

Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE)

18 August 2008

TEACHER EDUCATION: A NATIONAL PRIORITY

We bring to your attention the detrimental consequences for teacher education of successive policy and funding decisions relating largely to its designation as a "National Priority". Prior to the introduction of the Higher Education Support Act (2004), Education was in the same funding cluster as the Social Studies and Behavioural Sciences (SS&BS). Undergraduate teacher education received the same income as undergraduate SS&BS and graduate entry teacher education received 8% more, which in part redressed the additional expense of the intensive one year Graduate Diploma of Education program.

As a result of its designation as a national priority under HESA both undergraduate and graduate entry teacher education now earns only 92% of the income of the rest of the SS&BS cluster. Note that, in 2007, the Report of the House of Representatives Inquiry into Teacher Education, *Top of the Class*, described teacher education as badly under funded. It stated that:

a large proportion of submissions expressed concerns about the level of funding for teacher education. All viewed the funding level as inadequate and many singled the issue out as the most important in the inquiry ... having serious consequences for teacher education. (p 108)

and recommended that the Commonwealth

from 2008, increase the Commonwealth Contribution Amount for an Equivalent Full-Time Student Load in the Education cluster (to) the same level as that applying to the Foreign Languages, Visual and Performing Arts cluster [and also]... commission an examination of the cost of providing practicum and increase the amount of the loading for practicum to fully reflect its costs;

Overview of decisions

1988-2003 Under the Relative Funding Model:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education is in the same funding cluster as the Social Studies & Behavioural Sciences.• Undergraduate teacher education places receive 100% of the funding of the SS&BS cluster (RFM weight 1.3)• Graduate entry teacher education places receive 108% of the funding for the cluster (weight 1.4), the latter helping to address the considerable additional costs of the shorter duration intensive graduate entry courses.
2004 Following HESA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education (and Nursing) is precluded from charging the variable student contribution.• Undergraduate <u>and</u> graduate entry Education places earn 98% of the SS&BS cluster.• The 98% is <u>inclusive</u> of a special 'practical component' to assist the funding of school placements (\$717 in 2007), the partial compensation to Education for restricting it from generating additional income through the variable student contribution.
2007 <i>Top of the Class</i> , tabled:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommends that the Commonwealth fund Education at level of Foreign Language, Visual and Performing Arts (FLV&PA, cluster weight 1.6) or 122% of SS&BS cluster• Recommends commissioning an examination of the cost of providing practicum and increasing the amount of the loading for practicum to fully reflect its costs.• Recommends commissioning evaluation of the impact on teacher education courses of fixing the student contribution rate rather than allowing the variable student contribution
2008 <i>Top of Class</i> ignored in review of HESA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education is placed back into the SS&BS cluster, effectively removing the loading for practicum (ie Education received an effective funding increase from Commonwealth of \$109 per EFTSU compared with \$840 for the rest of SS&BS)• Education is still precluded from charging variable HECS so the student contribution for Education is \$1018 less than for the rest of SS&BS• The income for Education is now 92% of the rest of the SS&BS cluster compared with 100% for undergraduate and 108% for graduate entry in 2003. (It is only 81% of the funding of FLV&PA cluster recommended by <i>Top of the Class</i>.)

PLACEMENT FUND

2008 The 2007 budget created a Placement Fund for 4 years ONLY which:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2007 budget promised \$450 per eftsus to initial teacher education only (other Education not included) for courses fulfilling certain criteria in terms of days of placement and quality assurance• 2008 Actually delivered \$394 per EFTSL in 2008 (not the promised \$450) since insufficient in budget to cover compliant load.• Only results in 95% of the funding for the rest of the SS&BS cluster for eligible courses for initial teacher education. (and 92% for other Education)• 2009 Program is under review and conditions to apply unclear, but same budget
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allocation to spread over more places, due to additional early childhood load in system.
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TEACHER EDUCATION: PROFESSIONAL PLACEMENT

IPCTE Program: The Placement Fund

- April 07 Budget announcement of \$450 per eftsU for initial teacher education courses fulfilling certain conditions in terms of days of placement and quality criteria
- Jan 08 The ACDE met with Ms Gillard and as a result of that meeting she directed that the administrative guidelines for the IPCTE program were to be revised.
- Feb 08 Vice Chancellors were informed that the funds were to be released but that they were insufficient to allocate the \$450 per eftsU. Instead we were to receive \$394 per eftsU.
- May 08 Revised administrative guidelines were approved and promulgated in May. However, courses that had not been eligible under the previous guidelines did not receive the additional funding for 2008. Also courses that had been changed for 2008 to provide additional days of placement could not reverse course changes in time for the 2008 academic year and so were forced to pay for the extra days. These were all accepted with good will and in good faith that the new guidelines would come into effect for 2009.
- May 08 The Placement Fund was not supplemented in the 2008 budget to enable the original \$450 to be allocated and was not in the forward estimates. The ACDE informed its membership that they should only rely on receiving the funding for the remainder of the period of the Program (that is 2009-2011) and that the funding would remain at a reduced level.
- July 08 The ACDE wrote to DEEWR asking about the anticipated funding level for 2009. We asked whether the additional Early Childhood load had been 'fully funded' including the placement funds, and what the impact on payments would be of the additional load that would become compliant as a result of the changed guidelines. At this time, we believed that the guidelines about the number of days of placements and a quality assurance statement would continue to apply for the period of the Program, that universities could therefore forward plan for three years and the only issue was when we would know of the dollars per eftsU.
- Aug 08 ACDE was informed informally that the total allocation for the Program remained at \$18 million per annum and would have to be spread over any additional load so that the income per eftsU would be progressively reduced as the Early Childhood places with pipeline increased over three years. ACDE received a letter informing of a round of jurisdictionally based consultations during September about improving the quality of teacher education. One item on the agenda for consultation was the conditions of the IPCTE.
- Sept 08 The ACDE has been informed formally by DEEWR that the IPCTE program is the subject of consultations in September and October of this year (with employers, teachers, unions, parents and teacher educators) and is to be reviewed. We therefore do not know what funding will be available and what conditions might apply.

AEU Action

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has served universities (individually) with a statement of impending lodgement of claims to increase payments to teachers who take students on school placements. Any increases in the cost of paying teachers on school placements would have to come from existing income since this is seen to be a cost of universities. The AEU is seeking also to define such teachers as employees of the university.

The Tasmanian branch of the AEU placed work bans on teachers accepting students on placements but have been ordered by the Industrial Commission to remove the bans. Since the taking of students on placement is voluntary, teachers could not be directed to take them. The University of Tasmania has offered a 20% increase, which we understand has been turned down. The South Australia Department of Education and Community Services in the latest EB, negotiated with teachers an increase on placement payments for teachers without consulting with Universities who actually pay it. The Universities in South Australia have now been sent accounts for the difference.

The amount teachers are paid is very modest (around \$26 per day), has not changed since the early nineties and does not reflect the work involved if market value for the labour were applied. However, there is no further capacity by Education faculties/schools to pay. The supervision and induction of pre-service teachers needs to be regarded as part of the normal professional responsibility of every teacher, but then this needs to be resourced in some way.