e., metropolitan, rural/regional;
challenging and non-challenging schools; and
a range of affiliated universities as partner institutions.

Table 6: Schools identified for site visits over the term of the evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Period</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 (Trial)</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Oxley High School, Tamworth (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Epping Boys High School (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>McAuley Catholic College, Grafton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St Leo’s Catholic College, Wahroonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Minimbah Aboriginal Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coffs Harbour Christian Community School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Carlingford West Public School (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Colyton Public School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Westmead Public School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bonnyrigg Heights Public School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gulmarrad Public School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Macarthur Girls High School (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Morisset Public School (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Merewether Public School (Tranche 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Warialda High School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keiraville Public School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Narooma High School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blayney High School (Tranche 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>The Assumption Primary School, Bathurst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic School, West Pymble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St Pauls, Manly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St Peter’s Catholic College Tuggerah Lakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The selection of schools/on-line learning centres is designed also to ensure that the necessary comparisons explicit in the two primary evaluation questions can be addressed within Centres for Excellence, between Centres for Excellence, and between Centres for Excellence and statistically similar schools.

Statistically similar schools will be identified on the basis of available data, such as, ICSEA values, NAPLAN results for achievement, and characteristics, such as the proportion of Aboriginal students or students from Non-English speaking backgrounds.

**Document analysis**

The third aspect of sampling involves schools to be included in the desk-top audit of school plans and annual reports. Given that this aspect of the work has little or no impact on the work of schools a census approach rather than a sampling approach has been taken. Consequently, all C4E schools/on-line learning centres and schools nominated by the Catholic and Independent sectors will be incorporated into the Desktop Audit.

In addition, the audit will involve three randomly identified spoke schools for each C4E.

**2.4.4 Analysis of Professional Experience Reports**

A key aspect of judging quality teaching in relation to the professional experience reforms is the outcomes of student teachers’ professional experience, which are captured in supervisors’ reports. In general, these reports are held by the institutions in which students are enrolled at the time of their professional experience.

Discussions have been held with the Professional Experience Coordinator at the University of New England in regards to gaining access to these reports. Subject to the Ethics Committee’s approval, access to the reports is permissible. The issue for the Ethics Committee is that such reports contain identifying information, however, it is expected that approval will be granted to access the reports once the identifying information is removed.

Once the Ethics Committee’s conditions for accessing the reports are known then an approach will be made to Professional Experience Coordinators from the Australian Catholic University and the University of Western Sydney seeking access to professional experience reports. Reports from students at these three institutions will provide sufficient numbers of reports for reliable and valid analysis of teacher quality.
2.4.5 Ethics approval

An application for ethics approval for the evaluation has been prepared for consideration by Research Services at UNE. In the light of the broader evaluation perspective to be finalised in March 2012, submission of this application has been deferred pending clarification of potential amendments. Appendix F includes samples of Letters of Invitation – Information Sheets and Consent Forms for participants in the evaluation. Note: Team members have submitted relevant identification documents to facilitate Working with Children check, which are a requirement of undertaking school-based research activities.

The first two phases of the Phases of the Evaluation Table included in the Revised Evaluation Plan (p. 30) have been reworked to take into account the deferred ethics application. Trialling and the analysis of practicum reports is scheduled for January – June 2012.

Table 7: Revised Phases of the Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Progress Report Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Phase 1: Jun - Dec 2011 | • Refinement of Evaluation Plan  
• Refinement of Sampling Frame  
• Scoping across the 3 NSW sectors  
• Identification of participating sites | • Contextual overview  
• Rationale for site selection  
• Refined data collection instruments  
• Refined protocols for gathering data for individual participants |
| Phase 2: Jan - Jun 2012 | • Refinement of data collection procedures (local trialling)  
• Finalising protocols for gathering participant data (e.g., practicum records)  
• Further trialling of data collection procedures  
• Trial evaluation in selected sites  
• Preliminary data analysis | • Feedback on data collection procedures  
• Preliminary findings – analysis of trial evaluation |
3 Communication Strategies

3.1 National Partnerships Reporting and Evaluation, Office of Education

Communications with the National Partnership Evaluation Committee (NPEC) and its Reference Group have been facilitated through the NPEC Secretariat. These communications ensure that the project activities are consistent with the project brief, that any opportunities for cooperation between other SSNP evaluation teams are identified, and where possible disruptions to schools are minimised. The Secretariat also provides a facilitative role in arranging and monitoring cross-sectoral contact.

In addition, the NPEC Secretariat provides a conduit to sources of information that complement and supplement the evaluation activities. Such information includes the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Cross Sectoral Impact Survey (CSIS) data, which provides baseline data for the evaluation, and key reports relevant to the evaluation, e.g., the OECD’s recent report Building a High-Quality Teaching Profession – Lessons from Around the World.

3.2 Sectoral Stakeholders

To date, personnel within each sector responsible for programs relevant to the professional experience components of the Centres for Excellence initiative have been identified and communications protocols established. These contacts include:

- Diane Wasson, Carmel Senese and Leah Anderson (NSW DEC)
- Paul Rodney (CEC)
- Robyn Yates and Estelle Lewis (AIS).

3.3 Evaluation Team

To ensure that each member of the evaluation team within their respective locations is fully conversant with aspects of the evaluation and its progress, a fortnightly teleconference time has been set aside. This time is reserved for reviewing the progress of the evaluation and undertaking any necessary planning, such as is required for site visits.

3.4 Schools

A detailed protocol for communication with individual schools is yet to be finalised and this will be undertaken following the distribution of Invitations and Information Sheets to individual schools to participate in the evaluation.

It is expected that the letter which was part of the communications package (Appendix B) used to make contact with the Catholic Education Office in each Diocese will be adapted in line with the requirements of each of the sectoral authorities. Note, that the information sheet and sampling frame that was part of the communication with Catholic schools is not relevant to individual schools.
3.5 Online Contact

Participants will have online access to information about the evaluation via an evaluation Blog and they will be able to make contributions to the evaluation using a secure site provided by UNE’s Learning Management System, Moodle.

Figure 5 provides a screen shot of the evaluation Blog. This is accessible to the public and provides an opportunity to share information relevant to issues related to professional experience reforms. It is anticipated that key stakeholders, such as, participating school, educational jurisdictions, the National Partnership Evaluation Reference Group, will use the site. Members of the evaluation team make posts to this Blog, and only material that can be shared in the public domain will be included.
Navigation of the site is controlled mainly by the features on the right hand side of the Home Page. Two of the Links will take participants to the secure sites for completing Surveys or contributing to activities specific to the evaluation. The Participating Stakeholders area will contain links to information about organisations associated with the evaluation, e.g., the NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships or Centres for Excellence websites. The Archives will contain Posts that no longer appear on the Home page and Posts that are added are assigned to one of a number of Categories relevant to the evaluation. All links open as separate pages in the browser being used so that users can easily navigate back to the Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measure (iPERM) Home Page.

Figure 6 provides a screen shot of the page that participants in the evaluation will see when they click on the Moodle link. Using a user name and password provided by UNE, they will then be directed to areas where they can contribute to Forums, participate in online discussions if necessary, and upload documents.

![Figure 6 Screen Shot of the Moodle Site](image)

The Surveys Link takes participants to the following Page where the separate surveys are listed. These are not currently ‘open’ and when they are, participants will click on the relevant survey and be taken to the site for completing the survey. Passwords will be assigned according to the ‘role’ of respondents, i.e., Principals will be provided with a password that allows them to complete the Principal survey only.
Surveys

Introductory Information (About this page; what it is; instructions)

Groups participating in Surveys:

- Principals
- Pre-Service Teachers
- Early Career Teachers
- Highly Accomplished Teachers (Mentors etc)

Edit
4 Meetings

4.1 Project Coordination and Management

Two face-to-face meetings have taken place: one with the National Partnership Evaluation Committee and the other with the National Partnership Reporting and Evaluation Management team.

4.2 Educational Jurisdictions

Following the ITQ Reference Group meeting of 8th August 2011, three cross-sectoral meetings were held in mid-August. Discussions at these meetings provided contextual background and an update on activities within each sector related to Centres for Excellence.

Government (16th August 2011)

Key issues covered at this meeting included:

- The number of National Partnership evaluations to be administered within schools;
- The roll-out of Centres for Excellence within the sector;
- The structure of Centres for Excellence;
- The role of Highly Accomplished Teachers within Centres for Excellence;
- Strategies for keeping the Centres for Excellence informed;
- Other programs within the sector that are related to teacher quality, e.g., Beyond the Line, Beyond the Bridge; and
- Data collection advice.

An invitation was extended at this meeting to attend the C4E Conference scheduled for 10-11 November 2011. This conference provided an opportunity to present an overview of the evaluation project to principals from Centre for Excellence schools and to engage them (and their school’s Highly Accomplished Teachers) in structured discussions about aspects of professional experience in line with the session structure provided in Appendix 8.2. Feedback from the discussions was documented and provided an important source of preliminary contextual information. This information was collated as additional background to the preparation of data collection instruments.

Twelve discussion groups were organised and provided feedback to the following questions:

1. What are key school organisational issues (e.g., available personnel, support structures) for professional experience placement programs within your C4E?
2. What are some of the constraints (e.g., rurality, developing partnerships) impacting on professional experience placement programs within your C4E?
3. What are some pre-service teacher preparation issue (e.g., practicum structure, aspirations, relevance) that contribute to successful professional experience placement within your C4E?
4. What has been the extent of engagement of your C4E cluster?
5. What is the extent of familiarisation with and use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within your C4E?¹
6. What underpins (i.e., theoretical framework, professional development model) effective professional learning for your C4E?
7. What knowledge and dispositions do you consider to be necessary for ‘ideal’ and ‘challenging’ teaching situations? Are these general attributes, or are they career stage specific?
8. What are some of the issues (both contextual and supply related) that impact on the attraction and retention of teachers in your schools?
9. What are the perceived and actual benefits of having an established partnership with a university? Consider roles, impact on professional learning generally and the professional experience in particular.
10. How do you see the match between the knowledge and skills developed during the professional experience and the needs of pre-service/beginning teachers?
11. Has the professional experience program changed over time within your C4E? If so (e.g., school and/or supervising teacher capacity), how? If not, what changes are necessary?
12. What changes (e.g., around roles in teacher development) have you observed in your C4E community as a result of increased expectations about improving the quality of teaching and learning?

An analysis of responses is provided in Section 5, Initial Findings.

A future meeting with EMSAD was also arranged at the conference.

Catholic (16th August 2011)

Key issues covered at this meeting included:

- Data to be collected and the range of surveys to be managed within schools;
- Models of Centres for Excellence within the sector;
- Communication protocols within the sector, e.g., National Partnership Coordination Group;
- Existing partnerships in place with universities;
- Commonalities across Centres for Excellence within the sector; and
- Diocese where initiatives for improving teacher quality are in place.

¹ On the day, this question was modified to refer to NSWIT Standards.
As indicated in Section 2.2.2, The CEC distributed correspondence to each Diocese that sought feedback to the following questions. This feedback was sought as a supplement to the information contained in the Information Sheets on the NSW Smarter Schools National Partnerships website:  

1. **Describe in brief terms you Centre for Excellence Initiatives**

2. **Describe the support structure(s) implemented for undergraduate teacher development. This ‘development’ might encompass a beginning teacher’s:**
   - **Capacity** (preparedness for the profession across a range of contexts)
   - **Sustainability** (focus and commitment across a range of contexts)
   - **Resilience** (motivation across a range of contexts)

3. **How is this work described above being supported by National Partnership funds?**

4. **In general, describe the relationship between school in your Diocese and universities concerning the support of undergraduate teachers.**

5. **What are some of the successes and issues/challenges that are currently evident for you in the support of undergraduate teachers?**

6. **Do you wish to involve schools that have established university partnerships but which lie outside the Centre for Excellence initiative in the evaluation? If so, could you provide a list of the schools bearing in mind the attached sampling frame?**

7. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions concerning the evaluation to be undertaken within your Diocese.**

A summary of the responses provided by nine of the eleven Dioceses is provided in Section 5, Initial Findings. Question 3 was not included in responses received.

**Independent (17th August 2011)**

Key issues covered at this meeting included:

- Models for Centres for Excellence with the sector;
- Information available, e.g. surveys undertaken by AIS already;
- Approaches within the sector to professional experience;
- Existing partnerships with universities;
- The process within the sector for funding teacher quality initiatives;
- Sampling considerations; and
- Communication/contacts with AIS.

An important common issue articulated at these meetings related to tracking of students and teachers over the lifetime of the evaluation.

### 4.3 Evaluation Team

The evaluation team has met face-to-face and via teleconferences to undertake planning related mainly to gathering background information about individual Centres for Excellence and for the preparation of surveys and interview protocols. The team undertook a review of Centre for Excellence documents, namely school reports available on respective school...
websites together with summary information for Centres for Excellence available on the SSNP website.
5 Initial Findings

5.1 Data-based findings

Cross-sectoral Impact Survey data

Information concerning sampling, scope and form of the Cross-sectoral Impact Survey (CSIS) has been provided to the evaluation team on the 15th February. This information has been examined to assess the CSIS’s capacity to provide important baseline data for this evaluation and the expanded project. Results of the 2011 data collection are soon to be made available to the evaluation team.

As noted above, significant progress has been made auditing school plans within the Government sector. Publicly shared material about C4Es in the Catholic and Independent sectors has been accessed on the SSNP website Information Sheets. Whilst these provide important background information, further discussions with representatives of the cross-sectoral project reference group will help to inform the sampling of representative schools.

Given the need to assess the impact of expanding the scope of the evaluation beyond Professional Experience Reforms, no data collection has occurred through site visits or surveying of schools and teachers. At this time, there has been no formal communications with schools in regard to data collection, with the exception of contact with the Trial group of school principals.

5.2 Department of Education and Communities Centres for Excellence Conference (Government School Principals and HATs)

The twelve questions provided for discussion at the DEC C4E Conference (see Appendix B) were assigned to one of four thematic groupings for analysis:

1. Contextual issues (Questions 1, 2 and 8)
2. Preparation of teachers (Questions 3, 7, 9 and 10)
3. Overarching guidelines for improving teacher quality (Questions 5 and 6)
4. Changes in C4Es over time (Questions 4, 11 and 12).

It is not surprising that ‘workloads’ was raised as a major contextual issue, particularly when the attraction and retention of teachers into the profession was considered. ‘Workload’ was elaborated in terms of the additional pressures that supervision and/or mentoring entail, the absence of training for supervising teachers, erosion of teacher ‘good will’ during supervisions, and the extra duties given to early career teachers.

Outside this major issue, two additional contextual elements that directly impacted on professional experience placements related to:

1. Location: the distance of a school from a university, the availability of accommodation for pre-service teachers and the perceived ‘constraint’ of rurality were identified as influences that could reduce the range of opportunities available to pre-service teachers.
2. **Structure**: A range of management issues was identified in connection with placements and this included timing, repeated requests made to one school faculty, competition between universities for placements, reporting against standards in practicum reports, the (lack of) visits from university personnel, approaches from students rather than university coordinators, matching school and university annual schedules of events, arranging school-university meetings.

An additional, system-wide, issue was raised related to staffing. This involved a comment calling for more flexible staffing procedures so that schools can make appointments from graduates that have undertaken placements within that school.

The questions relating to the preparation of teachers raised a range of knowledge and logistical considerations. The importance of ‘knowing the audience’ and ‘knowing what they don’t know’ were regarded as necessary starting perspectives. This ‘knowing’ encompassed areas such as, students and their learning needs, strategies to support learning, how the school community functions, teaching as a collegial undertaking, and links between syllabus documents and quality teaching frameworks. In addition to pre-service teacher knowledge, a number of logistical issues were identified as impacting on opportunities that pre-service teachers can take up. These issues that include distances travelled, living costs and part-time job commitments can mean some schools are precluded from pre-service teachers’ choice of schools for their practicum.

Included in the ideal set of procedures for successful professional experience placement were:

- Motivating pre-practicum visits, avoiding activities that some pre-service teachers find awkward, e.g., interviews;
- Sufficient time for an effective placement and for the HAT to contribute feedback;
- Continuity of professional placements – holistic rather than unrelated experiences;
- Informative documentation, e.g., Handbooks, Gantt charts, expectations;
- Clearly defined roles for university and school personnel involved in placements; and
- Matching university requirements with school contexts.

The focus of the discussion on these procedural issues suggests that innovations relating to the preparation of teachers are contingent on the existence of supportive ‘ground rules’ and that the continued attention to these procedural issues can impact on the effectiveness of the placement. Commentary related to universities indicated a possible mismatch between preparation (within university courses) and practice (within schools). It was noted that “students need to be better prepared for a school-based experience”, “what students are learning at unis – sometimes it’s not adequate” and “some university guidelines are too prescriptive, limiting the focus of the student’s experience,” comments that point to a need for meaningful negotiations to take place in some instances to establish productive (mutually advantageous) school-university partnerships. Some C4Es have reported productive partnerships, where input from academics into the C4E cluster and the role of the HAT as a ‘conduit’ have led to positive outcomes.
Four considerations were evident in the commentary around overarching guidelines that supported improvements in teacher quality. The first aspect dealt with external frameworks, such as Professional Teaching Standards or the Quality Teaching Framework, which are used to guide professional learning. The second of these considerations related to internal school structures where support for enhancing teacher quality came from school goals and from faculty organisation. The third consideration took into account staffing needs, with a particular emphasis on the specific professional learning needs of school personnel at different career stages. Finally, opportunities for professional learning, such as, action learning, workshops, mentoring, professional self-audits and team teaching were listed as examples of activities that promoted quality teaching.

The perceived changes in C4Es can be summarised in the quote from one discussion group that commented:

*In terms of the practicum experience enjoyed by student teachers, this continues to improve. This is largely due to the quality of the teachers taking students and the quality of their teaching – this is improving due to the C4E HAT and paraprofessional and schools working together. Significantly, the whole of school and across the C4E (cluster) common approach to teaching of, and preparation for, ‘writing’ in particular has focused teacher on questioning their practice and making collegial efforts to improve.*

Whilst further work (within the context of this evaluation) will help to qualify the attributes of ‘quality’, two important ‘drivers’ are identified in the quote above, namely, the importance of an agreed focus for improvement and a collaborative approach to professional learning - both of which are supported by the literature around educational reforms, e.g., Mourshed, Chijioke, and Barber, 2011. Additional benefits of the C4E structure were identified as the increased levels of mentoring for effective teaching and the increase in the number of teachers seeking higher levels of accreditation.

One recurrent theme that emerged from the commentary and discussions provided at the C4E conference related to the effectiveness of the partnerships between C4Es and universities in supporting pre-service teachers’ transition into the profession. In some instances, this partnership is highly productive, with university and school personnel working collaboratively around an identified focus area. In other cases, there appears to be a mismatch of purpose, mainly around the organisational responsibility for professional experience. As the partnership is one crucial element in the effectiveness of professional experience reforms, there is a message for the evaluation team around undertaking an expanded approach concerning contact with universities to include surveys as well as interviews.

### 5.3 Catholic Diocese Information Sheets

Professional experiences for pre-service teachers within the Catholic Dioceses takes place within a context that is summed up in a statement made about C4Es, that they are “concerned with building teacher capacity of the current workforce.” Consistent with this
statement is the absence of any reference that directly referenced school structures to any Smarter Schools National Partnership initiatives.

Whilst there is system-wide support for practicum placements, initiatives directly related to pre-service teaching are initiated by universities. Instances of programs in place within Dioceses point to a holistic interpretation of professional experience that encompasses building capacity at all teacher levels. Working with teachers on the use of iPad technology, training Aboriginal Education Workers, filming lessons to capture student learning, strengthening science teaching and learning in primary classes, implementing special education programs are instances of ongoing professional learning that address school-based priorities. Pre-service teachers have opportunities to participate in these professional learning activities and associated mentoring by working alongside experienced teachers, e.g., as assistants in the Science Innovations in Primary Classrooms program. There is an additional group of programs in place that prepare pre-service teachers for employment within the sector, i.e., Step Up Into teaching (SUIT), the targeted graduate program and regional Dioceses internships.

There appear to be two distinct approaches to the provision of support structures for pre-service teachers. The first, hosting pre-service teachers, is seen as system-wide activity with formalised agreements or Memoranda of Understanding in place between schools and universities. There does not appear to be any system-wide approach, however, to professional learning programs in place for practicum coordinators. Only one university has been identified for its close relationship with schools to develop ‘best practice in pre-service teacher development,’ a component of which is support for mentors and supervisors.

The second approach is based on system-wide priorities, such as, the up-skilling of teachers, or recruitment of quality graduates. Professional learning programs in place in schools for teachers, for example, provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to work alongside experienced teachers as assistants. Whilst these mentoring activities support pre-service teachers in their professional learning, they operate outside the usual university assessment processes.

Most indicated positive partnerships with universities and, although placement difficulties often exist, support for pre-service teachers is seen as a school’s ‘professional responsibility’. There appears to be a balance between supporting pre-service teachers’ transition to teaching within the sector, e.g., through SUIT program, and developing a strong professional learning culture – supporting university assessment processes through portfolios or reciprocal learning.

Successes and challenges within each Diocese could be grouped according to the stakeholders affected, namely, universities, schools and pre-service teachers.

**University:**

**Successes:** Innovative non-practicum-based Professional Learning that has been planned; positive support from universities
Challenges: Closer relationships with schools desirable; timetabling to ensure that mutually convenient university-school collaboration can occur

Schools – C4Es

Successes: Capacity of schools to assimilate pre-service teachers – seen as a professional responsibility; school structures that contribute positively to pre-service teachers’ experiences; collegial network established; up-skilling of staff through use of technology

Challenges: Time for teachers to provide meaningful feedback to pre-service teachers; access to mentoring teachers; providing additional support for pre-service teachers in schools for particular settings (e.g., Special Education); accessing quality Professional Learning for all teachers; gathering effectiveness data; sustainability of programs

Pre-service teachers

Successes: Employment opportunities as teacher aids within schools in the sector; Quality of pre-service teachers; Professional Learning opportunities that are available across schools are enriching; range of learning opportunities for all staff

Challenges: Attracting students to ‘hard-to-staff’ schools; distance and isolation of some regional schools deters some pre-service teachers; part-time work commitments of pre-service teachers

Overall there were four recurring themes that emerged from the commentary provided by Dioceses:

- Establishing productive relationships with universities
- Balancing the benefits of mentoring with available personnel and resources
- Matching pre-service teachers with employment and professional learning opportunities within the sector
- Pre-service teacher ‘constraints’ that impacted on their engagement

An important area for more detailed consideration by the evaluation team from the information provided by Dioceses relates to the system-wide focus on building capacity of its workforce. Of relevance to professional experience reforms is the extent to which this approach addresses ongoing employment strategies within the sector and to what extent this approach addresses reform measures or provides innovative support for the personal aspirations of pre-service teachers.

5.4 Literature-based findings

Issues relating to quality teaching across international contexts are being monitored and analysed for their relevance to the New South Wales’ initiatives. These issues identified in the literature are being collated. Four documents are mentioned briefly here to illustrate the type of recommendations and findings that relate to educational reforms and improving teacher quality.

A large-scale international investigation of educational reforms in school systems has identified a number of commonalities in the strategies adopted by schools as they undertake ‘improvement journeys’ (Mourshed, Chijioke & Barber, 2010). In their report
titled *How the world’s most improved school systems keep getting better*, the authors discuss three improvement transition of schools systems from poor to fair, fair to good and from good to great in terms of four overarching characteristics:

1. **Interventions** that refer to the integrated cluster of activities chosen to focus improvements. These Interventions are either developed for a particular school ‘performance’ stage, or ones that are common across stages, e.g., curriculum reforms.

2. **Contextualising** that considers the realities in which systems operate and the need for key decisions to reflect a balance of mandating and persuasion. The approaches adopted by systems are discussed within the areas of professional development, the language of instruction, and student achievement targets.

3. **Sustaining** that focuses on the production of a ‘new professional pedagogy’ that is achieved by going beyond changing teachers’ practices to changing the way teachers think about their teaching. These changes are brought about through a focus on collaborative practices, close relationships between schools and systems (jurisdictions, universities), and effective leadership.

4. **Ignition** that describe events that start schools on their ‘improvement journeys. Three such events are discussed, namely, a political or economic crisis, the appearance of a high-profile report, and the appointment of a strategic leader (either political or system-wide).

These four characteristics provide an informing template against which initiatives related to professional experience reforms can be considered. In particular, the areas of professional development, student achievement targets, collaborative partnerships, and responding to high-profile reports (and documents, such as Standards frameworks) are familiar cross-sectoral priorities in New South Wales educational settings.

The engagement of teachers in educational reforms is also documented in an Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) report that focused on equipping teachers for effective learning in the 21st Century (Schleicher, 2011). The report documents the background to an international summit on the teaching profession that considered four interconnected themes: recruitment into the profession; teacher support and development; evaluation and remuneration for teachers; and the engagement of teachers in reforms.

The commentary around achieving educational reforms that work resulted in the identification of nine recurrent themes for engaging teachers. A particular issue that was highlighted related to the characteristics of effective professional development, which suggested that teachers need to be active agents of change in analysing their practice in the light of professional standards, as well as student learning standards. In order for this to occur, it was noted that clear and well-structured policy frameworks should be in place (Schleicher, 2010, p, 58). In the context of teacher quality, the report also had some clear messages about the current trends in teacher evaluation. The international perspective on improving teacher quality indicates that teacher evaluation has moved in the direction of considering improvements in learning outcomes and away from compliance-related issues.
In the report from McKinsey & Company (Mourshed et al., 2011), six interventions were identified as occurring across each of the improvement transitions:

1. Revising curriculum and standards
2. Appropriate rewards and remuneration
3. Building technical skills
4. Assessing students
5. Establishing data systems
6. Policy and education laws as facilitators of improvement

A report from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Kane & Staiger, 2012), which documents a Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project, provides relevant commentary around three of the interventions. The project involved 3000 teachers exploring alternative approaches to identifying effective teaching. The alternative methods are based on the use of multiple high-quality observations of teacher practice together with student surveys and achievement gains. Of particular interest is the recommendation that “… school systems should learn which measures (of effective teaching) are better aligned to the outcomes they value’ (Kaine & Staiger, p.20).

Within the Australian context, the importance of peer and direct observation (by school leadership), collaboration and student feedback is also documented in a report from the Grattan Institute (Jensen & Reichel, 2011). This report also highlights the importance of professional teaching standards in the context of teacher appraisal, echoing the notion of ‘Ignition’ in the McKinsey and Company report:

> It is therefore important that teachers and principals discuss what the national Standards mean for teaching at their school. This will promote conversations about effective teaching and provide teachers with a greater sense of ownership over effective teaching in their school. (Jensen, 2011, p.37)

The literature documenting improvements in teacher quality across international contexts is highlighting a common language and focus. One implication for this current evaluation is to consider the extent to which practices targeting improvements in teacher quality apply to teachers in the transition from pre-service into the teaching profession.
6 Further Planning

In addition to reviewing planning for this evaluation in the context of the C4Es – HATs – Paraprofessionals contract variation, the following planning activities remain outstanding:

- Further collaborative work with sector representatives to confirm participating schools;
- Furthering contact with professional experience offices at UNE, UWS and ACU to access pre-service teacher practicum reports;
- Finalising online aspects of the evaluation, i.e., website for surveys, structuring UNE’s Learning Management System to allow online access for participants;
- Review survey content in the light of C4E Plans, preliminary themes evident in commentary and information obtained to date, themes from the literature and the scope of an expanded evaluation;
- Completion of the ethics application process;
- Commencing site visits to schools identified to trial data collection instruments; and
- Preparation of Draft documents for the expanded project.

Continued discussions and liaison with the Cross-sectoral Project Reference Group will be an integral part of achieving activities.
7 References


8 Appendices
### 8.1 Appendix A – Summary of C4Es across the three sectors

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Centre For Excellence – School Plan Focus</th>
<th>University Partnership</th>
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<td>Linkages between initial teacher education programs and transition to teaching</td>
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| Quirindi High School                       | 5+ Spoke schools | Providing quality supervision, mentoring & support to early career teachers; Provide ongoing professional learning aligned for teaching standards; Providing quality supervision, mentoring & support to for initial teacher education students | University of New England
                                              |                                      | University of Newcastle                |                                        |
| Sydney Secondary College – Leichhardt Campus | 4 Spoke schools | Providing quality supervision, mentoring & support to early career teachers; Linkages between initial teacher education programs and transition to teaching                                                                                   | Sydney University
                                              |                                      | University of NSW                      |                                        |
## Progress Report #1: Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures

### School Cluster Centre For Excellence – School Plan Focus University Partnership

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### Catholic Sector

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*Progress Report #1: Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures*
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Indicates detailed information is currently unavailable or Not Applicable
8.2 Appendix B – Letter and Information Sheet sent to Catholic Dioceses

Evaluation of the Practicum Reforms arising from the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership

Dear

The SiMERR National Research Centre at the University of New England has been contracted to conduct an evaluation of the impact of professional experience reform measures as part of the NSW Smarter Schools National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. While SiMERR is the lead organisation, Associate Professor Cal Durrant and Associate Professor Paul White from the Australian Catholic University, and Professor Wayne Sawyer from the University of Western Sydney will also be involved.

The evaluation is to be conducted over three years and will consider the effectiveness of professional experience (practicum placement) as it is delivered through Centres for Excellence across Government, Catholic and Independent Schools. The NSW Smarter Schools National Partnership Evaluation Committee has oversight of the work and the involvement of the Catholic Sector is being coordinated through the Catholic Education Commission in the first instance, and then through the Catholic Education Office in each Diocese.

Support for the next generation of teachers is an important responsibility for teachers, schools and school systems and it is anticipated that there will be three key outcomes from the evaluation:

1. Higher quality teacher graduates
2. Teaching graduates who are better equipped and prepared to teach in NSW challenging school, such as those that are remote or which have high Aboriginal enrolments
3. Better retention of new graduates in teaching, especially in challenging schools

In addition, it is envisaged that the evaluation will also facilitate the identification and enunciation of the range of support structures and conditions, including school-university partnerships that better support the preparation of beginning teachers.

The first stage of the project involves the development of a detailed evaluation plan, inclusive of the methodology to be applied during the evaluation. This plan needs to recognise the distinct characteristics of the initiatives in each sector and we are therefore seeking your input to inform our discussions over the next month with the Smarter Schools National Partnership Evaluation Committee, and to enable us to proceed with planning for the initial stages of the evaluation.

A pro-forma Information Sheet has been developed to provide you with a sense of the scope of the evaluation and should provide an indication of how your respective Dioceses will be
able to contribute to the evaluation. We are asking you to complete these questions as a way of crystallizing your thoughts about the place of professional experience within your contexts and any special features of the initiatives being pursued in your Diocese. Also included is a Sampling Framework (e.g., school type, geographic location) as a guide to the identification of schools to participate in the evaluation.

Later stages of the evaluation involve site visits to schools, targeted interviews, and surveying of principals, supervising teachers, and student teachers. The information from these various instruments will be triangulated against a range of data indicative of teacher quality and of successful transition from university into the teaching profession.

Ethics approval and support for conducting the evaluation in schools is being undertaken in the first instance at the University of New England. Negotiations are also underway with the NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission, and the NSW Association of Independent Schools.

I would be grateful if you could return this pro-forma and a list of schools associated with a Centre for Excellence initiative within your Diocese that could participate in the evaluation by 2nd September. The information can be returned by email to Dr Greg McPhan (greg.mcphan@une.edu.au) who is a member of the evaluation team and works in the SiMERR National Research Centre where he can be contacted on 02 6773 2280 with any questions about the information we are seeking at this stage or about the evaluation. The Smarter Schools National Partnership Evaluation Committee has set the 16th September for the completion the completion of the Evaluation Plan.

Yours sincerely,

Professor John Pegg
Director
SiMERR National Research Centre
University of New England
INFORMATION SHEET – To be completed by each Diocese in which a Centre for Excellence exists

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<td>(M):</td>
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<th>Describe in brief terms your Centre for Excellence Initiatives?</th>
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<th>Describe the support structure(s) implemented for undergraduate teacher development. This ‘development’ might encompass a beginning teacher’s:</th>
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<td>• Capacity (preparedness for the profession across a range of contexts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sustainability (focus and commitment across a range of contexts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Resilience (motivation across a range of contexts)</td>
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<th>In general, describe the relationship between schools in your Diocese and universities concerning the support of undergraduate teachers.</th>
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<td>What are some of the successes and issues/challenges that are currently evident for you in the support of undergraduate teachers?</td>
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<td>Do you wish to involve schools that have established university partnerships but which lie outside the Centre for Excellence initiative in the evaluation? If so, could you provide a list of the schools bearing in mind the attached sampling frame?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have any other comments or suggestions concerning the evaluation to be undertaken within your Diocese?</td>
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</table>
Sampling Frame

The schools identified as participating in the Evaluation should be broadly indicative of the range of contexts in which the professional experience initiatives are being conducted. The following Sampling Frame is intended as a guide to the identification of schools.

School type:

Primary/Sec/K-12

Organisational form of the professional experience

Internship/ Block Models/Dispersed

Geographic distribution

Metropolitan/Rural/Remote

Characteristics of the schools’ students

Aboriginality/SES/ESL

School-University Partnerships

Range of Partners and relationship forms
### 8.3 Appendix C – Session Structure – C4E Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:15 – 11:20</td>
<td>Welcome and introductions</td>
<td>Greg</td>
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</table>
| 11:20 – 11:35 | • Overview of the evaluation: structure, timelines, contextual issues and key questions  
|             | • Questions                                             | Bruce         |
| 11:35 – 11:50 | • National directions: The National Professional Standards for Teachers  
|             | • Questions                                             | Greg          |
| 11:50 – 12:05 | • What makes an effective professional experience program?  
|             | • Questions                                             | Wayne         |
| 12:05 – 12:25 | Discussion groups based on the following questions:  
|             | 1. What are key school organisational issues (e.g., available personnel, support structures) for professional experience placement programs within your C4E?  
|             | 2. What are some of the constraints (e.g., rurality, developing partnerships) impacting on professional experience placement programs within your C4E?  
|             | 3. What are some pre-service teacher preparation issue (e.g., practicum structure, aspirations, relevance) that contribute to successful professional experience placement within your C4E?  
|             | 4. What has been the extent of engagement of your C4E cluster?  
|             | 5. What is the extent of familiarisation with and use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within your C4E?  
|             | 6. What underpins (i.e., theoretical framework, pd model) effective professional learning for your C4E?  
|             | 7. What knowledge and dispositions do you consider to be necessary for ‘ideal’ and ‘challenging’ teaching situations? Are these general attributes, or are they career stage specific?  
|             | 8. What are some of the issues (both contextual and supply related) that impact on the attraction and retention of teachers in your schools?  
|             | 9. What are the perceived and actual benefits of having an established partnership with a university? Consider roles, impact on professional learning generally and the professional experience in particular.  
|             | 10. How do you see the match between the knowledge and skills developed during the professional experience and the needs of pre-service/beginning teachers?  
|             | 11. Has the professional experience program changed over time within your C4E? If so (e.g., school and/or supervising teacher capacity), how? If not, what changes are necessary?  
|             | 12. What changes (e.g., around roles in teacher development) have you observed in your C4E community as a result of increased expectations about improving the quality of teaching and learning?  
| 12:25 – 12:40 | Reporting back                                          | Cal           |
| 12:40 – 12:45 | Final questions and concluding remarks                  | Greg          |
8.4 Appendix D – Draft Surveys (to be revised in the light of additional focus)

8.4.1 Pre-service teachers

Pre-service Teacher Survey

To the Pre-service Teacher:

The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England has been engaged by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC) to conduct a state level evaluation of elements of the Improving Teacher Quality Smarter Schools National Partnership (ITQNP).

This ITQNP involves a range of nationally significant and sustainable reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in our schools and classrooms.

The professional experience is an important aspect of the preparation of teachers that is sometimes undervalued and often not given the priority that other professions give to this aspect of initial preparation. Initiatives aimed at improving the outcomes of the professional experience for beginning teachers are being implemented in Centres of Excellence and other schools across NSW.

A consortium of university partners including the University of New England, The Australian Catholic University and the University of Western Sydney is participating in the evaluation. The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England is the Lead Partner.

We are writing to seek your support in completing this important survey about your professional experience. Your feedback about your Professional Experience is a critical aspect of this evaluation.

Results from this state level evaluation will directly inform future policy, resources and support to enhance teacher preparation in NSW schools - providing hard evidence to build a case for future funding of reforms supported by the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

The evaluation team would be grateful if you would complete the survey. It should take you no longer than 30 minutes.

Follow-up surveys and interviews will be conducted over the life of the 3-year study. If you are willing to participate the longitudinal aspects of the evaluation please follow the links within the survey.

Note: any feedback provided by you, as part of your survey response or subsequent interview will remain confidential to the evaluation team. Any reporting of commentary provided by individuals will be de-identified.

Thank you

Professor John Pegg
For and on behalf of the evaluation team.
Questions

About you:

1. I am preparing to be:
   a. an Early Childhood Teacher
   b. a Primary Teacher
   c. a Secondary Teacher

2. My home state is:
   a. NSW
   b. Queensland
   c. Victoria
   d. Western Australia
   e. South Australia
   f. Tasmania
   g. Australian Capital Territory
   h. Northern Territory

3. I am currently enrolled at the
   a. Australian Catholic University
   b. Australian College of Physical Education
   c. Avondale College
   d. Charles Sturt University
   e. Macquarie University
   f. Southern Cross University
   g. University of Sydney
   h. University of Canberra
   i. University of New England
   j. University of New South Wales
   k. University of Notre Dame (Australia)
   l. University of Technology Sydney
   m. University of Western Sydney
   n. Wollongong University
   o. 
   please indicate in the space below

   h
   e
   r
4. I am enrolled in a:
   a. four year integrated teaching degree
   b. a double degree
   c. one year graduate entry teacher education program
   d. two year graduate entry teacher education program

5. Please indicate which situation best represents your situation
   a. I am in the first year of my teacher education studies.
   b. I am in the final year of my teacher education studies
   a. I have successfully completed one or more years of my teacher education program, but I am not in my final year.

6. Please click the buttons that represent your teaching specialisations (Select all buttons that are appropriate to your program):
   - Early Childhoos
   - Primary
   - English
   - Mathematics
   - Biology
   - Chemistry
   - Earth and Environmental Science
   - Physics
   - Aboriginal Studies
   - Ancient History
   - Business Studies
   - Economics
   - Geography
   - Legal Studies
   - Modern History
   - Society and Culture
   - Studies of Religion
   - Agricultural Technology
   - Computing Technology Information Systems
   - Computing Technology Software Design
   - Design and Technology
   - Engineering Technology
   - Food Technology
   - Graphics and Multimedia Technology
   - Industrial Technology
   - Textiles Technology
   - Personal Development Health and Physical Education
   - Languages
   - Dance
   - Drama
• Music
• Visual Arts

**About your Professional Experience**

7. Click on the button that best represents the forms of professional experience in which you have engaged prior to your current or most recent professional experience (Select all buttons that are appropriate).
   • No prior in-school experience
   • one or two days in-school experience per week over a term or semester
   • a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   • familiarisation visits to the school followed by a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   • other

8. If Other, please indicate in the space below the form of the professional experience

   

9. Click on the button that best represents the current or most recent form of professional experience you have engaged in:
   • one or two days per week over a term or semester
   • a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   • familiarisation visits to the school followed by a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   • an Internship over 1 or 2 terms
   • other

10. If Other, please indicate in the space below the current form of professional experience

   

Progress
11. Who was responsible for contacting the school and arranging the professional experience
(Please select one of the following)
- I had to arrange it myself
- I made the initial contact which was followed up by the university’s practicum coordinator
- The university practicum coordinator
- Other

12. If ‘Other’, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating at this school


Orientation to the School

13. Click on the buttons that represent how you were introduced to school (Select all buttons that are appropriate).

- I went to the school prior to my professional experience
- I went to the school at the commencement of the professional experience program
- I was introduced to the Principal when I went to the school
- I was introduced to members of the school executive when I went to the school
- I met the school practicum coordinator prior to going to the school for my professional experience
- I met the school practicum coordinator when I went to the school for my professional experience
- I met my supervising teacher(s) prior to going to the school for my professional experience
- I met my supervising teacher(s) when I went to the school for my professional experience
- I was provided with an orientation manual when I went to the school
- I was provided with copies of teaching programs and access to resource materials
- My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the classes I would teach and about the subject content being taught
• My school practicum coordinator talked to me about the specific teaching and learning philosophy being implemented in the school.
• My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the specific teaching and learning philosophy being implemented in the class/grade/faculty.
• My school practicum coordinator talked to me about the specific teaching and learning strategies that were successful in the school.
• My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the specific teaching and learning strategies that were successful in the class/grade/faculty.
• Other
14. If ‘Other’, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating for your professional experience

Preparation for Professional Experience

Knowledge of students and how they learn

15. Indicate the extent to which your university studies have prepared you to be able to apply within your professional experience:

a. knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.

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b. knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.

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c. knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.

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d. broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

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e. knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

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f. broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

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Knowledge of content and how to teach it

16. Indicate the extent to which your university studies have prepared you to be able to:

a. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.

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b. Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.

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c. Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.

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d. Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.

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e. Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.

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f. Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum-learning opportunities for students.

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17. Please indicate the school at which you are undertaking your current professional experience or have undertaken your most recent professional experience.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS RELATE TO YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Learning in schools

Planning for and implementing effective teaching and learning

18. Indicate the extent to which this professional experience has provided opportunities to:

a. Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.

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b. Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.

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c. Include a range of teaching strategies in lessons.

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d. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.

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e. Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.

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f. Demonstrate broad knowledge of strategies that can be used to evaluate teaching programs to improve student learning.

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g. Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process.

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19. To what extent did this professional experience provide opportunities for you to:

a. identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.

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b. demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.

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c. develop a suite of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.

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d. develop an understanding of strategies that support students' well-being and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.

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e. demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues and the strategies available to support the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.

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Assessing learning and providing feedback to students

20. How important has this professional experience been in developing your capacity to:

a. demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.

Very important: 5 4 3 2 1 0

b. demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.

Very important: 5 4 3 2 1 0

c. demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.

Very important: 5 4 3 2 1 0

d. Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.

Very important: 5 4 3 2 1 0

e. Demonstrate understanding of a range of strategies for reporting to students and parents/carers and the purpose of keeping accurate and reliable records of student achievement.

Very important: 5 4 3 2 1 0

Becoming a professional

Professional Engagement

21. Has this professional experience contributed to:

a. your understanding of the role of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.

Not really: 0 1 2 3 4 5
b. your understanding of relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.

Not really                      It has helped a lot
0  1  2  3  4  5

Not really                      It has helped a lot
0  1  2  3  4  5

c. your capacity to seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.

Not really                      It has helped a lot
0  1  2  3  4  5

d. your being able to demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.

Not really                      It has helped a lot
0  1  2  3  4  5

Engagement with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

22. How important has this professional experience been to developing your:

a. understanding of the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.

Very important                        Not important
5  4  3  2  1  0

b. understanding of the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.

Very important                        Not important
5  4  3  2  1  0

c. understanding of strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.

Very important                        Not important
5  4  3  2  1  0

d. understanding of the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers’ professional knowledge and practice.

Very important                        Not important
5  4  3  2  1  0
Supervision

23. Please indicate who was the most important influence/contributor to the success of 
this professional experience

- your teacher mentor/supervisor
- the schools practicum coordinator
- the HAT
- the school principal
- the University supervisor

About the Professional Experience Session

24. If this is not your first professional experience please indicate which of the following 
apply to make this professional experience session different to prior sessions. (Select 
all that apply):

- There was a stronger focus on the quality of teaching and learning
- There was less focus on the quality of teaching and learning
- This school saw the professional experience as being important
- This school did not see their contribution to the professional experience as being 
  important
- My supervisor was more helpful and was better able to model what good 
  teaching looked like.
- I learned a broader range of strategies for managing student behaviour
- I was given a range of opportunities to learn more about being a teacher, such 
  as how to value the contribution of parents and the community
- My supervisor was able to provide constructive feedback which I was able to 
  implement in following lessons
- I was able to learn about Aboriginal students, their culture, and learning needs 
  and styles
- This session has given me the confidence to succeed as a teacher
- For me this session was no different to other professional experience sessions.

25. Please outline other ways in which this school’s practices and environment for this 
professional experience session were different to previous any professional 
experience session.
26. In what ways could the professional experience at this school be improved to better contribute to your development as a teacher? (Include areas where you feel you need further development and support)

Future involvement

27. This survey is part of a longitudinal evaluation of the success or otherwise of the professional experience reforms being initiated. Further aspects of the study involve the impact of the reforms on early career years of beginning teachers.

Please click on the following link to register your interest in participating in later stages of this evaluation. As indicated in the information letter sent to you from the University of New England Ethics Committee all information collected will remain confidential to the evaluation team and will not be used for any other purposes.

Click here to register your interest in further involvement in the evaluation.
8.4.2 Beginning teachers

Beginning Teacher Survey

To the Beginning Teacher:

The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England has been engaged by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC) to conduct a state level evaluation of elements of the Improving Teacher Quality Smarter Schools National Partnership (ITQNP).

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A consortium of university partners including the University of New England, The Australian Catholic University and the University of Western Sydney is participating in the evaluation. The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England is the Lead Partner.

We are writing to seek your support in completing this important survey about your professional experience. Your feedback about your Professional Experience is a critical aspect of this evaluation.

Results from this state level evaluation will directly inform future policy, resources and support to enhance teacher preparation in NSW schools - providing hard evidence to build a case for future funding of reforms supported by the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

The evaluation team would be grateful if you would complete the survey. It should take you no longer than 30 minutes.

Note: any feedback provided by you, as part of your survey response or subsequent interview will remain confidential to the evaluation team. Any reporting of commentary provided by individuals will be de-identified.

Thank you

Professor John Pegg
For and on behalf of the evaluation team.
Questions

About you:

1. I am:
   a. an Early Childhood Teacher
   b. a Primary Teacher
   c. a Secondary Teacher

2. I completed my teacher education studies at the:
   a. Australian Catholic University
   b. Australian College of Physical Education
   c. Avondale College
   d. Charles Sturt University
   e. Macquarie University
   f. Southern Cross University
   g. University of Sydney
   h. University of Canberra
   i. University of New England
   j. University of New South Wales
   k. University of Notre Dame (Australia)
   l. University of Technology Sydney
   m. University of Western Sydney
   n. Wollongong University
   o. Other please indicate in the box below

3. I completed a:
   a. four year integrated teaching degree
   b. a double degree
   c. a three year content degree followed by a one year graduate entry teacher education course
   d. a three content year degree followed by a two year graduate entry teacher education course

4. Please indicate which situation best represents your situation
   a. I am in the first year of teaching working as a casual teacher.
   b. I am in first year of teaching working in a full-time teaching position
   c. I have completed one or more years of teaching and am working towards achieving professional competence
   d. I have completed one or more years of full-time teaching and have achieved professional competence
5. Please click the buttons that represent your teaching specialisations or (Select all buttons that are appropriate to your program):
   - Primary
   - Early Childhood
   - English
   - Mathematics
   - Biology
   - Chemistry
   - Earth and Environmental Science
   - Physics
   - Aboriginal Studies
   - Ancient History
   - Business Studies
   - Economics
   - Geography
   - Legal Studies
   - Modern History
   - Society and Culture
   - Studies of Religion
   - Agricultural Technology
   - Computing Technology Information Systems
   - Computing Technology Software Design
   - Design and Technology
   - Engineering Technology
   - Food Technology
   - Graphics and Multimedia Technology
   - Industrial Technology
   - Textiles Technology
   - Personal Development Health and Physical Education
   - Languages
   - Dance
   - Drama
   - Music
   - Visual Art

6. Please indicate the name of your current school
About your Professional Experience

7. Click on the buttons that best represent the forms of professional experience you undertook during your initial preparation (Click all relevant buttons):
   - one or two days per week over a term or semester
   - blocks of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - familiarisation visits to the school followed by blocks of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - an Internship over 1 or 2 terms
   - other, please indicate in the space below the form of the professional experience

8. Please indicate the school in which you undertook your most successful professional experience

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS RELATE TO YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

9. When you were involved in this professional experience who was responsible for initiating the contact the with schools and arranging the professional experience (Please select one of the following)
   - I had to arrange it myself
   - I made the initial contact which was followed up by the university’s practicum coordinator
   - The university practicum coordinator
   - Other

10. If ‘Other’, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating at this school
Orientation to the School

11. Click on the buttons that represent how you were introduced to school during the final professional experience session (Select all buttons that are appropriate).
   - I went to the school prior to my professional experience
   - I went to the school on the first day of my Professional experience session
   - I was introduced to the Principal when I first went to the school
   - I was introduced to members of the school executive when I went to the school
   - I met the school practicum coordinator prior to going to the school for my professional experience
   - I met the school practicum coordinator when I went to the school for my professional experience
   - I met my supervising teacher(s) prior to going to the school for my professional experience
   - I met my supervising teacher(s) when I went to the school for my professional experience
   - I was provided with an orientation manual when I went to the school
   - I was provided with copies of teaching programs and access to resource materials
   - My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the classes I would teach and about the subject content being taught
   - My school practicum coordinator/talked to me about the specific teaching and learning philosophy being implemented in the school
   - My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the specific teaching and learning philosophy being implemented in the class/grade/faculty.
   - My school practicum coordinator talked to me about the specific teaching and learning strategies that were successful in the school
   - My supervising teacher(s) talked to me about the specific teaching and learning strategies that were successful in the class/grade/faculty

12. If ‘Other’, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating for your professional experience
Preparation for Teaching

Knowledge of students and how they learn

13. Indicate the extent to which you believe your university studies prepared you to be able to apply to your teaching:

a. knowledge and understanding of the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5

b. knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5

c. knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5

d. broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5

e. knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5

f. broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

   Not Prepared  Well Prepared
   0  1  2  3  4  5
Knowledge of content and how to teach it

14. Indicate the extent to which your university studies prepared you to be able to:

   a. Apply knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.
      
      | Well Prepared | Not Prepared |
      |--------------|-------------|
      | 5 4 3 2 1 0  |

   b. organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequences.
      
      | Not Prepared | Well Prepared |
      |--------------|---------------|
      | 0 1 2 3 4 5  |

   c. use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.
      
      | Not Prepared | Well Prepared |
      |--------------|---------------|
      | 0 1 2 3 4 5  |

   d. demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.
      
      | Not Prepared | Well Prepared |
      |--------------|---------------|
      | 0 1 2 3 4 5  |

   e. know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.
      
      | Not Prepared | Well Prepared |
      |--------------|---------------|
      | 0 1 2 3 4 5  |

   f. implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum-learning opportunities for students.
      
      | Not Prepared | Well Prepared |
      |--------------|---------------|
      | 0 1 2 3 4 5  |

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SESSION

Learning in schools

Planning for and implementing effective teaching and learning

15. Indicate the extent to which this professional experience session provided opportunities to:
a. Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
2 | 0
1 | 0
0 | 0

b. Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
2 | 0
1 | 0
0 | 0

c. Include a range of teaching strategies in lessons.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
2 | 0
1 | 0
0 | 0

d. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
2 | 0
1 | 0
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e. Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
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0 | 0

f. Demonstrate broad knowledge of strategies that can be used to evaluate teaching programs to improve student learning.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
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1 | 0
0 | 0

g. Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process.

Numerous opportunities | No opportunities
---|---
5 | 0
4 | 0
3 | 0
2 | 0
1 | 0
0 | 0

16. To what extent did this professional experience session provide opportunities for you to:

a. Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.

No opportunity | Numerous opportunities
---|---
0 | 5
1 | 5
2 | 5
3 | 5
4 | 5
5 | 5
b. demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.

No opportunity

0 1 2 3 4 5
Numerous opportunities


c. develop a suite of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.

No opportunity

0 1 2 3 4 5
Numerous opportunities


d. develop an understanding of strategies that support students’ well-being and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.

No opportunity

0 1 2 3 4 5
Numerous opportunities


e. demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues and the strategies available to support the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.

No opportunity

0 1 2 3 4 5
Numerous opportunities

Assessing learning and providing feedback to students

17. How important was this professional experience in developing your capacity to:

a. demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.

Very important

5 4 3 2 1 0
Not important

b. demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.

Very important

5 4 3 2 1 0
Not important

c. demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.

Very important

5 4 3 2 1 0
Not important

Progress Report #1: Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures
d. Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.

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e. Demonstrate understanding of a range of strategies for reporting to students and parents/carers and the purpose of keeping accurate and reliable records of student achievement.

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**Becoming a professional**

*Professional Engagement*

18. Has this professional experience contributed to:

a. developing an understanding of the role of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.

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b. your understanding of relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.

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c. your capacity to seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.

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d. your being able to demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.

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*Engagement with colleagues, parents/carers and the community*

19. How important was this professional experience to developing your:
a. understanding of the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.

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b. understanding of the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.

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c. Understanding of strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.

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d. understanding of the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers’ professional knowledge and practice.

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Supervision

20. Please indicate who was the most important influence/contributor to the success of this professional experience

- your teacher mentor/supervisor
- the schools practicum coordinator
- the HAT
- the school principal
- the University supervisor

About the Professional Experience Session

21. Please indicate which of the following applied to this professional experience session that made it different to other sessions. (Select all that apply):

- There was a stronger focus on the quality of teaching and learning
- This school saw the professional experience as being important
- My supervisor was more helpful and was better able to model what good teaching looked like.
- I learned a broader range of strategies for managing student behaviour
• I was given a range of opportunities to learn more about being a teacher, such as how to value the contribution of parents and the community
• My supervisor was able to provide constructive feedback which I was able to implement in following lessons
• I was able to learn about Aboriginal students, their culture, and learning needs and styles
• This session has given me the confidence to succeed as a teacher
• This was my first professional experience session
• For me this session was no different to other professional experience sessions

22. Please outline any other aspects of this schools approach and organisation of the professional experience session that were different from other sessions

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23. To what extent do you perceive that your professional experience prepared you for working in:

a. ‘challenging’ schools, i.e. schools with relatively low student outcomes on some measures

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b. schools with high Aboriginal Enrolments

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c. rural and remote communities

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d. schools with high student welfare needs and behaviour management demands

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Orientation towards teaching

24. If you are currently employed in a full-time position please indicate which of the following applies to you. More than one may apply:

- I am contracted in my current position for one year or less
- I am in a probationary position working towards professional competence
- I am enjoying teaching
- I feel valued in my current role
- I am confident about my teaching at the moment
- I don’t think that I want to stay in this school beyond this year
- If the opportunity arose I would stay in this school for the next 2-3 years
- If the opportunity arose I would stay in this school for the next 4-5 years
- I find teaching my current classes difficult
- I am well supported by the senior executive of the school
- I do not think I am well supported by the senior executive of the school.
- I don’t think that teaching is a long term career prospect for me
8.4.3 Principal/school

Initial Principal Survey

To the Principal:

The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England has been engaged by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC) to conduct a state level evaluation of elements of the Improving Teacher Quality Smarter Schools National Partnership (ITQNP).

This ITQNP involves a range of nationally significant and sustainable reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in our schools and classrooms.

The professional experience is an important aspect of the preparation of teachers that is sometimes undervalued and often not given the priority that other professions give to this aspect of initial preparation. Initiatives aimed at improving the outcomes of the professional experience for beginning teachers are being implemented in Centres of Excellence and other schools across NSW.

A consortium of university partners including the University of New England, The Australian Catholic University and the University of Western Sydney is participating in the evaluation. The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England is the Lead Partner.

We are writing to seek your support in completing this important survey about your professional experience. Your feedback about your Professional Experience is a critical aspect of this evaluation.

Results from this state level evaluation will directly inform future policy, resources and support to enhance teacher preparation in NSW schools - providing hard evidence to build a case for future funding of reforms supported by the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

The evaluation team would be grateful if you would complete the survey. It should take you no longer than 30 minutes.

Shorter follow-up surveys and interviews will be conducted over the life of the 3-year study to measure progress and outcomes.

Note: any feedback provided by you as part of your survey response or subsequent interview will remain confidential to the evaluation team. Any reporting of commentary from individual responses will be de-identified.

Thank you

Professor John Pegg
For and on behalf of the evaluation team.
About your school

1. Name of your school:

School characteristics

2. Click on the buttons which are appropriate to your school
   a. The school is a:
      - Primary school
      - Secondary school
      - Middle school
      - K-10 school
      - K-12 school
   b. The school enrolment is between:
      - 15 and 50
      - 51 and 150
      - 151 and 250
      - 251 and 500
      - 501 and 800
      - 801 and 1000
      - 1001 and 1500
   c. The school is located in:
      - Metropolitan Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong
      - a regional city
      - a rural area
      - a remote rural area

3. Please complete the following in relation to the student demographic and engagement of your school
   - % ESL students = ____________________
   - % Aboriginal Students = ______________
   - Average attendance = __________________

4. Would you describe the teaching environment in your school to be ‘challenging’ (ie ‘difficult’)?
   
   Yes/No

5. If ‘Yes’ please indicate below the specific challenges for teachers in your school e.g. ESL, Aboriginality, behaviour management, low achievement, student engagement, remoteness etc.
Involvement in the professional experience

6. Click on the button that indicates approximately how many student teachers undertook their professional experience in your school in this half of the year

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

7. Click on the button that indicates approximately how many student teachers undertook their professional experience in your school in the most recent half-year

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

8. Indicate by clicking the appropriate button the approximate number of student teachers coming to your school from each of the teacher education institutions this year:

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<td>10 or more</td>
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</table>
9. Does your school give priority to accepting students from particular universities?
   - Yes
   - No

10. If ‘Yes’, please indicate in the space below the universities you prioritise and why.

   [Blank space]

11. Click on the buttons which represent the forms of professional experience sought by students (Click more than one if appropriate):
   - One day per week over a term
   - Blocks of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - Introductory familiarisation visits to the school followed by a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - An Internship over 1 or 2 terms
   - Other

12. Please describe in the space below the form/nature/detail of the professional experience offered in your school. What are its specific aims? Does it differ according to the Year level of the student teacher (e.g., whether they are a first or second or later years student)? Does it vary for different teaching methods?

   [Blank space]

13. Is there a deliberate policy for selecting students to undertake the professional experience in your school?
   - Yes
   - No

14. If ‘Yes’ please indicate who makes the decision and what are the criteria

   [Blank space]
Preparedness of beginning teachers

15. Rate each of the following knowledge/skills/dispositions of New Scheme Teachers in terms of their importance for successful teaching in your school:

   a. The development of knowledge about students and how they learn
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   b. The development of knowledge about the content and how to teach it
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   c. The development of the skills needed to plan and implement effective teaching and learning
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   d. The ability to create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   e. The capacity to assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   f. The capacity to engage in professional learning
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

   g. The capacity to engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community
      Not Important Very Important
      0 1 2 3 4 5

16. Do you feel that current initial teacher education programs adequately prepare new scheme teachers for successful teaching in your school?

   Yes/No

17. If ‘No’ please comment
School University Partnerships

18. Does your school have a school university partnership arrangement with the university that you prioritise?

Yes/ No

If you answered ‘Yes’ go to Question 20

19. Does your school have a partnership with another university?

Yes/ No

If you answered ‘No’ then go to Question 23

20. Select the buttons that best describe your partnership with a university? Click all relevant buttons.

- The partnership is an informal arrangement
- The partnership is a formal arrangement with agreed commitments from each of the partners
- University teacher education staff regularly visit the school
- University sessional staff regularly visit the school in a professional experience capacity
- The university makes available its professional learning expertise to teachers
- School staff regularly meet with teacher educators to plan for more effective teaching
- The partnership has resulted in specific training for Supervising Teachers/Mentors
- The focus of the partnership is on improving teaching and learning across the school
- The partnership includes a research element investigating better ways of supporting and preparing student teachers.
- The partnership includes a research element investigating better ways of supporting and preparing New Scheme Teachers.
- The partnership’s focus is on supporting the professional experience program being undertaken by the university’s students
- The partnership has resulted in a more focused professional experience program
- The partnership has not impacted on prior or current practices
- The partnership has impacted on the way we manage and support the professional experience
- The university has articulated a clear theoretical framework and philosophy for reforming the professional experience
- The focus of the partnership is not clear
- Other, please elaborate in the space provided below.
21. What does the school gain from this partnership?

22. How has the partnership enhanced the professional experience programs? What is now different in terms of resources, personnel, programs and outcomes?

The status of professional experience reforms in your school

23. Please click on the button that applies to your school
   - Changes to the way we provide professional experience are yet to be considered
   - We have spent some time investigating how to improve the professional experience but are yet to make changes
   - We are implementing changes to the way we provide professional experience

24. Who was/is responsible for developing different models and strategies for changing the way the school supports the professional experience?
   - I have that responsibility
   - The HAT
   - Another member of the school Executive is responsible.
   - The school Executive shares responsibility
   - Our university partner
   - No one
25. What is the basis of the changes that are planned or being implemented? What is the theoretical framework for reforming the professional experience?

Coordination, management and supervision of the professional experience in your school

26. Click on the buttons that best represent how the professional experience is managed in your school. Click all relevant buttons
   - All professional experience is approved and coordinated by the principal
   - Professional experience is coordinated by the HAT
   - The School Executive has collective responsibility for coordinating and managing support for the professional experience
   - Individual teachers are responsible for managing their involvement in the professional experience
   - There are no formal structures within the school for approving, coordinating or managing professional experience
   - The school has set policies and procedures for managing professional experience in the school
   - The school implements the policy of the student teacher’s university
   - Other
     if ‘Other’, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating in your school

27. Who determines which teachers are selected to supervise the professional experience?
   - The principal
   - The Professional Experience Coordinator
   - The School Executive
   - The year/subject coordinator selects from teachers who volunteer to act as supervisors.
   - Teachers arrange the placements themselves
28. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the importance of each of the following in selecting teachers to supervise the professional experience.
   a. Years of teaching experience
      Not Important  Very important
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   b. Perceptions about the quality and capacity of the supervising teacher
      Not Important  Very important
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   c. Fit with student teacher’s request in terms of school stage and subject
      Not Important  Very important
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   d. The willingness of teachers to supervise the professional experience
      Not Important  Very important
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   e. The teacher having undertaken specific supervision/mentorship training
      Not Important  Very important
      0  1  2  3  4  5

29. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the extent to which you agree with the following statements
    ('0' represents ‘Disagree’ and ‘5’ represents ‘Strongly agree’)
   a. Participating in the professional experience keeps teachers up to date with current developments in education
      Disagree  Strongly agree
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   b. Participating in professional experience develops teachers’ mentoring and supervisionary skills
      Disagree  Strongly agree
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   c. Contributing to the development of new members of the profession is a professional responsibility of all teachers
      Disagree  Strongly agree
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   d. Professional experience is a burden on the school and its teachers
      Disagree  Strongly agree
      0  1  2  3  4  5
   e. Student teachers are a positive influence on a school and its community
      Disagree  Strongly agree
      0  1  2  3  4  5
f. Teachers would not participate in professional experience if it was not for the payment received
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

h. There is a need for student teachers to have other forms of engagement with schools e.g. viewing demonstration lessons in schools
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

i. The professional experience is an element of the work currently underway to improve the quality of teaching in the school
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

j. Schools have the capacity to play a greater role in the development of new teachers
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

k. Effective school-university partnerships are beneficial to schools
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

l. The professional standards for Graduate teachers provide a good framework for reforming the professional experience
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

30. How can schools monitor the effectiveness of the professional experience? Please indicate any success criteria that could be used to monitor the effectiveness of the professional experience provided.
University support

31. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the extent to which you agree with the following statements
    (‘0’ represents ‘Disagree’ and ‘5’ represents ‘Strongly agree’)
    a. The guidelines provided by universities for managing the professional experience are clear
        Disagree Strongly agree
        0  1  2  3  4  5
        If you disagree please indicate your concerns below

    b. The criteria provided by universities for assessing whether a student has satisfied requirements for the professional experience are clear
        Disagree Strongly agree
        0  1  2  3  4  5
        If you disagree please indicate your concerns below

    c. The performance benchmarks set by universities for passing students at the professional experience are too low
        Disagree Strongly agree
        0  1  2  3  4  5

    d. Universities liaise regularly with the school during the practicum
        Disagree Strongly agree
        0  1  2  3  4  5
        If you disagree please indicate your concerns below

    e. Universities have clear processes for dealing with cases where it is determined that a student is not meeting requirements
If you disagree please indicate your concerns below

32. Please indicate for each of the following areas of student teacher development where you believe the in-school professional experience could play an increased role.
   a. The development of knowledge about students and how they learn
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   b. The development of knowledge about the content and how to teach it
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   c. The development of the skills needed to plan and implement effective teaching and learning
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   d. The ability to create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   e. The capacity to assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   f. The capacity to engage in professional learning
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
   g. The capacity to engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community
      Disagree Strongly agree
      0 1 2 3 4 5
**General Comments**

33. Please outline any special features of the professional experience in your school that have not been captured in the survey questions above.
8.4.4 HATS/Mentors

Base Line Survey Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)

To the Highly Accomplished Teacher:

The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England has been engaged by the NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee (NPEC) to conduct a state level evaluation of elements of the Improving Teacher Quality Smarter Schools National Partnership (ITQNP).

This ITQNP involves a range of nationally significant and sustainable reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in our schools and classrooms.

The professional experience is an important aspect of the preparation of teachers that is sometimes undervalued and often not given the priority that other professions give to this aspect of initial preparation. Initiatives aimed at improving the outcomes of the professional experience for beginning teachers are being implemented in Centres of Excellence and other schools across NSW.

A consortium of university partners including the University of New England, The Australian Catholic University and the University of Western Sydney is participating in the evaluation. The SiMERR Centre of the University of New England is the Lead Partner.

We are writing to seek your support in completing this important survey about your professional experience. Your feedback about your Professional Experience is a critical aspect of this evaluation.

Results from this state level evaluation will directly inform future policy, resources and support to enhance teacher preparation in NSW schools - providing hard evidence to build a case for future funding of reforms supported by the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

The evaluation team would be grateful if you would complete the survey. It should take you no longer than 30 minutes.

Shorter follow-up surveys and interviews will be conducted over the life of the 3-year study to measure progress and outcomes.

Note: any feedback provided by you as part of your survey response or subsequent interview will remain confidential to the evaluation team. Any reporting of commentary from individual responses will be de-identified.

Thank you

Professor John Pegg
For and on behalf of the evaluation team.
About your school

1. Name of your school:

School characteristics

2. Click on the buttons which are appropriate to your school
   a. The school is a:
      - Primary school
      - Secondary school
      - Middle school
      - K-10 school
      - K-12 school
   
   b. The school enrolment is between:
      - 15 and 50
      - 51 and 150
      - 151 and 250
      - 251 and 500
      - 501 and 800
      - 801 and 1000
      - 1001 and 1500
   
   c. The school is located in:
      - Metropolitan Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong
      - a regional city
      - a rural area
      - a remote rural area

3. Please complete the following in relation to the student demographic and engagement of your school
   - % ESL students = ______________________
   - % Aboriginal Students = _________________
   - Average attendance = _________________

4. Would you describe the teaching environment in your school to be challenging (ie ‘difficult’)?
   - Yes/No
5. If ‘Yes’ please indicate below the specific challenges for teachers in your school e.g. ESL, Aboriginality, behaviour management, low achievement, student engagement, remoteness etc.

Professional experience in the school

6. Click on the buttons which represent the forms of professional experience sought by students approaching your school (Click more than one if appropriate):
   - One day per week over a term
   - Blocks of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - Introductory familiarisation visits to the school followed by a block of between 2 and 4 weeks
   - An Internship over 1 or 2 terms
   - Other

7. If Other, please indicate in the space below the arrangements operating in your school

8. Please describe in the space below the form/nature/detail of the professional experience offered in your school. What are its specific aims? Does the program differ according to the Year level of the student teacher (i.e., whether they are a first or second or later years student)? Does it vary for different teaching methods?
9. Is there a deliberate policy for selecting students to undertake the professional experience in your school?

Yes/No

10. If ‘Yes’ please indicate who makes the decision and what are the selection criteria

Preparedness of beginning teachers

11. Rate each of the following knowledge/skills/dispositions of New Scheme Teachers in terms of their importance for successful teaching in your school:

a. The development of knowledge about students and how they learn
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

b. The development of knowledge about the content and how to teach it
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

c. The development of the skills needed to plan and implement effective teaching and learning
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

d. The ability to create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

e. The capacity to assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

f. The capacity to engage in professional learning
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5

g. The capacity to engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community
   Not Important  Very Important
   0 1 2 3 4 5
12. Do you feel that current initial teacher education programs adequately prepare new scheme teachers for successful teaching in your school?  
Yes/No
13. If ‘No’ please comment

School University Partnerships
14. Does your school have a school university partnership arrangement with a university?  
Yes/No
If you answered ‘No’ go to Question 20
15. What is your role in facilitating this partnership?

16. What is the nature of the university’s commitment to the school in terms of personnel and resources?

17. Select the buttons that best describe your school’s partnership with the university. Click all relevant buttons.
• The partnership is an informal arrangement
• The partnership is a formal arrangement with agreed commitments from each of the partners
• University teacher education staff regularly visit the school
• University sessional staff regularly visit the school in a professional experience capacity
• The university makes available its professional learning expertise to teachers
• School staff regularly meet with teacher educators to plan for more effective teaching
• The partnership has resulted in specific training for Supervising Teachers/Mentors
• The focus of the partnership is on improving teaching and learning across the school
• The partnership includes a research element investigating better ways of supporting and preparing student teachers. The partnership includes a research element investigating better ways of supporting and preparing New Scheme Teachers.
• The partnership’s focus is on supporting the professional experience program being undertaken by the university’s students
• The partnership has resulted in a more focused professional experience program
• The partnership has not impacted on prior or current practices
• The partnership has impacted on the way we manage and support the professional experience
• The university has articulated a clear theoretical framework and philosophy for reforming the professional experience
• The focus of the partnership is not clear
• Other, please elaborate in the space provided below.

18. What does the school gain from this partnership?

19. How has the partnership enhanced the professional experience programs? What is now different in terms of resources, personnel, programs and outcomes?
The status of professional experience reforms in your school

20. Please click on the button that applies to your school:
   - Changes to the way we provide professional experience are yet to be considered
   - We have spent some time investigating how to improve the professional experience but are yet to make changes
   - We are implementing changes to the way we provide professional experience.

21. Who is responsible for developing different or new models and strategies for changing the way the school supports the professional experience?
   - I have that responsibility
   - The Principal
   - Another member of the school Executive is responsible.
   - The school Executive shares responsibility
   - Our university partner
   - No one

22. What is the basis of the changes planned or being implemented? Include comment upon the theoretical or conceptual framework underpinning any changes.

Coordination, management and supervision of the professional experience in your school

23. Click on the buttons that best represent how the professional experience is managed in your school. Click all relevant buttons
   - All professional experience is approved and coordinated by the principal
   - Professional experience is coordinated by the HAT
   - The school Executive is responsible for coordinating and managing support for the professional experience
   - Individual teachers are responsible for managing their involvement in the professional experience
   - There are no formal structures within the school for approving, coordinating or managing professional experience
24. Who determines which teachers are selected to supervise the professional experience?
   - The principal
   - The Professional Experience Coordinator
   - The School Executive
   - The year/subject coordinator selects from teachers who volunteer to act as supervisors.
   - Teachers arrange the placements themselves

25. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the importance of each of the following in selecting teachers to supervise the professional experience.
   a. Years of teaching experience
      
      
   b. Perceptions about the quality and capacity of the supervising teacher
      
      
   c. Fit with student teacher’s request in terms of school stage and subject
      
      
   d. The willingness of teachers to supervise the professional experience
      
      
   e. The teacher having undertaken specific supervision/mentorship training
      
      
26. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the extent to which you agree with the following statements
('0' represents 'Disagree' and '5' represents 'Strongly agree')

a. Participating in the professional experience keeps teachers up to date with current developments in education
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

b. Participating in professional experience develops teachers’ mentoring and supervisory skills
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

c. Contributing to the development of new members of the profession is a professional responsibility of all teachers
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

d. Professional experience is a burden on the school and its teachers
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

e. Student teachers are a positive influence on a school and its community
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

f. Teachers would not participate in professional experience if it was not for the payment received.
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

g. It is important to ensure that student teachers have a successful professional experience
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

h. There is a need for student teachers to have other forms of engagement with schools e.g. viewing demonstration lessons in schools
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5

i. The professional experience is an element of the work currently underway to improve the quality of teaching in the school
Disagree Strongly agree
0 1 2 3 4 5
j. Schools have the capacity to play a greater role in the development of new teachers

Disagree  Strongly agree
0         1         2         3         4         5

k. Effective school-university partnerships are beneficial to schools

Disagree  Strongly agree
0         1         2         3         4         5

l. The professional standards for Graduate teachers provide a good framework for reforming the professional experience

Disagree  Strongly agree
0         1         2         3         4         5

27. How can schools monitor the effectiveness of the professional experience? Please indicate any success criteria that could be used to monitor the effectiveness of the professional experience provided.

University support

28. Rate on a scale of 0 - 5 the extent to which you agree with the following statements

('0' represents ‘Disagree’ and ‘5’ represents ‘Strongly agree’)

f. The guidelines provided by universities for managing the professional experience are clear

Disagree  Strongly agree
0         1         2         3         4         5

If you disagree please indicate your concerns below
g. The criteria provided by universities for assessing whether a student has satisfied requirements for the professional experience are clear

| Disagree | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

If you disagree please indicate your concerns below


h. The performance benchmarks set by universities for passing students at the professional experience are too low

| Disagree | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

i. Universities liaise regularly with the school during the professional experience

| Disagree | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

If you disagree please indicate your concerns below


j. Universities have clear processes for dealing with cases where it is determined that a student is not meeting requirements

| Disagree | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

If you disagree please indicate your concerns below


29. Please indicate for each of the following areas of student teacher development where you believe the in-school professional experience could play an increased role.
h. The development of knowledge about students and how they learn
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

i. The development of knowledge about the content and how to teach it
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

j. The development of the skills needed to plan and implement effective teaching and learning
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

k. The ability to create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

l. The capacity to assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

m. The capacity to engage in professional learning
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

n. The capacity to engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community
   Disagree Strongly agree
   0 1 2 3 4 5

General Comments

30. Please outline any special features of the professional experience in your school that have not been captured in the survey questions above.
8.5 Appendix E – Interview Protocols

8.5.1 Interview Protocol – Pre-service teachers

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<tr>
<th>Student Teacher:</th>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview:</td>
<td>School where Professional Experience was undertaken:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Relationship of the professional experience session to the teacher preparation program

Possible prompts:

- What is the form of your teacher education program?
- At what stage are you in your teacher preparation?
- How many professional experience programs have you completed?
- Does the university have other means of providing you with in-school experience?

2. Perceptions of the role

Possible prompts:

- What do you perceived as your ideal teaching situation?
- What knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for teaching in this ideal situation?
- How would the teaching demands of a challenging environment be different?
- What additional knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for successful practice in a challenging teaching environment?

3. Preparedness to undertake professional experience in terms of content and pedagogic knowledge

Possible prompts:

- How challenging is this professional experience been for you in terms of classes, student characteristics, curriculum stage and concepts to be taught?
- What do you see as your current areas of strength, weakness and priority development needs?
- Do you think that your university study program has adequately prepared you for the teaching situations encountered in this professional experience session?
- Are there any specific aspects of teaching in this school for which you were unprepared?
- What particular challenges does this school present for student teachers undertaking professional experience?

4. Structure and philosophy of the professional experience program

Possible prompts:

- How is this professional experience program structured?
- What support structures are in place to support beginning teachers?
- What is the scope of teaching undertaken?
- What are the aims of the program?
- How relevant are the Graduate Teaching standards to the program?
- Is the support provided to you sufficient to meet areas of perceived weakness in their teaching?
- Is there a research aspect to the professional experience program?

5. Role of the university
### 6. About the professional experience in this school

**Possible prompts:**
- To what extent is the university involved with the school in the delivery of the professional experience program?
- How often were you contacted or your teaching observed by university personnel?
- By what means do you communicate with your university supervisor or practicum coordinator?

### 7. Areas for improving support and outcomes of the program

**Possible prompts:**
- To what extent are/were supervisors/mentors able to provide the advice, modelling of practice and support you needed to meet your development needs?
- What characteristics and features make this school different in terms of teaching demands?
- How is the professional experience provided in this school different to that experienced in other schools?
- Have opportunities been presented within the program to address all domains of the Professional Standards?
- Did professional experience contribute to you developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to work in challenging schools such as those with high Aboriginal enrolments or those that are remote?
8.5.2 Interview Protocol – Beginning teachers

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<th>Beginning Teacher:</th>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview:</td>
<td>Current School:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Form of professional experience and teacher education program

**Possible prompts:**
- What is the form of your teacher education program, including teaching methods and the professional experience component?
- How many professional experience sessions did you complete and in which schools?
- Did you see any one Professional experience sessions as more effective than others?

2. Preparation for the role

**Possible prompts:**
- What do you perceived as your ideal teaching situation?
- What knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for teaching in this ideal situation?
- How would the teaching demands of a challenging environment be different?
- What additional knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for successful practice in a challenging teaching environment?

3. Preparedness to teach

**Possible prompts:**
- How challenging is the current teaching role in terms of the social and learning characteristics of students, and the curriculum requirement of the current teaching schedule?
- What are their current areas of strength, weakness and professional learning needs? Are these needs being met?
- To what extent was the on-the-job learning of the professional experience in schools relevant to their current role?
- Did the initial teacher education program provide adequate preparation for teaching?

4. Structure and philosophy of the professional experience programs undertaken

**Possible prompts:**
- How was the professional experience program structured? What were its key features, e.g. coaching and modelling of practice?
- To what extent was the professional experience undertaken shaped by the capacity of the school and supervising teachers rather than the development needs of student teachers?
- What were the aims and objectives of the professional experience sessions?
- Was the professional knowledge/skills and dispositions developed during the professional experience sessions relevant to current teaching roles?
- To what extent was the professional experience program adaptable to meet the individual development needs of student teachers?
- How relevant were the Graduate Teaching Standards to the professional experience programs?
- Was there a research aspect to the program?
5. Role of the university in professional experience

Possible prompts:

- What role did the university have in your professional experience, in terms of preparing you for it, and working with schools prior to and during it?
- Is there a need for this role to be enhanced, if so in what ways?

6. Effectiveness of the professional experience

Possible prompts:

- What differences were evident in the schools where professional experience was undertaken?
- What criteria in terms of school characteristics and features differentiate successful from unsuccessful professional experience?
- To what extent were supervisors/mentors able to provide high quality support?
- Were there opportunities within the professional experience program to address all domains of the Graduate Teaching Standards?
- Did the professional experience contribute to the development of the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to work in challenging schools such as those with high Aboriginal enrolments or those that are remote?

7. Areas for improving support and outcomes of the program

Possible prompts:

- What do they see as the most important features of a good professional experience program?
- Were all of these features evident in their professional experience program?
- Are there any areas in which they believe they could have been supported better?
- How could professional experience programs be improved?
### 8.5.3 Interview Protocol – Principal/school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal:</th>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview:</td>
<td>School:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 1. Form of professional experience and teacher education programs

**Possible prompts:**
- What forms of professional experience programs is your school expected to engage in?
- How does the school manage the different forms of professional experience programs offered across universities?
- What do you see as the characteristics of teacher education programs that best prepare student teachers for professional experience?
- To what extent have you seen professional experience programs evolve over time and have the changes been positive?

#### 2. Preparation for the teaching role

**Possible Prompts**
- How would you describe your ideal teaching situation?
- What knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for successful teaching in this ideal teaching situation?
- What differences would there be between this ideal teaching situation and a challenging teaching situation?
- What additional knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need to be successful in a challenging teaching environment?

#### 3. Student Teacher preparedness for the professional experience and teaching

**Possible prompts:**
- To what extent are student teachers adequately prepared for professional experience in your school?
- What do you see as the current areas of strength, weakness of student teachers coming into the school? What are their learning needs?
- Is the teaching staff adequately equipped to meet perceived learning needs?
- Is the on-the-job learning offered by your school relevant to teaching in challenging schools such as those with high Aboriginal enrolments or those in remote locations?

#### 4. Professional Learning and teacher development in the school

**Possible prompts:**
- How does your school support the development of teachers including student teachers?
- What are the relationships between the schools strategies for developing teachers at different career stages, that is existing teachers, new scheme teachers and student teachers?
- To what extent is the professional experience in your school shaped by the capacity of the school and supervising teachers compared with the development needs of student teachers?
- What is the theoretical framework underpinning the model of professional learning operating in your school?
- Do you see the professional knowledge/skills and dispositions developed during the professional experience sessions as being relevant to the needs of student teachers?
- How are the Professional Teaching Standards used to shape to professional learning programs in the school including the professional experience?
### 5. Role of the university in professional experience

**Possible prompts:**
- What role does the university have in your school’s professional experience program?
- Does your school have a partnership agreement with a university, if so what is its purpose and how is it impacting on teacher development generally and the professional experience specifically?
- What does your school gain from the Partnership with the university? What does the university gain?
- Is there a research component to the partnership?
- Are there ways in which this partnership could be made more effective?

### 6. Supporting and managing the professional experience in your school

**Possible prompts:**
- Who is responsible in the school for developing and supporting supervisors/mentors to be able to provide high quality support?
- How has your role in teacher development changed, and how have you developed as a result of increased expectations about improving the quality of teaching and learning in your school?
- What role do other members of the school executive have in supporting the professional experience, is there individual or collective responsibility?
- How does the school support teachers to provide effective professional experience?

### 7. Areas for improving support and outcomes of the program

**Possible prompts:**
- What do you see as the most important features of a good professional experience program?
- What characteristics and features differentiate successful from unsuccessful professional experience? How do they rate the success of the professional experience offered by your school?
- What measures are in place to monitor and judge the success of the professional experience programs in your school?
- Which areas of the professional experience in your school can be improved?
8.5.4 HAT/Supervising teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAT/Supervising Teacher:</th>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview:</td>
<td>School:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Form of professional experience and teacher education program

Possible prompts:

- What forms of professional experience programs is your school expected to engage in?
- How does the school manage the different forms of professional experience programs offered across universities?
- What do you see as the characteristics of teacher education programs that best prepare student teachers for professional experience?
- To what extent have you seen professional experience programs evolve over time and have the changes been positive?

2. Preparation for the teaching role

Possible Prompts

- How would you describe your ideal teaching situation?
- What knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for successful teaching in this ideal teaching situation?
- What differences would there be between this ideal teaching situation and a challenging teaching situation?
- What additional knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need to be successful in a challenging teaching environment?

3. Student Teacher Preparedness for the professional experience in terms content and pedagogic knowledge

Possible prompts:

- To what extent are student teachers adequately prepared for professional experience in your school?
- What do you see as the current areas of strength, weakness of student teachers coming into the school? What are their learning needs?
- Is the teaching staff adequately equipped to meet perceived learning needs?
- Is the on-the-job learning offered by your school relevant to teaching in challenging schools such as those with high Aboriginal enrolments or those in remote locations?

4. Professional Learning and teacher development in the school

Possible prompts:

- How does your school support the development of teachers including student teachers?
- What are the relationships between the schools strategies for developing teachers at different career stages, that is existing teachers, new scheme teachers and student teachers?
- To what extent is the professional experience in your school shaped by the capacity of the school and supervising teachers compared with the development needs of student teachers?
- What is the theoretical framework underpinning the model of professional learning operating in your school?
- Do you see the professional knowledge/skills and dispositions developed during the professional experience sessions as being relevant to the needs of student teachers?
- How are the Professional Teaching Standards used to shape to professional learning programs in the school including the professional experience?
### 5. Role of the university in professional experience

**Possible prompts:**

- What role does the university have in your school’s professional experience program?
- Does your school have a partnership agreement with a university, if so what is its purpose and how is it impacting on teacher development generally and the professional experience specifically?
- What does your school gain from the Partnership with the university? What does the university gain?
- Is there a research component to the partnership?
- Are there ways in which this partnership could be made more effective?

### 6. Supporting and managing the professional experience in your school

**Possible prompts:**

- Who is responsible in the school for developing and supporting supervisors/mentors to be able to provide high quality support?
- How has your role in teacher development changed, and how have you developed as a result of increased expectations about improving the quality of teaching and learning in your school?
- What role do other members of the school executive have in supporting the professional experience, is there individual or collective responsibility?
- How does the school support teachers to provide effective professional experience?

### 7. Areas for improving support and outcomes of the program

**Possible prompts:**

- What do you see as the most important features of a good professional experience program?
- What characteristics and features differentiate successful from unsuccessful professional experience? How do they rate the success of the professional experience offered by your school?
- What measures are in place to monitor and judge the success of the professional experience programs in your school?
- Which areas of the professional experience in your school can be improved?
### 8.5.5 University practicum coordinator/supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practicum Supervisor:</th>
<th>Interviewer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of interview:</td>
<td>University:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1. Form of professional experience and teacher education program

**Possible prompts:**

- What forms of professional experience programs are offered by your university?
- How consistent are the forms of professional experience program offered by your university the programs offered by other universities?
- To what extent are schools able to manage the range of professional experience programs offered by universities?
- What do you see as the characteristics of teacher education programs that best prepare student teachers for professional experience?
- To what extent have you seen professional experience programs evolve over time and have the changes been positive?

#### 2. Preparation for the teaching role

**Possible Prompts**

- How would you describe your ideal teaching situation?
- What knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need for successful teaching in this ideal teaching situation?
- What differences would there be between this ideal teaching situation and a challenging teaching situation?
- What additional knowledge/skills and dispositions would you need to be successful in a challenging teaching environment?

#### 3. Student Teacher Preparedness for the professional experience in terms content and pedagogic knowledge

**Possible prompts:**

- How well prepared are student teachers from your university for professional experience in schools?
- What do you see as the current areas of strength, weakness of student teachers from your university coming into schools? What are their most pressing their learning needs?
- How prepared are school teachers to meet the perceived learning needs of student teachers?
- Is the on-the-job learning offered across the schools you visit relevant to teaching in challenging schools such as those with high Aboriginal enrolments or those in remote locations?

#### 4. Professional Learning and teacher development in the school

**Possible prompts:**

- How can schools better support the development of teachers including student teachers?
- How coherent are the teacher development strategies of schools? What are the relationships between schools strategies for developing teachers at different career stages, that is existing teachers, new scheme teachers and student teachers?
- To what extent is the professional experience in schools shaped by the capacity of the school and supervising teachers compared with the development needs of student teachers?
- What is the theoretical framework underpinning the model of professional experience offered by your university?
Do you see the professional knowledge/skills and dispositions developed during the professional experience sessions as being relevant to the needs of student teachers?

How are the Professional Teaching Standards used to shape to professional experience programs in schools including professional experience programs?

5. Role of the university in professional experience

Possible prompts:

- What role does the university have the delivery of professional experience programs?
- Does your university have partnership agreements with school, if so what is their purpose and how are they impacting on teacher development generally and the professional experience specifically?
- Who in the university has responsibility for managing and promoting the range of school university partnership?
- What do schools gain from their Partnership with your university? What does the university gain?
- Is there a research component to the partnership?
- Are there ways in which such partnerships could be made more effective?

6. Supporting and managing the professional experience in your school

Possible prompts:

- Who has responsibility for developing and supporting supervisors/mentors to be able to provide high quality professional experience support?
- How has your role in the professional experience changed, and how have you changed what you do to meet increased expectations about improving the quality of teaching and learning in your school?
- What is your relationship with members of the school executive have in supporting the professional experience, is there individual or collective responsibility?
- How does the school support teachers to provide effective professional experience?

7. Areas for improving support and outcomes of the program

Possible prompts:

- What do you see as the most important features of a good professional experience program?
- What characteristics and features differentiate successful from unsuccessful professional experience? How do they rate the success of the professional experience programs in which your students engage?
- What measures are in place to monitor and judge the success of the professional experience programs across the range of schools?
- Which areas of the professional experience could be improved?
8.6 Appendix F – Draft Letters of Invitation – Information Sheets and Consent Forms (Samples; to be revised in the light of additional focus)

8.6.1 Professional Experience Offices

INVITATION – INFORMATION SHEET (Professional Experience Offices)

Evaluation Project: Evaluation of the Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures

Dear XXXX,

I am writing to invite you to seek your university’s involvement in an evaluation project related to professional experience reforms detailed below. The information provides some background to the evaluation, the extent of involvement of your university and contact details for the evaluation team.

Background

This Information Sheet provides details of an evaluation as part of the bilateral agreement between the NSW and the Commonwealth Government to undertake an evaluation of the reforms implemented through each of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. These evaluations are intended to guide future education policy and funding decisions and they will support management and monitoring efforts at the school, system and sector levels.

Centres of Excellence are an initiative of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships reform agenda. They are a component of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (ITQNP), and as part of their remit, provide a context for implementing new and improved approaches to the professional experience provided to entrants to the teaching profession.

The NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee has commissioned the SiMERR National Research Centre (SiMERR) at the University of New England to design and implement an evaluation of the impact of professional experience reform within Centres for Excellence.

The primary audience is the NSW government and non-government educational sectors, who establish and guide educational policy in NSW – particularly the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. The evaluation report is to inform the NSW report to the Commonwealth on the outcomes of these Partnerships. The secondary audience for the evaluation is the participants in the initiatives, that is, the schools, teachers, student teachers and universities who have a critical interest in reform of the professional experience.

The evaluation is designed to investigate the range of professional experience initiatives supporting teachers in training occurring in Centres for Excellence and in other settings. In
particular, the evaluation is to investigate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of these initiatives in preparing teachers for working in challenging schools, including remote schools and those with high Aboriginal enrolment.

Your Involvement

Professional Experience Offices at each university and College in NSW are being contacted with a request access pre-service teacher professional experience reports. An analysis of these reports form part of the desk-top audit being undertaken by the evaluation team to identify indicators of teacher quality. Commentary in the reports is to be analysed against criteria set out in the Graduate and Professional Competence Standards of the New South Wales Institute of Teachers Standards. In seeking access to these reports, the evaluation team undertakes to ensure that any information in them is de-identified and that their contents remain confidential.

If approval is gained from your institution to provide a selection of professional experience reports, could you contact Dr Greg McPhan via email and he will follow up this contact to continue the process. His details are provided below.

The Evaluation Team (Details to be included)

Prof. John Pegg

Dr Greg McPhan

Dr Bruce Mowbray

Prof. Wayne Sawyer

A/Prof. Cal Durrant

A/Prof Paul White

Evaluation Process

It is anticipated that this evaluation will be completed by June 2014. The final Evaluation Report will inform the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on the impact and success of the reforms and how best to sustain them. The report is to be prepared for the National Partnerships Evaluation Committee and the findings may also be presented at conferences or written up in journals without any identifying information.

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No. ......., Valid to .././...)

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at the following address:

Research Services
University of New England
Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

Regards

Professor John Pegg
SiMERR National Research Centre
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Consent Form for Professional Experience Offices


I, .......................................................................................... have read the information contained in the Letter of Invitation – Information Sheet to Professional Experience Offices and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

Yes/No

[Name of Institution] agrees to participate in this activity.

Yes/No

It is agreed that any data gathered for the evaluation will be de-identified and remain confidential

Yes/No

..............................................  ..............................................

Professional Experience Coordinator       Date

..............................................  ..............................................

Researcher       Date
8.6.2 Principals

INVITATION – INFORMATION SHEET (Principals)

Evaluation Project: Evaluation of the Impact of Professional Experience Reform Measures

Dear XXXX,

I am writing to invite you to seek your school’s involvement in an evaluation project related to professional experience reforms detailed below. The information provides some background to the evaluation, the extent of involvement of your school and contact details for the evaluation team.

Background

This Information Sheet provides details of an evaluation as part of the bilateral agreement between the NSW and the Commonwealth Government to undertake an evaluation of the reforms implemented through each of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. These evaluations are intended to guide future education policy and funding decisions and they will support management and monitoring efforts at the school, system and sector levels.

Centres of Excellence are an initiative of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships reform agenda. They are a component of the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (ITQNP), and as part of their remit, provide a context for implementing new and improved approaches to the professional experience provided to entrants to the teaching profession.

The NSW National Partnerships Evaluation Committee has commissioned the SiMERR National Research Centre (SiMERR) at the University of New England to design and implement an evaluation of the impact of professional experience reform within Centres for Excellence.

The primary audience is the NSW government and non-government educational sectors, who establish and guide educational policy in NSW – particularly the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. The evaluation report is to inform the NSW report to the Commonwealth on the outcomes of these Partnerships. The secondary audience for the evaluation is the participants in the initiatives, that is, the schools, teachers, student teachers and universities who have a critical interest in reform of the professional experience.

The evaluation is designed to investigate the range of professional experience initiatives supporting teachers in training occurring in Centres for Excellence and in other settings. In particular, the evaluation is to investigate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of these initiatives in preparing teachers for working in challenging schools, including remote schools and those with high Aboriginal enrolment.

Your School’s Involvement in Data Collection: Survey completion; Participation in Interviews
You are receiving this letter as part of the initial stage of the evaluation during which data collection tools are being trialled. We are seeking your involvement - and other personnel at your school, to review the data collection instruments.

A range of participants in the Centres for Excellence program, including Principals, Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATS), practicum supervisors, mentor teachers, beginning teachers, and pre-service teachers will be surveyed at intervals to be negotiated with the Project Reference Group. A regular collection of data for this evaluation is favoured to ensure that emerging themes are captured comprehensively, although the evaluation team is mindful of the burden on participants and will therefore be guided by the advice of the Project Reference Group to ensure a balanced approach in this area.

There are three purposes for gathering the survey data at regular intervals: one is to gather sufficient information to capture a longitudinal perspective of participants’ engagement with professional experience reform measures, another is to obtain perspectives on the developmental nature of Centres for Excellence and the third is to provide a clear picture of the respective school environments from the commentary of participants.

The surveys, which will be offered online, will provide a range of contextual information about the program and the participants, and their perceptions of aspects of the program including the relative effectiveness of the programs in developing teacher quality and meeting the needs of new teaching graduates. Contextual information will be obtained through multiple choice type questions. Perceptions about program effectiveness will be determined through responses to Likert scale and free response items. The initial survey will provide baseline data and be designed to capture stakeholders’ views about preparation for the teaching profession. Subsequent surveys will be designed to gather information about teachers’ professional learning needs, their aspirations, their preparedness to teach in a range of contexts and how personnel within schools respond to those needs. Specific surveys around these broad themes will be prepared and refined in the light of data collected initially.

Throughout the evaluation consortium team members will have access to participating schools for purposes of discussions and interviews. In particular, site visits afford the opportunity to explore contextual issues around teacher preparation and the relationship between schools and universities. As with survey timing, these site visits will be negotiated with the respective sector representatives through the Project Reference Group.

If you agree to your school’s involvement in the trialling process, could you contact Dr Greg McPhan via email and he will follow up this contact to continue the process, which will include the distribution of similar letters to staff you nominate who could also contribute feedback. His details are provided below.

**The Evaluation Team (Details to be included)**

Prof. John Pegg  
Dr Greg McPhan  
Dr Bruce Mowbray
Prof. Wayne Sawyer
A/Prof. Cal Durrant
A/Prof Paul White

Evaluation Process

It is anticipated that this evaluation will be completed by June 2014. The final Evaluation Report will inform the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on the impact and success of the reforms and how best to sustain them. The report is to be prepared for the National Partnerships Evaluation Committee and the findings may also be presented at conferences or written up in journals without any identifying information.

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No. ........, Valid to ../../..)

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at the following address:

Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351.
Telephone: (02) 6773 3449 Facsimile (02) 6773 3543
Email: ethics@une.edu.au
Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

Regards

Professor John Pegg
SiMERR National Research Centre
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Consent Form for Principals (Trial Schools)


I, ........................................................................................................................................... have read the information contained in the Letter of Invitation – Information Sheet for Principals and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

Yes/No

I agree for [Name of School] to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.

Yes/No

I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published using a pseudonym

Yes/No

I agree to any formal interview and to having my voice recorded and transcribed.

Yes/No

……………………………..     …………………………..
Participant         Date

……………………………..     …………………………..
Researcher           Date