

Aspiring to Excellence

*Final Report of the International Review Panel on the
Structure of Initial Teacher Education in Northern
Ireland*

Conducted for the Minister for Employment and Learning

June 2014

Contents	Page	
Membership of Panel	iii	
Acknowledgements	iv	
Glossary of Terms	v	
Executive Summary	1	
Introduction	3	
International Trends in Teacher Education	7	
Current Provision in Northern Ireland	16	
Teaching in Northern Ireland: Two Key Challenges	26	
Principles Underpinning an Enhanced System	31	
Conditions for Change	36	
Options	42	
Conclusion	58	
Bibliography	60	
Annexes		
Annex I	Terms of Reference	63
Annex II	Graduates from Northern Ireland Teacher Education Institutions	65
Annex III	Previous Attempts to Reform the Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland	67
Annex IV	Case Studies	71
Annex V	Panel Member Biographies	78

Membership of Panel

Pasi Sahlberg, Visiting Professor of Practice, Harvard University (Chair)

Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE, University of Bristol

John Coolahan, Emeritus Professor of Education, National University of Ireland Maynooth

John Furlong, Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Oxford

Gordon Kirk OBE, Emeritus Professor of Education, The University of Edinburgh;
Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers.

Acknowledgements

We wish to record our indebtedness to those who submitted views and who engaged with us in the course of our work. In particular, we would like to thank the institutions and stakeholders, who gave of their time to meet with us during our visit to Belfast in February 2014. All of these discussions and engagements were collegial and constructive. We are also grateful to the Higher Education Division of the Department for Employment and Learning, whose officials supported and facilitated the work of the Panel in a host of ways and could not have been more helpful.

Glossary of Terms

BEEd	-	Bachelor of Education, a 4 year degree course of Initial Teacher Education
BERA	-	British Educational Research Association
CCMS	-	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CPD	-	Continuing Professional Development
CREDIT	-	Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers
DCU	-	Dublin City University
DE	-	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
DEL	-	Department for Employment and Learning
EPD	-	Early Professional Development
ESA	-	Education and Skills Authority
ETI	-	Education and Training Inspectorate
EU	-	European Union
GB	-	Great Britain
GTCNI	-	General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland, the professional body for teachers
IME	-	Irish Medium Education
ITE	-	Initial Teacher Education
MLA	-	Member of the Legislative Assembly

NEET	-	A young person (aged 16-24) not in employment, education or training
NIEE	-	Northern Ireland Institute of Education
NICIE	-	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
OECD	-	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OU	-	Open University
PGCE	-	Postgraduate Certificate in Education, a one year course of Initial Teacher Education
PGDE	-	Postgraduate Diploma in Education, PGCE equivalent in Scotland
PIRLS	-	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	-	Programme for International Student Assessment
QUB	-	Queen's University Belfast
RAE	-	Research Assessment Exercise
REF	-	Research Excellence Framework, the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK Higher Education Institutions
RSA	-	Royal Society for the Arts, Manufacture and Commerce
TDM	-	Teacher Demand Model, the statistical model used as part of the determination of student intakes to initial teacher education courses
TDA		Training and Development Agency for Schools
TIMSS	-	Trends in Mathematics and Science Study
TTA		Teacher Training Agency
UCAS	-	Universities and Colleges Admission Service
UCET	-	Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers

- UK - United Kingdom
- USA - United States of America
- UU - University of Ulster

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Review Panel was appointed to provide an overview of international best practice in teacher education; to evaluate current provision in Northern Ireland against international best practice; and, after consultation with institutions and others, and building on Stage 1 of the review of teacher education, to propose and evaluate options for the future infrastructure of teacher education, assuming a commitment to a more shared and integrated approach.
- 1.2 The Panel interpreted the references in its remit to “initial teacher education” and “teacher education” to indicate an acceptance of the international trend to see the initial preparation of teachers as a phase in a career-long process of continuing professional development. In addition, we also accepted that, if we were to consider infrastructure issues, it was essential for us to examine what teacher education involves, even if that meant straying into matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Education (DE). It is the Panel’s view that infrastructural questions presuppose a clear understanding of what the infrastructure is intended to support. In any case, our terms of reference explicitly enjoined us “to examine the case for the reform of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland” and “to compare what is considered best international practice with the current provision in Northern Ireland”. Fidelity to these terms of reference *required* us to engage in the consideration of issues that are the responsibility of the Department of Education.
- 1.3 The examination of international best practice in teacher education identified five trends: selection should admit the most able and most suitable candidates; programmes should be academically strong, practice-focussed and based on relevant research; theory and practice should be closely inter-related, involving close partnership between teacher education institutions and schools; there should be strong links between initial teacher education and continuing professional development (CPD); and programme design should be based on evidence about how student teachers learn to teach.
- 1.4 While teacher education in Northern Ireland has areas of strength, as is evidenced by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) and other independent evaluations, it falls short of international best practice in many respects. These shortcomings are discussed in Section 4.

- 1.5 If Northern Ireland is to address the serious challenges it faces - most notably, the relatively poor performance of its post-primary pupils, and the needs of social reconstruction in a post-conflict society – it needs a teaching profession that is at the top of its game. Such a profession is to be secured by ensuring that teacher education, in every respect, is underpinned by the principles that derive from the international trends identified. In addition, acknowledging the particular context of Northern Ireland, we emphasise the need to recognise the competing interpretations of teacher education and its nature and purpose and need for a pluralist approach. In addition, we set out certain conditions that need to be met to help realise a teacher education system based on the principles of international best practice. We certainly do not intend these conditions to be formal recommendations to DE. Rather, we see them as steps in the creation of a context that is conducive to the further development of teacher education in Northern Ireland.
- 1.6 Finally, we recognise that neither the principles on which the enhancement of teacher education is based, nor the conditions we stipulate for that enhancement, point ineluctably to a specific infrastructural arrangement. We have rejected the status quo as an option, on the grounds that it is simply not robust enough to deliver the change that is required. We are proposing four options for consideration: enhanced collaboration between the existing institutions; a two-centre model, with one institution based in the North-West and the other in Belfast; a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Federation, in which existing institutions continue but with some ceding of responsibilities to a supra-institutional federal body; and, finally, a single Northern Ireland Institute of Education in which the distinctive missions of the current teacher education institutions would be retained. These options, which are set out fully in Section 8, are evaluated against current international trends in teacher education.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 We were appointed in September 2013 by the Minister for Employment and Learning to conduct the second stage of the review of initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland. The first stage of that review, conducted by Grant Thornton, examined the current method of funding initial teacher education, benchmarked the cost of teacher training against practice elsewhere in the United Kingdom (UK), and also considered the financial circumstances of the two university colleges engaged in initial teacher education. The second stage of the review was seen as complementary, building on that earlier work. Our precise terms of reference, which are set out in full at Annex I, required us, as an independent international panel of teacher education specialists, “to examine the case for the reform of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland and whether the funding being provided could be used better by the teacher training institutions if they were prepared to move towards a more shared or integrated system”; to evaluate provision in Northern Ireland against international best practice; to engage with teacher education institutions and other stakeholders, drawing on their views; and to come forward with a report which sets out for the Minister “options for the future shape of initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland”.
- 2.2 At the risk of anticipating some of the subsequent discussion and analysis in our report, we make four observations on these terms of reference. Firstly, while the review was primarily concerned with the enhancement of the quality of teacher education, it was expected to acknowledge that the cost of provision had to be taken into account by considering how funds might be used to better effect. It was certainly conceivable that that enhancement of the quality of provision might be achieved through the more efficient use of resources.
- 2.3 Secondly, since our terms of reference invoked “teacher education” as well as “initial teacher education” we took the view that the use of both terms deliberately acknowledged that the initial professional preparation of teachers is a phase of a much wider and more extended process. Besides, as the term is understood internationally, teacher education does not refer simply to initial teacher education: it encompasses the whole continuum from initial teacher education, through induction and early professional development (EPD), into CPD, in effect recognising “the three *Is*”, the

tripartite phasing comprising *Initial* teacher education, *Induction*, and *In-service*, which originated in the James Report of 1972, but which found a particular home in Northern Ireland. That is, teacher education must be viewed as a coherent process of professional formation and development extending well beyond and building upon initial professional preparation. Fortunately, all of the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland share that wider conception of their academic and professional responsibilities. We needed to base our recommendations on the infrastructure of teacher education on a secure understanding of that wider sense of the term in the contemporary international context.

- 2.4 Thirdly, since the review had been initiated by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), it could be interpreted, as it was by several of those who submitted evidence, that the review panel had to focus on those issues that were of concern to DEL only, and to refrain from matters that fell within the purview of DE. However, if we were expected to come forward with options for the more effective provision of teacher education and its infrastructure, it was necessary – logically inevitable – to form a view of the nature and importance of teacher education in general. Infrastructural questions could only be addressed once the prior questions about the purpose and functions of teacher education have been considered. We did not believe that by exploring the nature of teacher education *per se* we were straying beyond our terms of reference: such discussions provided the essential basis for our examination of infrastructural options.
- 2.5 Fourthly, the terms of reference included an extremely important condition. We were enjoined to examine whether the available funds could be more effectively deployed by the institutions “if they were prepared to move to a more shared or integrated system”, implying that savings might be deployed to enhance provision further. Clearly, if that condition did not obtain, the work of the panel would be vitiated from the outset. Fortunately, all of the institutions declare a commitment to shared education. Without exception, they are committed to greater collaboration in ways that cut across social, religious and other divisions; and every institution can invoke examples of how, in partnership with their colleagues in other institutions and in schools, they are providing opportunities for students from different traditions to learn together, and to acquire mutual respect and understanding. Evidence of the extent of this commitment is provided in Section 5 of this report. Overall, in its exchanges with the various teacher

education institutions, the Panel formed the view that the institutions themselves were in principle “prepared to move to a more shared or integrated system”.

- 2.6 Indeed, the view was expressed to us that even greater progress towards shared education and the enhancement of provision would be secured if institutions were able to devote their professional efforts to that task rather than the continuing and debilitating fight to protect their distinctive missions. The Panel formed the view that the preoccupation of the University Colleges with their future was an obstacle to the further development of the system, and that the sooner the future of the colleges was finally settled the sooner they would be able to participate in a much more constructive engagement about the development of teacher education in Northern Ireland. We acknowledge that of course there can be no certainties here, and later in this report we examine the extent to which financial pressure on every area of public provision, including the education service and the teacher education service in particular, will exert an impact on the future initial teacher education structures in Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, we maintain that the ending of uncertainty about their future will allow the professional energies of the institutions to be released so that they will be able to make the kind of contribution to the development of the sector and to shared education they are anxious to make. Indeed, what is striking about the submissions we received, and what impressed us deeply in our engagements with institutions and stakeholders, is the acknowledgement that teacher education is vital to the future economic and social wellbeing of Northern Ireland. We were also encouraged by the commitment of the whole teacher education community to the further enhancement of quality to create a truly world-class teacher education system.
- 2.7 The evidential base for this review and its conclusions and options for the future shape of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland, and our warrant for formulating these as we have done, is extensive. We have undertaken a review of international trends in teacher education; we have analysed current strategic and policy frameworks for teacher education in Northern Ireland and elsewhere; we have sought to engage with the teacher education community in Northern Ireland and received 111 responses to our invitation to submit views to us; we have engaged with senior representatives of each of the five teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland and received detailed submissions from each of them. We have also met with a number of key stakeholders

such as the GTCNI, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), the Transferor Representatives' Council, and the Equality Commission; we have studied the ETI reports on each of the institutions; and we have had discussions informally with a wide range of specialists on such matters as faith-based higher education, ecumenical initiatives in higher education, and the characteristics of pluralism in the contemporary world. In addition, we have drawn on a wide range of current writing on teacher education, and benefitted from both the Interim and Final Reports of the recent British Educational Research Association-Royal Society for the Arts, Manufacture and Commerce (BERA-RSA) Inquiry into Research and Teacher Education.

- 2.8 Early in the life of the Panel the Open University (OU) intimated, late in 2013, that it would be withdrawing from initial teacher education after it has met its commitments to current students. We received written evidence from the OU and met that university's representatives as part of our programme of consultations. For this reason, we excluded the OU from our discussion about the infrastructure of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland, but took full account of the OU's provision for the CPD of teachers.
- 2.9 The structure of our report is as follows: we begin with an analysis of international trends in teacher education; we then examine provision in Northern Ireland in the light of these international trends, drawing attention to its acknowledged strengths and its weaknesses; we then offer an analysis of the importance of teacher education and of the particular challenges facing education in Northern Ireland, including the need to address low achievement of post-primary pupils and the role of schools in creating greater social cohesion in a post-conflict society; we then set out the principles that should underpin a world-class system of teacher education in Northern Ireland, drawing particular attention to the need to protect pluralism in teacher education, followed by an enumeration of the conditions that should be met if teacher education is to flourish as we envisage; finally, we identify four options for the infrastructure for teacher education in Northern Ireland and offer an evaluation of these against international best practice in teacher education.

3 INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

- 3.1 There is a widespread international consensus that, if modern societies are to flourish, if they are to strengthen their economic productivity, and if they are to ensure that all their citizens lead satisfying personal lives, they need, through their educational systems, to cultivate the skills and capabilities of all, so that all can achieve their best potential. That same consensus affirms that the quality of teaching is the most crucial in-school factor in raising the level of pupils' achievement and furthering their educational progress.
- 3.2 It is therefore clearly vital that communities need to have in place robust ways of selecting students to teacher education, of having teacher education programmes that are academically relevant, with a systematic focus on clinical practice or school experience, and of supporting teachers professionally throughout their careers. To this end, both the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union (EU) have been devoting increased policy attention, over recent years, to the teaching profession and to teacher education. International influences on education policy have become increasingly evident. For example, the OECD has recently put stronger emphasis on teacher education in enhancing the quality of education in its member countries by recommending that teacher education should have close links to universities or university-like institutions, that there should be a seamless continuum between initial teacher education and the CPD of teachers, and that school-based learning should be a systematic part of initial teacher education. It has become commonplace for countries to assess the quality of their teacher education provision against international trends and models, thus allowing research increasingly to have an impact on policy and practice in teacher education.
- 3.3 The acknowledged importance of initial teacher education and continuing professional development to the creation of a successful and effective education system also prompted a recent inquiry by BERA and RSA, into the relationship between educational research and the nature of teacher education. This inquiry has provided a range of research papers relevant to this review and reference to them is made throughout this analysis. These research papers formed part of the considerable volume of current writing on teacher education that helped to structure the discussions between the review panel and the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland.

3.4 The Panel's first task was "to provide an overview of the most current developments in the field of initial teacher education provision which represents best practice internationally". That overview paper, which was based on an analysis of the international literature and international practice, identified five issues. These are:

- a) ensuring that initial teacher education programmes meet the needs of future teachers and that they attract the best and most suitable candidates to teacher education programmes;
- b) offering academic awards that are competitive, practice-focused and built on relevant educational research;
- c) developing close relationships between theory and practice, in a way that helps students to understand and explore the interconnectedness of educational theories and classroom practices;
- d) establishing strong links between initial teacher education and the CPD of teachers in schools; and
- e) ensuring that all of the above principles are underpinned by a clear understanding of evidence about how student teachers learn to teach.

3.5 The Panel recognises that these themes, concerned as they are with the nature and content of initial teacher education provision, as areas of responsibility fall under the aegis of DE. They are considered here, however, as the essential basis for this review as they need to be fully taken into account in any consideration of the future infrastructure of initial teacher education. These themes are explored in more detail below.

Issue 1: Teacher education should attract the best and most suitable candidates.

3.6 There is international agreement that teaching is such a crucial and demanding professional activity that it ought to seek to recruit to its ranks those who demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching and who possess those pronounced academic and social skills necessary to become successful and effective teachers.

- 3.7 Concurrent programmes, for example, Bachelor of Education (BEd) degrees, need to attract an appropriate share of able school leavers, and consecutive programmes such as the PGCE should recruit a significant share of the most able graduates with the depth of knowledge and the range of skills that are so essential in the teaching profession. Having recruited highly able students, universities and the schools, working in partnership, need to stretch their students both academically and professionally.
- 3.8 Those who teach, in either the primary phase or the secondary phase, need to be able to operate from a secure academic base in the subject(s) they teach, and need to engage in professional studies and activities that are intellectually, socially and professionally demanding.
- 3.9 Effective teacher education requires candidates who are strong academically and who also have the appropriate combination of interpersonal skills, the commitment and the drive which the teaching profession requires. That is, whilst academic ability is a necessary condition for admission to a teacher education programme, it is not in itself a sufficient criterion for selection.

Issue 2: Teacher education should be based on academic degrees that are competitive vis-à-vis other academic fields of study, practice-focused and built on relevant educational research

- 3.10 It is widely acknowledged that teacher education programmes incorporate three key elements: foundation studies, professional studies and practical training through school placement or clinical teacher training schools. Foundation studies provide the theoretical underpinnings of teaching, equipping the beginning teacher with a framework of reference, drawing on insights from fields such as educational psychology and sociology. Professional studies focus on curriculum, pedagogical and assessment processes which relate directly to the practical engagement with learners and the planning of how their educational progress is to be secured.
- 3.11 School placement, or clinical teaching experience in designated teacher training schools, incorporates the observation of teaching, the practice and analysis of teaching under mentoring and supervision, as well as a wide range of school-based experiences which induct the beginning teacher into the culture of schooling and the values of the teaching profession.

- 3.12 The international evidence indicates that in high quality teacher education programmes each of these three elements benefits from the infusion of relevant research. It is therefore incumbent on teacher education staff to be pro-actively involved in the conduct of educational research and to be skilled in applying their own research, and that of their peers, in order to enrich course content and the beginning teacher's educational experience. The promotion of educational research forms a dynamic component of the culture and practice of teacher education institutions.
- 3.13 The duration and level of teacher education courses are also relevant. There is a growing international trend, especially among the most successful education systems, to offer initial teacher education programmes at master's level in research universities. This mode of professional preparation is linked to a course duration which allows student teachers to engage with research training and appropriate research findings in order to conduct research projects linked to their pedagogy or to aspects of their school-based experience.
- 3.14 This orientation to and experience of educational research provide a foundation for an enquiry-focussed approach in continuing professional development. It facilitates the emergence of teachers as reflective practitioners, and it nurtures and reinforces the ideal of teachers as researchers of their own practice, committed to systematic self-study.
- 3.15 Both concurrent and consecutive models of teacher education programmes are endorsed by international agencies such as the OECD and the EU. Whichever mode is employed, international developments highlight the value of a wide range of teaching and learning approaches. To that end, formal lectures are supplemented by small group sessions such as seminars, tutorials, workgroups, paired-learning, micro-teaching and problem-solving groups. In addition, training and facilitation in the use of a repertoire of information and communication technologies are essential to the equipping of student teachers for the modern classroom.

Issue 3: Developing close relationships between theory and practice, in a way that helps students to understand and explore the interconnectedness of educational theories and classroom practices

- 3.16 Prominence is given to the inclusion in all teacher education programmes of school experience, or placement, or clinical practice, as an acknowledgement that learning to teach requires sustained spells of school-based work under the supervision of accomplished, experienced teachers. In the course of this experience beginning teachers observe and analyse their own and other people's teaching, undertake progressively more demanding teaching episodes with learners, and begin to come to terms with the way of life of schools. The term "clinical practice" refers to more than effective mentoring, where practising teachers take an active role in providing structured learning experiences for novice teachers. It involves the provision of opportunities for student teachers to engage with other forms of knowledge – from research, from theory, from practice in other places and contexts – and to use that knowledge and the insights it provides to challenge, to question, to reflect on, and to improve their own teaching. Such clinical practice is one of the hallmarks of the most successful systems.
- 3.17 The importance of school experience has implications for which schools are involved in the provision of school experience and the numbers of students placed in such schools. There is evidence that placing larger numbers of student teachers in a smaller number of schools is the key to developing effective placement opportunities and to strengthening university-school partnership.
- 3.18 There is a range of ways in which what has been called research-informed clinical practice can be achieved. One model is for the initial teacher education institutions to work in close partnership with chosen schools to ensure that they become places for clinical teaching practice similar to the teaching hospitals that are part of faculties of medicine in many countries.

3.19 The quality of university-school partnerships is strengthened by invoking the idea of schools as centres of professional learning, where teachers collaborate in curriculum development, student assessment, and school improvement, where the principle of schools as self-evaluating institutions is taken seriously, and where, as a consequence, the notion of the teacher as researcher is continuously reinforced. The challenge is to secure the proper co-ordination of the two inter-related strands: university-based and school-based. It is for this reason that the practice has developed of characterising teacher education as a university-school partnership and of referring, for example in Oxford and Melbourne universities, to “research-informed clinical practice”.

Issue 4: Establish strong links between initial teacher education and continuing professional development of teachers in schools

3.20 There is evidence internationally that, however effective initial teacher education may be, it is, in itself, insufficient: structures are also needed to ensure that newly qualified teachers are well supported during their induction year and indeed throughout their careers. Effective programmes of initial teacher education can be set at naught if they are not built upon in ways that take teachers’ professional understanding and skill further forward in a structured way, well beyond the point of induction.

3.21 In order to serve the complex set of needs of teachers in schools, the initial teacher education institutions must be actively engaged in research and development work in teacher education, other human sciences, educational technologies and global education policies, and must be able to take full account of international trends in these fields.

3.22 School improvement is increasingly focusing on developing whole-school practices and fostering schools as learning institutions rather than concentrating on individual teachers or teaching on its own. Continuing professional development for teachers, therefore, requires that teacher education institutions have more holistic and systemic repertoires of knowledge and recommendations on alternative practices to stimulate teachers and school leaders to enhance the quality of the educational experience they offer.

Issue 5: Ensure that all of the above principles are underpinned by a clear understanding of evidence about how student teachers learn to teach

3.23 There is extensive research evidence on how student teachers learn to teach. For example: how they often need to “re-learn” what they think they know about teaching and learning from their own very particular school experience; the difficulties they have in learning to “see” how effective teachers actually teach (what often looks simply like common sense); and the importance of experimenting firstly within a safe environment. There are also important decisions to be made as to how the different elements of the programme link together. Again, international practice suggests that the most effective teacher education programmes are based on clear understandings of student teacher learning and are themselves the focus of ongoing research and development.

Faith-based teacher education

3.24 In the international literature the above themes apply across all types of teacher education and do not relate to any specific tradition of teacher education, faith-based or otherwise. International experience suggests that different institutional contexts are to be found that take account of specific religious traditions. Thus, across the world, there is a very extensive network of Catholic universities and institutions of higher education, which seek to combine a commitment to the values of a religious tradition with the traditional values espoused by universities. Many of these universities, such as the Australian Catholic University, or Boston College, Loyola University, and San Francisco University in the USA, have a long history of involvement in teacher education, some of them originating in the early years of the nineteenth century.

3.25 At the same time, there is also a long tradition of free-standing, faith-based teacher education institutions. Many of these, such as St Mary’s University College in London, Newman University in Birmingham, and Leeds Trinity University, have diversified to include a range of disciplines and professional schools and faculties, including teacher education. There, teacher education is embedded in an institution that still professes a religious mission. Indeed, some such institutions, for example, Roehampton University, London¹, and Liverpool Hope University, combine more than one religious tradition, offering a single integrated programme of teacher education while protecting

¹ See Annex 4 Case Study 1

a plurality of religious commitments. In the Republic of Ireland, the government has adopted a policy of promoting the rationalisation of teacher education colleges within a university-integrated framework. For example, the process of incorporating three denominational teacher education institutions within Dublin City University² is well advanced. Their incorporation involves provision for their denominational identity, while being members of an Institute of Education within the university.

- 3.26 Where neither diversification of function nor union with other faith-based institutions has proved possible, monotechnic faith-based teacher education institutions have tended to merge with a neighbouring university. The most recent of these mergers involved the former St Andrew's College in Glasgow. Itself the product in 1981 of the merger of two former Catholic colleges – Craiglockhart in Edinburgh and Notre Dame in Glasgow – to create Scotland's national Catholic college, St Andrew's College joined the university's existing education specialists to form the Faculty of Education of the University of Glasgow in the 1990s³. That merger was based on the agreement that those who taught in Catholic schools would continue to "require to be approved as regards religious belief and character" by the Catholic Church, in accordance with the terms of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 and subsequent legislation.
- 3.27 But diversification of function or merger have not been universal practices. There still exist, for example, in the USA, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, and Belgium, a number of relatively small faith-based teacher education institutions. St Mary's University College is one such college. Stranmillis University College, while not formally aligned to a specific denomination has elements of that status.
- 3.28 This consideration of the different institutional contexts in which faith-based teacher education is currently located internationally is not intended to indicate any preferred institutional arrangement. Rather, its aim is to demonstrate the range of evidence that the Panel took into account in formulating its recommended options for the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland, given the importance of the faith-based tradition in Northern Ireland.

² See Annex 4 Case Study 6

³ See Annex 4 Case Study 5

Developments of teacher education within the United Kingdom and Ireland

- 3.29 Developments across the four nations of the UK reveal a diverse picture in relation to international best practice. In England and Wales for many years there has been a strong emphasis on placing school-based experience at the heart of initial teacher education programmes with the consequence that the contribution of universities has lessened. This practice-oriented approach has been particularly strong in England, with many new teachers entering the profession through a variety of employment-based routes.
- 3.30 The current development in England of the School Direct model of teacher education, where schools themselves take the lead responsibility for training, buying what support from universities they see fit, further extends this practice-oriented model and potentially undermines the contribution of universities even further.
- 3.31 By contrast, Scotland and Northern Ireland have maintained a strong role for their universities. However, while in both countries schools have contributed substantially to the professional education of teachers, it is acknowledged that there is still scope for the further strengthening of university-school partnerships, with the aim of securing the closer integration of research and professional practice. Therefore, national practice in all four countries requires further development if it is to match the very best models of teacher education identified in the international literature.
- 3.32 In the Republic of Ireland initial teacher education programmes have been extended in duration and are being restructured along best practice lines. Government policy has decreed that closer collaboration or integration should take place between colleges of education and the universities. Teacher education, as a continuum, is now officially established, with many courses leading to advanced qualifications. The emphasis is on reflective practice and research underpins all phases of the continuum.
- 3.33 It was a necessary feature of our work to assess teacher education in Northern Ireland against these international trends. That assessment is the substance of the next section.

4. CURRENT PROVISION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

- 4.1 The review of any area of public policy can give rise to the suspicion that the area under review is, if not in crisis, in serious difficulties, to the extent that its effectiveness is a cause for concern. We wish to record that, in the light of the evidence before us, teacher education in Northern Ireland has a number of key strengths. All programmes have been endorsed by the GTCNI; they have all received very positive evaluations from the ETI; they have demonstrated that they are in alignment with the standards set by university quality assurance regimes; they are recruiting strongly; they receive high ratings in the annual national student evaluation, in the case of one of the institutions an outstandingly high evaluation; their graduates are well received by the schools of Northern Ireland and elsewhere; and their partnerships with schools are appreciated and attract supportive and favourable comment. One of the striking features of teacher education in Northern Ireland is the way the teacher education institutions, not least the two university colleges, have become members of international networks, including the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South, thus enriching the educational experience of Northern Ireland students and those from other countries. Moreover, as befits a mature system of teacher education, there is a widespread commitment to the still further enhancement of the quality of provision.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding these positive evaluations, there are significant weaknesses in the existing provision. These weaknesses fall into three categories: those relating to the size and relatively fragmented nature of current provision; those relating to the quality of provision judged against the international trends we have identified; and those relating to anomalies and apparent inequities in the existing arrangements.
- 4.3 With regard to the first of these, initial teacher education is currently provided by five institutions: Stranmillis University College, St Mary's University College, Queen's University Belfast (QUB), the University of Ulster (UU), and the OU.
- Stranmillis offers a four-year BEd (Hons) course directed at primary level teaching, a four-year BEd (Hons) course directed at secondary teaching in Business Studies, Technology and Design, and Science and Mathematics, and a one-year course directed at primary level teaching for university graduates leading to the award of a PGCE.

- St. Mary's offers a four-year BEd (Hons) course directed at primary level teaching, a four-year BEd (Hons) course directed at secondary teaching in Business Studies, Technology and Design, and Science and Mathematics, and a one-year course directed at primary level teaching in Irish Medium Education schools for university graduates leading to the award of a PGCE.
- QUB offers a one-year course directed at secondary level teaching for university graduates leading to the award of a PGCE with a variety of subject specialisms.
- The UU offers a one-year course directed at primary or secondary level teaching for university graduates leading to the award of PGCE with a variety of subject specialisms.
- The OU, presently, offers a part-time course directed at secondary level teaching for university graduates leading to the award of a PGCE in a variety of subject specialisms.

4.4 The student numbers for each institution for the current academic year (2013/14) are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	PGCE	Total
Stranmillis*	146	138	128	142	15	569
St Mary's**	147	135	143	124	20	569
QUB	-	-	-	-	137	137
UU	-	-	-	-	118	118
OU	-	-	-	-	25	25
Total	293	273	271	266	315	1418
Potential Graduates***	-	-	-	266	315	581

Figures taken from December 2013 statistical returns provided to DEL from the five institutions

*Stranmillis also has 272 non- initial teacher education students

**St Mary's also has 286 non- initial teacher education students

***PGCE and Year 4 students will enter the employment pool following graduation, i.e. potentially 581 newly qualified teachers available for employment.

4.5 While DEL provides the funding for Initial Teacher Education, DE determines the number of teachers trained each year by the providers in Northern Ireland, using their Teacher Demand Model (TDM), and also takes into account wider policy issues and the need to maintain capacity in the providers and the provision of opportunities for students to engage in higher education.

4.6 DE has approved the following intake for initial teacher education courses for session 2014/15:

Table 2

	Primary BEd	Primary PGCE	Primary PGCE IME	Primary PGCE Early Years	Post- Primary BEd	Post- Primary PGCE	Post- Primary PGCE IME	Total
Stranmillis	95	-	-	15	50	-	-	160
St Mary's	95	-	20		50	-	-	165
QUB	-	-	-	-	-	134	4	138
UU	-	33	-	-	-	80	4	117
OU	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	20
Total	190	33	20	15	100	234	8	600

BEd - Bachelor of Education

PGCE - Postgraduate Certificate in Education

IME – Irish Medium Education

4.7 As we have already noted, the OU announced its withdrawal from the PGCE qualification in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and the associated PGDE qualification in Scotland in November 2013 with the decision coming into effect following the January and March 2014 intake dates. However, 8 of the 20 places from the OU intake allocation for 2014/15 have commenced a PGCE course in May 2014.

- 4.8 While the number of students enrolled on programmes of initial teacher education can be precisely computed, the same cannot be said for the number of those on programmes of CPD, partly because they vary in duration and partly because they do not all lead to a recognised academic or professional award. Our discussions suggested that a small minority of the teaching force in Northern Ireland are currently engaged in CPD programmes leading to a postgraduate award.
- 4.9 Many of the difficulties of current provision were elaborated in the first stage of the review, which was undertaken by Grant Thornton. The report of that review, *Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland*⁴, published in March 2013, highlighted a number of issues which raised serious concerns about the financial viability of the two university colleges. It noted that the costs of teacher education in Northern Ireland were significantly higher than in comparator institutions elsewhere in the UK; that these higher costs were directly attributable to premia paid to the colleges, partly to accommodate the diseconomies of scale associated with their small size, partly to take account of their specialist function, and partly to enable them to meet the additional costs associated with old premises; that such premia were not paid to any other teacher education institution in the UK; and that the combined effect of these premia was to make teacher education some 38% higher in Stranmillis University College than in teacher education institutions in England and elsewhere in Northern Ireland, and at St Mary's University College some 31% higher.
- 4.10 In addition, Grant Thornton reported that the University Colleges were funded to undertake non-teacher education programmes, which amounted to about a third of their total student numbers, not primarily, it was maintained, to contribute to the skill base of an advanced economy, but as a way of enabling the colleges to remain financially viable.
- 4.11 The data provided by Grant Thornton have been corroborated from other sources. Figures provided by the Department, sourced from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, indicate that during the 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 academic years approximately 1700 Northern Ireland domiciled students commenced an initial teacher education course in Great Britain. Over the same period approximately 300 NI domiciled students who graduated from an initial teacher education course in Great

⁴ <http://www.delni.gov.uk/teacher-education-infrastructure-ni-study.pdf>

Britain obtained employment (either full-time or part-time) in the teaching profession within Northern Ireland, notwithstanding their lack of familiarity with the Northern Ireland curriculum or the way of professional life in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, data provided by the GTCNI, which are reproduced in full in Annex II, show that a diminishing proportion of those who graduate from teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland find employment, the figure for 2013 being 18.48%.

- 4.12 Four observations might be made on these figures. Firstly, the combined number of students on pre-service and in-service courses is not large, judged by UK and international standards. Several schools or faculties of education in other parts of the UK comfortably exceed provision in the whole of Northern Ireland.
- 4.13 Secondly, at least in the short term, there is no projected increase in the number of students. Such an increase could occur for several reasons, assuming that existing assumptions made by the TDM such as teacher/pupil ratios remain as they are. A decision might be taken to lessen Northern Ireland's dependence on teachers trained elsewhere, in order to strengthen the viability of existing institutions; there could be a lengthening of programmes, such as the PGCE; and there could be a significant extension of CPD opportunities, even although such students would be overwhelming part-time. In our view, even if the number of teachers involved in CPD programmes were to be doubled, that would represent only a modest investment in the professional replenishment of a key occupational group. The funding of such changes could be achieved either through the allocation of additional resources or by securing economies and efficiencies, so that the increase in the size of the sector would be financially neutral. Given the fragility of the financing of existing provision, and the progressive tightening of the public purse, it is very likely that any expansion of the sector will need to be self-funded.
- 4.14 Thirdly, as has been noted above, teacher education in Northern Ireland is heavily fragmented. Currently, five institutions have responsibility for a total of some 1400 initial teacher education students, not, as we have noted, a large figure by UK standards. The apportionment of specialist programmes appears to be the product of historical influences rather than rational policy-making. In consequence, comparatively small groups of staff are engaged in work that duplicates what is being provided elsewhere. While there is some evidence of joint course provision, institutions for the

most part offer their own range of programmes, working in isolation. The failure to rationalise provision is particularly noteworthy in the CPD provision for teachers: each institution offers a suite of specialist master's degree programmes, with relatively small groups of staff working independently, instead of seeking to create a critical mass of specialists in the different fields of study in a way that would strengthen the quality of the teaching and learning.

- 4.15 It is important to be clear about the problem that is being considered here. The difficulty to which we have drawn attention should not be read as an attack on small institutions: it is a criticism of five relatively small teacher education providers, three of them in close geographical proximity, being based in the same city, failing to organise themselves in a way that reduces fragmentation, failing to build strong groups of specialist academic staff, and failing to minimise the significant duplication of activity that occurs when five institutions each offer the same extensive range of support services in a way that invites the charge of inefficiency.
- 4.16 Fourthly, such figures suggest that something is seriously amiss with the planning of student intakes to teacher education programmes, as Grant Thornton maintained. On the one hand, a diminishing proportion of those trained are finding employment as teachers in Northern Ireland, while, on the other, a significant proportion of those employed as teachers each year obtain their professional qualification outside Northern Ireland. In addition, it seems to be common practice for DE to announce intakes to teacher education programmes that are in excess of the numbers indicated by the TDM, the official mechanism for assessing the size of the demand for teachers. The Panel received evidence of widespread concern about the adequacy of the arrangements for determining intakes to teacher education programmes. We regard this as an extremely serious shortcoming. For, if the intention is to recruit a larger share of able students to teacher education programmes, the surest way of losing such potential teachers is to generate a large pool of unemployed teachers.
- 4.17 We noted that the two university colleges questioned some of the Grant Thornton findings and felt that the financial difficulties considered by Grant Thornton could be significantly alleviated if the number of students admitted to teacher education were increased. The Panel found the Grant Thornton analysis to be persuasive, and was unable to see how, at a time when there was a substantial pool of unemployed teachers,

the number of students admitted to teacher education programmes could justifiably be increased.

- 4.18 Turning to the quality of provision, the current system, despite the strengths to which we have drawn attention, falls short of the best international practice in several respects. Firstly, and this weakness was a frequently expressed criticism in the evidence we received, there is no clear Northern Ireland strategy for teacher education. Elsewhere in the world effective systems of teacher education are well led: leadership responsibility is clearly located, and the community looks to that leadership to determine, after appropriate consultation, the strategic direction of teacher education and its part in the further development of the education service.
- 4.19 Secondly, teacher education in Northern Ireland may not be best served by being the responsibility of two government departments. It is appreciated that governance in Northern Ireland is a complex process, and that the politics of coalition government can result in agreements that are less than ideal and that may inhibit straightforward and speedy policy-making. We have no doubt, however, and our view is widely shared across the teacher education community, that Northern Ireland should find a way to make teacher education the responsibility of a single government department.
- 4.20 Thirdly, there is a regrettable disjunction between initial teacher education and teachers' CPD. It is now widely acknowledged that the professional preparation, formation and development of teachers should be a seamless process, in which teachers progressively extend and deepen their professional skills and understanding, without loss of educational momentum, throughout their career. That conception of teacher education is undermined when initial teacher education is the responsibility of universities and university colleges but CPD is the responsibility of others.
- 4.21 Fourthly, while all the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland espouse the partnership principle and work in close collaboration with partner schools, these partnerships require still further development if they are to match the best international practice. The position paper on *Teacher Education in Northern Ireland (2012)* developed by the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers in Northern

Ireland (UCET Northern Ireland), to which all the institutions are committed, captures the essence of such partnership. It maintains that

the most widely acclaimed form of partnership is now recognised to be one that is multi-faceted, in which placement and initial teacher education are embedded in a nexus of relationships involving close collaboration on continuing professional development, of the kind involved in much postgraduate professional development for teachers, cooperative teaching, curriculum renewal, collaborative research initiatives, secondments, staff exchanges and joint appointments, and many other forms of academic and professional interchange, all contributing to a shared culture of professional learning and collaboration. Such a culture flourishes most vigorously when the partnership is characterised by mutuality, and when the benefits are reciprocal. Such arrangements can enable schools to access the curricular and research expertise of the university to enhance the effectiveness of the educational experience they offer, as well as the achievements of their pupils. Universities, for their part, through placement opportunities are able to draw on the experience of schools to enliven and authenticate their teaching, to identify a context and partners for their research, and to become more firmly embedded in their local communities.

- 4.22 That conception of professional collaboration as a partnership of equals with joint responsibility and shared accountability has been adopted as an aspiration by all the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland. Current practice falls well short of what all institutions have accepted in principle. Further development is required if that aspiration is to become a reality.
- 4.23 Fifthly, the research performance of the teacher education sector as a whole is very uneven. The Northern Ireland universities have made strong returns in the periodic Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) over the years and have demonstrated, although not to the same level, a significant amount of research work that is of the highest international standing. By comparison, the two university colleges, while continuing to strengthen and extend their research base, principally but not exclusively in relation to professional practice, need to make substantial progress if they are to match the research performance of, for example, some of the former monotechnic teacher education institutions which have fully merged with universities, as at Cambridge, Exeter, Glasgow, and Edinburgh.

- 4.24 The third category of weaknesses we seek to highlight concerns a number of small but important features of the system that undermine its equitability. The first of these concerns variations in the way in which students qualify to teach in Catholic primary and nursery schools. At the UU students will automatically study and obtain the certificate as an integral part of their programme; at St Mary's University College students can elect to take the Certificate course as part of their initial teacher education. However, students attending Stranmillis University College must complete a programme provided by the University of Glasgow, if they wish to be qualified to teach in Catholic primary or nursery schools. The Panel questions whether such variation is acceptable or fair.
- 4.25 The second anomaly concerns admission to a teacher education programme. Currently, some applicants apply through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), the UK-wide admissions system, but can also apply directly to an institution, thus increasing their chances of admission. The Panel questions why all those seeking application to an institution of higher education are not expected to register through UCAS.
- 4.26 The third anomaly is that one of the institutions has been designated as a non-departmental public body, which in its view sharply diminishes that institution's discretion in budgetary and wider financial matters. We appreciate that has been imposed by the independent Office for National Statistics in London and we agree with that institution's claim that it is being treated differently and hope that DEL will pursue this matter on behalf of the institution.
- 4.27 All of the weaknesses and anomalies to which we have drawn attention inhibit the development of a teacher education service that is of the highest quality and seriously weaken the capacity of that service to respond robustly to the major challenges facing education in Northern Ireland. There are two such challenges that are especially demanding. The first concerns the relatively low achievement of post-primary pupils in Northern Ireland; the second concerns the deep social, religious, and other divisions that characterise the Northern Ireland community following such a prolonged period of conflict and social dislocation. To be sure, these divisions will call for action across a wide range of public policy but schools must be expected to play their part. These challenges, which are given more detailed consideration in the next section, will call for

a teaching profession that is so well selected, so well prepared and so well professionally supported that it consistently performs at the top of its game. That will call for significant change.

5. TEACHING IN NORTHERN IRELAND: TWO KEY CHALLENGES

- 5.1 In modern societies education serves two broad functions: it is expected to nurture and expand the nation's intellectual and social capital, and to initiate children and young people into the way of life of the community. The first of these functions is especially important in a society which is not blessed with a rich supply of natural resources upon which the wealth of the country can be based. In such a circumstance the country's prosperity depends on the cultivation of the skills and capabilities that are prized in the knowledge society: the educational imperative is to ensure that all of the country's citizens, not simply a selected minority, acquire those forms of knowledge and the manifold skills that enable them to contribute to the country's economic productivity and social wellbeing.
- 5.2 The second function of the educational system is to ensure that all young people acquire the knowledge, the skills and the dispositions that enable them, in their own interests, and in those of the community to which they belong, to be active citizens, to espouse the values of the community, to lead richly satisfying personal lives, and to contribute to the well-being of the community, and through various forms of social engagement to help to enrich the quality of life of the community. In many parts of the world this second function is attracting increased attention: the formal school system needs to cultivate qualities such as curiosity, creativity, and the willingness to learn, but these same qualities need to be nurtured even when institution-based learning is completed.
- 5.3 With regard to the first of these functions, the cultivation of the capabilities and talents of all to as high a level as possible, the education service in Northern Ireland faces a serious challenge. While the performance of Northern Ireland primary pupils is impressive – in 2011 they were outperformed by only four of the 45 participating countries in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and by only six of the 50 participating countries in the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) – in post-primary and beyond the performance of Northern Ireland pupils gives cause for concern. Thus, in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Northern Ireland, like other UK countries, was below the average of OECD countries and came third of the UK countries.

- 5.4 On other measures of educational achievement Northern Ireland does poorly: according to *The Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report* of 2013, in 2012 18.4% of the adult population had no formal qualification, almost double the UK figure of 9.9%; in the same year some 20% of young people in Northern Ireland were so-called NEETS (those not in employment, education or training), the highest figure in the UK; and in 2013 four out of ten schools leavers failed to achieve five good GCSE passes (A*-C, including English and Mathematics), the standard measure of employability.
- 5.5 In Northern Ireland, the second function of the education system, the creation of a cohesive community, is especially important. A series of government documents make repeated reference to the need, in a post-conflict society, for a process of social reconstruction and for the widespread endorsement of the values which underpin social life. Thus, the *Good Friday Agreement* of 1998 seeks to ensure that the major political and social changes ushered in by that Agreement enshrine the values of “partnership, equality and mutual respect”. *The Programme for Government 2011-15* issued by the Executive in 2012 has as one of its four key priorities “to build a shared and better future for all”. That commitment is reinforced by the use of such terms as advancing “social cohesion and integration”, “collaborative working”, and fostering “fairness and good relations”. Moreover, that same document gave an undertaking to establish an advisory group “to advance shared education”.
- 5.6 In implementation of that policy commitment the Office of the First and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) published in 2013 a specific programme of action significantly entitled *Together: Building a United Community*. The principal aim of that strategy was to create “a united community based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation, one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance”. The fundamental values championed by the strategy were explicit: “cohesion, diversity, fairness, inclusion, integration, interdependence, respect, responsibilities, rights, sharing and tolerance”. Significantly, the educational service was seen as having a key role to play in the implementation of the strategy.

- 5.7 The role of schools was even further emphasised in the report of the DE Ministerial Advisory Group, *Advancing Shared Education* (2013). Shared education was seen as providing “a central mechanism for improving the quality of education provision, expanding the range of opportunities open to children and young people and for preparing them with the skills required to make a full and active contribution to building an inclusive society based upon respect for diversity and difference”. DE was specifically enjoined to “develop a framework for supporting the early and continuing professional development of teachers that encourages its delivery through shared education”. That same Department, as well as DEL, in conjunction with the teacher education institutions, were urged “to consider appropriate mechanisms for collaboration to ensure that student teachers and teachers returning for professional development can be provided with opportunities to learn together, including in relation to preparation for teaching through shared education”.
- 5.8 The authors of that report issued an important warning. They feared that “this opportunity to transform our educational system will be lost if key stakeholders simply retreat into, and seek to defend, their respective interests and sectors”.
- 5.9 That same commitment to shared education is also reflected in the written and oral evidence the Panel received from teacher education institutions. Thus, for example, while the submission from St. Mary's stressed its commitment to the Catholic tradition of teacher education, it also affirmed that “the St. Mary's vision is consistent with a collective desire to create a world-class system of initial teacher education over time which also enhances and improves sharing within the sector”. Referring to existing links, St. Mary's went on to emphasise that “The autonomy which St. Mary's seeks, as a Catholic institution, is balanced by a sincere commitment toward partnership and cooperation within the framework of the evolving shared approach to education which has been endorsed by the Minister of Education, Mr. John O'Dowd, MLA”.
- 5.10 Other institutional submissions reflect that same commitment. Thus, QUB makes reference to “building constructive connections with all sectors of education and promoting a genuinely shared sense of participation and collaboration across the entire educational system”, invoking its own research and development work on shared education, which now forms part of the Programme for Government. The UU lists among the challenges facing teacher education in Northern Ireland “the needs of a

divided society emerging from conflict”, and refers to its practice of encouraging students to learn from each other and cross boundaries between their practice schools...in the context of local sectarian divides”. For its part, Stranmillis University College exemplifies its commitment to shared education in the joint programme it has mounted with St Mary’s University College entitled CREDIT (Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers), which “involves teachers working in all phases and sectors to help them to develop skills and confidence in dealing with issues of diversity, inclusion and community cohesion in the classroom and on a whole-school basis”.

- 5.11 The language and the overwhelming burden of the key public documents, referred to in paragraphs 5.5 to 5.7, at one and the same time declare a commitment to the values that characterise the good society and issue a call to action. To be sure, every social agency, every public body, every organ of civil society has an obligation to see these values embedded in public life and woven into the fabric of social living. However, the educational service has a particularly important role to play: indeed, since it is one of the two consuming preoccupations of the educational system to nurture these values and these communitarian impulses, the contribution of schools to social reconstruction cannot be over-emphasised.
- 5.12 The effectiveness of the educational system in realising these two broad aims will depend pre-eminently on the knowledge, skills, resourcefulness and commitment of a nation’s teachers. Certainly, other social agencies have an important role to play; but what matters most within the school is the quality of the teaching. It is for this reason that the quality of the teacher education system is so crucial.
- 5.13 Teachers are agents of personal and social transformation. By their capacity to inspire, to support, and to guide, they transform the lives of their pupils and in so doing lay the basis for the transformation of social living. If Northern Ireland seeks to create a world-class educational system it requires a world-class teaching force. That is the kind of teaching force which the Northern Ireland community expects and it is the kind of teaching force to which the children and young people of Northern Ireland are entitled.

- 5.14 The Panel was impressed by the enthusiasm with which the teacher education institutions were addressing the challenges they faced and by their commitment to the continuous development of their provision, of their programmes, of the services they offer, and of their plans for the future.
- 5.15 What became evident through our meetings and discussions with the teacher education institutions and a range of professional constituencies is the need for a single, coherent, and commonly shared teacher education strategy for Northern Ireland. Such a strategy should be comprehensive enough to unify the whole teacher education community; it should inform the purposeful leadership of teacher education; and it should underpin policy-making and the further development of the sector, as well as the funding and overall governance of teacher education in Northern Ireland. The starting point for the Panel's consideration of future initial teacher education structures for Northern Ireland was to articulate the principles upon which such an agreed strategy for the future of teacher education in Northern Ireland would be based, and from these principles to identify options for the future development of the infrastructure of teacher education in Northern Ireland. These principles are considered in the next section.

6 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING AN ENHANCED SYSTEM

- 6.1 In section 3 we summarised the characteristics of a world-class system of teacher education based on a review of the international research and practice: programmes should certainly recruit those who are intellectually able but who also demonstrate a commitment to teaching and the interpersonal and non-cognitive qualities that teaching requires; they should cultivate a strong academic base in relation to domain knowledge and pedagogy; they should provide students with effective clinical practice whereby they undertake teaching and the analysis of teaching under the supervision of accomplished and experienced teachers; the campus-based and the school-based strands of the programme should be carefully coordinated to create a coherent educational experience; and the whole programme should be underpinned by relevant research about teaching and learning and should cultivate in students the disposition and the professional wherewithal to subject their teaching to systematic scrutiny with a view to its enhancement.
- 6.2 Options for new initial teacher education structures must be underpinned by principles that are reflected in current international trends and research. Indeed, these principles are already reflected, to varying degrees, in current provision. What is required to create a teacher education system that is as strong as the best in the world is a fuller realisation of these principles: enlarging teacher education's share of the most able school leavers and university graduates; the deepening of the academic and pedagogical knowledge which beginning teachers bring to their work; the further enrichment of clinical practice in such a way as to enable students to bring the insights of experienced teachers, and their developing professional awareness of the realities of life in schools and classrooms, as well as relevant research, into closer and continuing relationship; and the more thorough infusion of the research power of universities, to the extent that, even although they are beginning teachers, they acquire the teacher-researcher's habit of subjecting their work to systematic scrutiny.
- 6.3 However, there is a further principle that must be invoked to take account of the particular context of Northern Ireland: teacher education should be pluralist, in the sense that it acknowledges that there are competing interpretations of teacher education and of its nature and purpose. How initial teacher education is structured in Northern Ireland is significantly affected by this principle and by the related principle of shared

education. There are four identifiable conceptions of teacher education in Northern Ireland: one that recognises the distinctive character of the Catholic tradition of teacher education; a second that urges that teacher education should be faith-based in a broader sense; a third that, in line with the dominant European university tradition, is agnostic in the sense that it does not see faith as an appropriate or certainly a necessary dimension of teacher education; and a fourth, less widespread than the others, which calls for a more integrated or shared approach, in which deliberate steps are taken to engage teacher education students in shared teaching and other forms of engagement that may serve to weaken barriers, real or imagined, between different social and religious groups and to contribute to a more cohesive society.

- 6.4 The proponents of faith-based teacher education maintain that the process of becoming a teacher is not simply a form of intellectual engagement with relevant academic and pedagogical studies, combined with the acquisition of a repertoire of skills and strategies through which pupils' learning is progressed. In addition, they argue, it is an integral feature of learning to teach that students come to espouse certain values, which give point and purpose to the whole professional undertaking. These values are absorbed through the lived experience of participating in an educational community; they are exerted by, and implicit in, that community's whole mode of operation. They constitute what has been called a "hidden curriculum", which powerfully reinforces what the formal curriculum conveys.
- 6.5 The corollary of that stance is that those who adhere to a different conception of teacher education, faith-based or otherwise, must be afforded the same entitlement to offer a teacher education which enshrines their values and to pursue those forms of professional socialisation which reflect their principles.
- 6.6 In our view, and we cannot express our conviction more strongly, there can be no progress in teacher education in Northern Ireland, no realisation of our aim to see a world-class system of teacher education in Northern Ireland, no healing of the scars left by decades of bitter acrimony and social conflict, unless teacher education and the wider community can endorse these conflicting views of teacher education as valid, legitimate, and worthy of political support. There is no shame in acknowledging in the conduct of human affairs that men and women of good will disagree on a vital issue, and there is little point in seeking, through coercive measures or otherwise, to expect

those who adhere strongly to a particular conception of the education of teachers to resist from practices which are inveterately habitual, or to weaken a commitment that is unshakeable. However, we firmly believe, and we are supported in that belief by a strong thrust of the evidence we received, that the principle of pluralism cannot be accepted on its own. A community is more than a collection of groups which profess distinctive values and which have no engagement with each other. By the same token, we cannot accept that different conceptions of teacher education should become institutionalised in parallel universes, wherein students would attend a school that espouses a particular world-view, religious or otherwise, graduates to attend a teacher education institution that is committed to that same world-view, undertake field-based experiences in the same schools in which they were educated, and ultimately take up teaching positions in those same schools.

Shared Education

- 6.7 Fortunately, there is evidence of support for a more inclusive view of community life. It is acknowledged that a community is more than a collection of self-sufficient and self-absorbed sub-groups with little or no interaction between them. Rather, it is widely recognised that a community is a human institution that coheres because of a shared commitment to certain values and shared forms of social life, shared engagement, and interdependence. These values, which are not the monopoly of any single religious or secular group, include justice, fairness, respect for the dignity of individuals, trust, tolerance, and commitment to the common good. Public documents such as those identified in paragraphs 5.5 to 5.7 above seek to engender an aspiration on all members of the Northern Ireland community to pursue these values in the interests of creating, after years of bitter acrimony and division, a more cohesive community.
- 6.8 In our view, teacher education must contribute to that more cohesive form of social living. To that end, teacher education provision in Northern Ireland should certainly recognise and support different philosophies of teacher education, but it should also seek to ensure that teachers are able to contribute to their pupils' awareness of what members of the Northern Ireland community share in common. It is clear from the evidence submitted to us, and from our discussions with the teacher education institutions, that all subscribe to the principle of shared education, that all make a contribution at present to what shared education entails, and that all are willing to

contribute to the further development of shared education. Moreover, shared education is a key policy objective supported by all political parties in Northern Ireland and therefore has important implications for initial teacher education. As the recent report to the Minister of Education defined it, shared education involves two or more schools or other institutions from different sectors working in collaboration in a way that “delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion”. Moreover, just as faith-based teacher education is accepted to require active participation in and personal experience of what it means to teach in a particular faith tradition, so we maintain that all teacher education students should, as part of their total programme and experience, engage in shared education activities of the kind we have mentioned.

6.9 Accordingly, we maintain that all programmes of teacher education, irrespective of the tradition to which they adhere and within which they operate, should make provision for students of different faith and none to engage with each other across existing lines of social division, through at least the shared use of premises, where possible, through mixed classes, through shared teaching and other forms of social engagement, which bring students from different faith traditions into full participation in forms of activity that increase mutual understanding. Matters relating to the promotion of shared education are of course formally beyond the remit of our work in that they involve the content rather than the structure of provision. However, we believe that initial teacher education has a vitally important role to play in the achievement of effective shared education and we hope that DE will agree to make the preparation of new teachers in shared education a significant and compulsory element for all programmes. Such an element is an integral feature of all four policy options outlined in section 8.

6.10 Clearly, it is not appropriate for us to advise on the detailed content of such a programme. Defining that content should be a collaborative task for the teacher education sector itself, in consultation with the many other agencies with a contribution to make to shared education. We nevertheless suggest that it should involve a significant proportion of curriculum time and that it should cover knowledge, such as the background to current policy initiatives and the social, cultural and religious aspects of life in Northern Ireland, the development of practical skills in collaborative working and, centrally, school experience. During the course of the programme, all student

teachers should have some experience of studying alongside students from other institutions and traditions, and they should all have experience of teaching in more than one school sector. Through such curricular and extra-curricular experiences student teachers' understanding and appreciation of differences will be strengthened and their appreciation of what they share in common at the human level will enrich their professional preparation.

- 6.11 In summary, when we maintain that teacher education in Northern Ireland should be pluralist we intend by that term to denote that the faith-based tradition of teacher education should be respected, but that, in addition, formal provision should be made for student teachers, whether or not they adhere to a particular religious belief, to undertake, as an integral feature of their total programme, a shared education component. The shared education component of initial teacher education acknowledges the need to support plurality of teacher education provision, but it also recognises the need in every teacher education programme to engage students with those personal and social values that are widely shared across the different faith traditions.
- 6.12 We are aware that much of the substance of this section of our report and the next, which sets out the conditions we consider to be necessary for the full realisation of these principles, falls within the province of DE. However, as we have repeatedly urged, it is impossible to devise infrastructural arrangements for teacher education without an understanding of what teacher education entails.

7 CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

- 7.1 If the previous section led the Panel into the consideration of matters that fall under the aegis of DE, the same applies, *a fortiori*, to this section. We repeat our response to that possible criticism: infrastructural questions presuppose a clear understanding of what the infrastructure is intended to support. In any case, our terms of reference explicitly enjoined us “to examine the case for the reform of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland” and “to compare what is considered best international practice with the current provision in Northern Ireland”. Fidelity to these terms of reference, rather than wilful supererogation, *required* us to engage in the discussion of issues that are the responsibility of DE. The conditions we now consider may fall to that Department to address, but they are key to the success of any new structures for teacher education. We certainly do not intend these conditions to be formal recommendations to DE. Rather, we see them as steps in the creation of a context that is conducive to the further development of teacher education in Northern Ireland. In effect, the issues involved inter-penetrate the work of both DE and DEL and, in the overall interest of promoting the quality of teacher education, it is our hope that they can be addressed in a spirit of mutual engagement and cooperation.
- 7.2 We believe that the establishment of a teacher education system which reflects the principles articulated in section 6 above can only be effected if the following four conditions are met. These conditions will not by themselves create a system that rivals the best but such a system will not be built without them.
- 7.3 Firstly, there must be an agency or body that is concerned with the strategic direction of teacher education. While government departments in a democratic society are ultimately responsible for national strategy in any area of public policy and must be held accountable to legislative bodies for this work, a wise and prudent government department will find ways in which relevant professional expertise is harnessed to contribute to the development and implementation of policy, subject always to the overriding authority of government. In the proposals for the streamlining of local government in Northern Ireland through the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), provision was made for the introduction of a Teacher Education Committee, which would perform a national advisory role with regard to teacher education strategy. The fact that there now seems little likelihood that the ESA will be established in the

immediate future does not invalidate our proposal: we believe there is a strong case for the creation of a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Advisory Council, with appropriate representation from the teacher education institutions, the GTCNI, those who employ teachers, as well as teachers' professional bodies. Moreover, we believe that that advisory body should be answerable to a single government department responsible for all aspects of teacher education.

- 7.4 The second condition is that there should be an agreed pattern of teacher education programmes. We were not made aware of any desire to depart from the established practice of offering undergraduate and postgraduate routes into teaching. Indeed, there was strong support for that dual approach, notwithstanding a recent claim for the adoption of an "exclusive route" into teaching through an albeit extended PGCE⁵. There was, however, a strongly held view that the existing one-year PGCE was too compressed and should be extended to two years. We support that view and suggest that that two-year programme should lead to the award of a master's degree, in line with an international trend and as the first step in rendering teaching a master's level profession. A further step would be the allocation of funds to support a substantial growth in CPD for teachers, building on the long experience of the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland in such work, thus establishing within the teacher education institutions a clear line of professional development from initial teacher education, through induction, into career-long professional development and learning.
- 7.5 However, this change would depend on the establishment of formal partnership agreements between employers and their schools and teacher education institutions, on the nature and provision of programmes, and on utilising those partnership agreement and arrangements that are found in the most fruitful collaborations at the stage of initial teacher education. To promote the approach to partnership that entails extensive collaboration across a wide range of professional activities including research we consider that the GTCNI, the employers, and the teacher education institutions should collaborate in developing a *Partnership Concordat*, which would establish through consultation codes of professional practice governing school placement and clinical practice, the provision of master's level CPD for teachers, and the conduct of research.

⁵ GTCNI Annual Lecture 2012 "Should we ignore our past? Reflections on the Development of Teacher Education in Ireland" by Dr Seán Farren

- 7.6 In discussing the pattern of teacher education provision in the years ahead we must emphasise that, while the pattern of provision is important, so also is the intellectual underpinning of that provision. In our view, teacher education in Northern Ireland needs to be strengthened academically and cognitively. Provision has not yet been sufficiently infused with the intellectual power which university involvement in teacher education makes possible. That intellectual power derives from the universities' research activities. Like any other field of human endeavour, teaching requires a continuing pursuit of fresh ways of conceptualising, innovative approaches to professional action, and more sophisticated appraisals of how human learning is to be facilitated. All of those involved in teacher education in Northern Ireland must therefore make more determined efforts to bring to the education of teachers and their continuing professional development the fruits of research and other scholarly activity. Without recourse to the findings of such activity teacher education will stagnate and the quality of the education provided by the schools will slip into steady decline, with irreparable damage to the life chances of young people, the country's economic standing and its social wellbeing.
- 7.7 That intellectual renaissance must begin at the stage of initial teacher education, where among the manifold skills and understandings that beginning teachers acquire is the capacity to draw on research findings to inform their classroom work and to adopt the researcher's disposition to scrutinise their teaching with a view to its enrichment. It is our view that beyond initial teacher education there must be increased scope for teachers to undertake advanced study and research at master's and doctoral levels. There is strong evidence to demonstrate that engagement in such forms of master's level study confers considerable benefits: it encourages teachers to interrogate their own practices and those of others; it induces the disposition to innovate; it provides teachers with the professional wherewithal to adjudicate between alternative forms of classroom action; it sustains a professional community that is committed to improved practice; and it develops teachers' problem-solving and research skills. If there is a genuine desire to create a world-class system of teacher education in Northern Ireland then there is a need for a substantial investment in the continuing professional development of teachers through the kind of master's level and doctoral studies that enable teachers to be the key players in curriculum development, in system improvement, in research, and in the leadership of teaching and learning. In our view

the possibilities for quality enhancement of the kind we have been urging will require staff synergies in centres of excellence that will, in turn, call for reformed and strengthened patterns of institutional collaboration, which may in turn create savings that can be used to improve the service in other ways.

- 7.8 The intimate inter-relationship between teacher education and research has been powerfully reinforced by the recent BERA-RSA inquiry. The final report of that inquiry identifies four ways in which research can inform and enrich teachers' professional preparation and their CPD:

First, the content of teacher education programmes may be informed by research-based knowledge and scholarship emanating from a range of academic disciplines and epistemological traditions. Secondly, research can be used to inform the design and structure of teacher education programmes. Third, teachers and teacher educators can be equipped to engage with and be discerning consumers of research. Fourth, teachers and teacher educators may be equipped to conduct their own research, individually and collectively, to investigate the impact of particular interventions or to explore the positive and negative effects of educational practice.

- 7.9 In elaboration of that thesis, the report distinguishes between engagement *with* and engagement *in* research. In the first of these, teachers draw on research findings to find the best evidence available on how pupils' learning can be supported and assessed to inform their classroom decision-making. In the second, teachers adopt the researcher's disposition to systematic enquiry and are encouraged to research their own practice, to test the effectiveness of particular teaching strategies, and to establish the evidence that will provide the basis for improved practice.
- 7.10 The cultivation of what the report calls "research literacy" and the sustaining of school cultures that are "research-rich" strongly reinforce the idea of the teacher as researcher and the teaching profession as a researching profession, one in which teachers are not simply the focus of research by others but are themselves generators of research findings which can shape the debate on teaching and learning as well as influence the practical conduct of schooling. What is more, the report maintains that the most effective teaching, the teaching that has the most pronounced impact on pupils' learning, is the teaching that is informed by evidence and which sustains the systematic

analysis of and reflection on professional practice. Viewed in this way, research provides the warrant for professional action, as well as the stimulus to improved performance. Far from being remote and divorced from the practical realities of the classroom, or an optional extra for the busy practitioner, research is deeply integral to the professional life of the teacher and therefore of teacher education.

7.11 The BERA-RSA report makes recommendations for each of the four jurisdictions in the UK. For Northern Ireland the report recommends, firstly, the establishment of CPD as an “entitlement to career-long professional learning for all teachers”, a principle we have fully endorsed at paragraph 7.4 above; secondly, the creation of mechanisms that support partnership working between schools on CPD and research engagement by teachers, which is broadly similar to the Partnership Concordat we have proposed at paragraph 7.5 above; thirdly, the building of research capacity in the university colleges and faculties of education so that research-informed approaches are embedded in teacher education and CPD; fourthly, the revision of the Teacher Competency Framework to support schools in promoting “research informed reflective practice”; and, finally, the modification of the inspection framework to enable the inspection process to encourage the development of “research-rich school and college cultures”. The review panel warmly supports all of these recommendations and sees them all as contributing to the strengthening of the educational research culture in Northern Ireland, and through that the enhancement of the quality of teaching and of teacher education in Northern Ireland.

7.12 The third condition is the introduction of a more rational and dependable system of workforce planning in teacher education. Currently, notwithstanding the well-tryed Teacher Demand Model, there are developments that are extremely difficult to reconcile. Thus, while numbers have been significantly reduced in recent years in the teacher education institutions, a substantial number of teachers are recruited who have received their professional education elsewhere. A further disturbing feature is that there is a substantial pool of unemployed teachers, thus creating serious difficulties for recent graduates to find employment. Taken together, these factors inhibit the rational planning of provision and make estimates of the projected size of the teacher education sector extremely hazardous, if not impossible, and perversely making teaching a less attractive choice for able graduates and school leavers. A way must speedily be found

to provide institutions with information about the size of the intake and its distribution over a longer planning cycle than the current arrangements allow.

- 7.13 The final condition concerns the effective use of resources. It is axiomatic that there will be more demands on the public purse than can easily be accommodated, and every area of public provision can expect to be placed under pressure to deploy what resources it attracts to best effect so that the taxpayer can be reassured that funds are being disbursed and utilized responsibly and in a way that secures value for money. The education service and the teacher education service cannot be immune from these pressures. The greatest care must therefore be taken to allocate resources within the service responsibly, to eliminate unnecessary duplication of provision, and to avoid what can amount to a misuse of public funds. One of the major costs in any public service is staffing. No public service can evade the responsibility to deploy staff in a way that avoids duplication and patterns of deployment that are extremely hard to justify on efficiency grounds.
- 7.14 The endorsement of the principles we have articulated would help to create the optimal environment for an effective system of teacher education. The question then to be addressed concerns the most appropriate infrastructure for teacher education: which institutional arrangements will be most effective in creating the vibrant and powerful system of teacher education that Northern Ireland needs? It has to be acknowledged that no single infrastructural arrangement follows ineluctably from our principles and conditions: there are various possible forms of an appropriate infrastructure for teacher education. These options are considered in section 8 below.

8 OPTIONS

- 8.1 There have been three previous independent reviews of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland in recent years: the Chilver review of 1980, the Taylor/Usher review of 2004 and the Osler review of 2005. Each of these reviews sought to address the most appropriate way in which the teacher education system could meet the diverse needs of Northern Ireland schools and society. The recommendations of these earlier reviews are summarised in Annex III. This Panel has taken the insights of these significant previous studies into account but has also recognised the changing context of provision in Northern Ireland and the need therefore for any new changes in the infrastructure of teacher education to reflect the current characteristics and ambitions of that population.
- 8.2 Given the explicit policy commitment of the Northern Ireland Executive to working towards increased mutual understanding and social integration, as evidenced by the *Programme for Government 2011-15* and the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy, we believe there is great value in increased collaboration in teacher education, a value that is further reinforced by the relatively modest numbers involved and the small geographical area covered.
- 8.3 In accordance with our remit, we have reviewed the literature on teacher education and international best practice to identify the features of a world-class system of teacher education. We have assessed current provision in Northern Ireland and shown where, notwithstanding its many strengths, provision in Northern Ireland needs to be developed if it is to rival the world's best and if it is to address the challenges it faces. We have set out the principles which should govern the enhancement of the quality of teacher education in Northern Ireland, and the conditions that must be met if that enhancement is to be secured. We turn now to consider the most appropriate infrastructure that will support the enhancement of the provision we judge to be required. However, before considering the options for the infrastructure of teacher education and the criteria against which they should be assessed, we must highlight those features of the Northern Ireland context that we believe need to be taken into account.

- 8.4 Firstly, it is necessary to sustain those aspects of teacher education in Northern Ireland that are acknowledged to be of high quality. The need now is to build on these strengths and to accelerate those developments that will make a decisive impact on provision.
- 8.5 Secondly, it is vital, as our terms of reference required, to take account of the need to secure efficiencies in the teacher education system. The more wisely and prudently resources are deployed the more likely it is that savings will be secured that can be used to generate improvements in the quality of provision, such as the provision of increased funding for research and investment in teachers' CPD. These and other potential future investments, which would result from greater efficiency, would provide the institutions involved in the provision of teacher education in Northern Ireland with a real opportunity to influence its future development and incentives to grasp this opportunity to make significant progress towards international best practice.
- 8.6 In that connection, it is essential to take account of the potential impact on the financial sustainability of the institutions concerned. Experience elsewhere, as well as in Northern Ireland itself, suggests that it is possible to ensure financial sustainability in different ways and without continuing to provide funding for initial teacher training places that are not needed. Indeed, it has been found elsewhere that a decision to sustain the future financial viability of institutions through encouraging them to diversify their provision has a number of advantages, since it can lead to new models of course provision and act as a new stimulus to greater collaboration. In the case of Northern Ireland, for example, this diversification could take the form of jointly offered undergraduate degrees between the Universities and the University Colleges, drawing on their different expertise. Through greater collaboration there is also the possibility of building on the pedagogical expertise of the University Colleges as a resource for the benefit of the higher educator sector in Northern Ireland as a whole.
- 8.7 Thirdly, we recognise the importance of the historic context of Northern Ireland society and its continuing diversity. In addition to the pursuit of greater quality and efficiency we have therefore taken into account the need to respect the role of the different faith traditions in teacher education as well as the widespread desire for greater sharing across the sector as a contribution to the building of a more cohesive society.

8.8 Finally, it was necessary to consider the position of the OU. As has been noted, that university has decided to withdraw from initial teacher education but will continue to contribute to the provision of CPD for teachers. The OU offers such distinctive provision that we judged it inappropriate to include it in our analysis of the infrastructural options for teacher education. Whatever infrastructure is decided upon, there will always be the need for an agency like the OU which defies the customary constraints of time and place to create learning opportunities for many, including teachers, who find conventional patterns of course participation incompatible with their life style or pattern of work.

8.9 While the options we propose differ in character they all share certain common features. These are:

- each institution should ensure that every teacher education course should include a programme of shared education;
- each centre of teacher education should become a major centre for CPD, for educational research, for curriculum development, and school improvement, and related professional activities, developed in close association with partner schools and employers;
- both concurrent and consecutive programmes should be maintained;
- the PGCE should extend to two years and should issue in a master's degree in teaching;
- there should be a substantial investment in CPD for teachers leading to master's level awards endorsed by the GTCNI;
- a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Advisory Council should be established;
- a Partnership Concordat should be established, under the leadership of the GTCNI, to oversee partnership between universities, schools, and employers, across the whole range of professional activities, including research; and
- all undergraduate recruits to initial teacher education in Northern Ireland should apply through the UCAS system although this requirement would not preclude the use of appropriate additional selection procedures.

8.10 The criteria used for the analysis of the advantages and disadvantages as we see them of each of the options identified are drawn from the characteristics of a world-class system of teacher education discussed in Section 3. These are:

- teacher education should attract the best and most suitable candidates;
- teacher education should be based on academically-competitive degrees, be practice-focused and built on research;
- teacher education should develop strong links between theory and practice;
- teacher education should have close links with the continuing professional development of teachers in schools;
- teacher education should provide for research-based training;
- teacher education should involve a richer and deeper partnership with a smaller number of outstanding schools; and
- all these principles should be underpinned by an understanding of evidence about how student teachers learn to teach.

8.11 When applied to the unique Northern Ireland context, these general principles translate into the need for any future teacher training strategy to emphasise:

- sustaining and improving the existing high quality of initial teacher training provision;
- maximising efficiency in terms of the overall numbers of students being trained, their subject specialisms, and in the provision of master's and other in-service courses;
- co-locating provision where this drives quality and efficiency but does not reduce access or the opportunity for widening participation; and
- respecting different faith traditions and the consequent need for a pluralist approach whilst providing for individuals and institutions to work together to create greater social cohesion.

- 8.12 We have summarised these features in terms of four key criteria: quality, efficiency, continued support for the existing diversity of provision, and with regard to each option's potential ease of implementation.
- 8.13 We define the *quality* criterion in terms of the characteristics of international trends: attracting high calibre candidates; qualified teacher status being associated with competitive academic degrees; a clear role for research as an integral part of teacher education; close links with a small number of training school partners; and strong links between initial and continuing professional development.
- 8.14 We define the *efficiency* criterion in terms of maximising the use of government funding made available for teacher education, development and associated research activity. Included under this heading therefore is the efficient use of staff, both academic and support, across the various institutions; avoiding duplication of provision; and the optimum use of infrastructure, especially buildings.
- 8.15 We define the *diversity* criterion in terms of the extent to which a particular option reflects both the traditions and aspirations of the people of Northern Ireland as a whole and the faith traditions that play an important role in current initial teacher education provision. It is closely associated with the emphasis in our terms of reference on seeking to move towards "a more shared or integrated system" and the requirement to build on the vision put forward in the responses of the various stakeholders outlining their vision of the "structures necessary to create a world-class system of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland which also enhances and improves sharing and integration within the sector".
- 8.16 We define the *practicability* criterion in terms of the perceived ease of implementation of any particular option. We see practicability as being likely to depend on the particular mix of the other three criteria represented by any particular option combined with the relative complexity of the organisational, political and financial processes that would be involved in implementing that option.
- 8.17 Each of the options for reconfiguring the infrastructure of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland identified below is thus evaluated with reference to four clear criteria.
- 8.18 There is a view that the status quo must always be an option, on the assumption that the current situation may not be perfect but any change could imperil a set of arrangements

that are broadly satisfactory. We do not accept that view since we believe that any public service should be committed to the search for continuous improvement. Moreover, although the status quo in teacher education provision in Northern Ireland has a number of strengths, it also has a number of weaknesses in relation to contemporary world-class provision which we enumerated in section 4 and also with regard to the efficient use of public money. We believe that the existing infrastructure of teacher education in Northern Ireland is currently too fragmented to deliver the changes that are necessary. For this reason, we have not included below a “no change” or status quo option. As the maximum gains in terms of quality and efficiency of changes proposed in paragraph 8.9 above could not be achieved within the status quo, their introduction should be conditional on structured commitment by the teacher education institutions to one of the four options, or a combination of them, as set out in the rest of this section.

Option A: A collaborative partnership

- 8.19 This option builds on the strength of existing initial teacher education provision in Northern Ireland. Under this option, initial teacher education would continue to be provided by all four current providers in Belfast and the North-West. Both St Mary's and Stranmillis would continue to exist as autonomous colleges but in an enhanced partnership⁶. It would be a condition of the funding grant to all three institutions, QUB, Stranmillis and St. Mary's, that they would be required to work more closely together, with QUB actively exercising its role as the validating university in the collaborative delivery of a comprehensive programme of initial teacher education, induction and in-service training.
- 8.20 We would encourage greater collaboration between the two University Colleges and their university partner in line with the provisions of the existing formal agreement between them, which calls for the establishment of a Joint University Group at senior level to oversee the strategic, policy and other issues associated with the relationship between the University Colleges and the University. This Group would actively promote understanding, cooperation and collaboration between the three bodies and would act as an arbitration panel if necessary.
- 8.21 The Colleges would also be required by their funding arrangements to commit to an element of shared education and to providing all students with the experience of working in schools of different denominations. They would also be required to engage in greater collaboration in the provision of joint programmes and to make progress on the development of research.
- 8.22 Under this option, it would be necessary for the University Colleges to build long-term financial sustainability within a context of limited initial teacher education numbers by developing further as centres of excellence in professional induction and in all aspects of in-service teacher education as well as by developing funding streams for applied educational research⁷. Funding arrangements would encourage inter-institutional collaboration in the design and delivery of teacher education programmes, especially at master's level, in order to reduce the current duplication of provision and to improve quality through increased collaboration by staff and research-informed teaching. It

⁶ Annex 4, case-study 1 provides an illustration of this kind of model.

⁷ As envisaged in the 2005 Osler Report

would also be possible for the institutions to collaborate on the provision of new education-related undergraduate degrees.

- 8.23 Under this option, the UU would concentrate its provision in the North-West, including the development of its role in the provision of CPD as proposed in its submission to the Panel. However, the option assumes that, even if the UU is some distance from Belfast, it would nevertheless participate in inter-institutional discussions about the rationalisation of course offerings and options at the stage of initial teacher education, the coordination of master's degree pathways, and the development of a strategy for educational research in Northern Ireland. Such joint planning on a sector-wide basis will go some way to removing duplication of provision and help to create those groupings of academic and professional expertise upon which a strong system of teacher education depends.

Assessment

- 8.24 This option scores relatively highly on the diversity criterion since it would enable the Colleges to protect their distinctive ethos. It also scores highly on the practicability criterion since it would be relatively simple and quick to implement. However, it would offer relatively little progress towards the criterion of greater efficiency since under this option the two University Colleges would continue to need to be sustained financially through higher levels of funding as documented in the Grant Thornton Report of the first phase of this study. Nevertheless, there would be some progress in this respect derived from a stronger partnership between the Belfast institutions in CPD activities, some rationalisation of existing master's level provision, and further collaborative diversification of courses. However, this option does not score as highly as others on its potential for progress towards the characteristics of a world-class system of teacher education.

Option B: A Two-Centre Model with a Belfast Institute of Education

- 8.25 Option B sets out a model that includes the creation of an Institute of Education in Belfast. Elsewhere, such institutes - which can take a variety of different administrative forms - have provided an effective basis for collaboration between teacher education providers in a given locality. In Northern Ireland too, such an Institute could work in a number of ways and we present here an example of how it could be organised in this context.
- 8.26 Under this model there would be two main centres for teacher education in Northern Ireland. The first, based at the UU, would concentrate its provision in the North-West including developing its CPD role, as proposed in its submission to the Panel. The UU is geographically well-located to be a hub for the continuum of teacher education in the North-West of the province since it has evolved a process of school based loci for professional practice and has a track record of curricular development research and school leadership expertise in association with schools in its hinterland. The University is well positioned to offer initial teacher education courses, as well as CPD for teachers, both on-site and through the School's blended learning processes. The development of a Religious Education programme for teacher education students from both the main cultural traditions, with the approval of local church authorities, provides a further foundation for enhanced provision. The existing contributions of the UU to teacher education for the Further Education sector, in association with DEL, also has scope for development.
- 8.27 For the second centre, provision in Belfast would build on the existing academic relationship between QUB and the University Colleges to create a QUB Institute of Education. Within that Institute, St Mary's and Stranmillis colleges would continue to exist in their current locations, though with a somewhat changed role and constitutional status. All existing academic staff would be transferred to the Institute, which would be managed by a Board made up of equal representation from all three existing bodies, with an independent Chair. The Board would be responsible for the oversight of all academic courses offered within the Institute, as well as its budget, and have overall responsibility for the nature and quality of its programmes.

- 8.28 The Institute would offer a single undergraduate BEd programme through each of its two colleges, with students again being admitted to each college via the common UCAS system. While offering a shared programme, overseen by the Institute, the two colleges would be free to develop a majority of their undergraduate teaching in ways appropriate for their particular ethos and mission. As stated in paragraph 8.9, all initial teacher education students, both undergraduate and PGCE, would take part in a common strand of teaching focusing on shared education.
- 8.29 All other teaching (master's, doctoral work, other award-bearing courses) would be undertaken under the supervision of the Institute, which would be responsible for developing a coherent and coordinated programme. Depending on their nature, some of the teaching for these courses would be offered within the two Colleges, others within the Institute itself.
- 8.30 The Institute would be responsible for facilitating and developing a common programme of research amongst its entire academic staff and for encouraging collaboration with the UU for some master's and doctoral studies. In particular, there would be the potential to build on the existing research expertise in shared education and the pioneering work of the UU in the pedagogy of controversial subjects to create a world-class centre of excellence in this field.
- 8.31 Under this model, St Mary's and Stranmillis would continue to exist but as colleges within QUB. As in other collegiate universities, each college would continue to have its own governing body, be able to employ additional (non-university) staff, receive endowments and develop work in other ways, for example, by offering a range of non-university validated courses. All staff and students of the Institute would be offered membership of one of the two Colleges, with a view to contributing to and benefitting from its social, academic, religious and pastoral life. Over time, the colleges might develop a broader role within QUB as a whole.
- 8.32 Despite its foundation as an explicitly secular institution, QUB would be encouraged to explore how to establish support for a religious education dimension within the Institute's teacher education provision. This work could also take the form of a Foundation which would support faith-based activity, providing research and other forms of intellectual leadership for religiously based education in Northern Ireland. It would also oversee the denominational dimensions of the Institute's own initial teacher

education programmes. One model would be for the Foundation to report independently to QUB Senate.

- 8.33 Ideally, the Institute would be based in a new building on the Stranmillis site although this suggestion is not a definitive feature of this option.

Assessment

- 8.34 This two-centre option, which includes the creation of a QUB Institute of Education, would represent significant progress in relation to the quality criterion of best international practice: it would strengthen research and create a coherent framework of provision across Belfast. Option B also scores well on the diversity criterion in preserving and enhancing the ethos of the two current University Colleges. It scores better than Option A on the efficiency criterion by providing significant economies of scale and greater collaboration. It would also potentially provide renewed momentum for the re-location of the QUB teacher education provision to the Stranmillis Campus whilst allowing the St Mary's campus to continue to be used in the current way. Although this option is not as strong as Option C on the efficiency criterion, given that there would be no formal provision for collaboration with the UU, by bringing together the Belfast-based institutions it would represent a significant step forward in this respect. In terms of practicability, the existing University College partnership of St Mary's and Stranmillis with QUB would provide a good basis on which to build. Experience elsewhere would suggest that such arrangements can be both practicable and fruitful⁸.

⁸ Annex 4 case-study 2 provides an example of this kind of arrangement elsewhere.

Option C: A Northern Ireland Initial Teacher Education Federation

8.35 In this option, initial teacher education across Northern Ireland would be coordinated as a Federation, a supra-institutional agency which would be entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the various institutions achieved greater efficiency through the rationalisation of provision whilst at the same time driving-up quality to world-class standards. The Federation would be the hub of a network of collaborating institutions, each continuing to retain its individual ethos and mission within a common framework of provision. It would be led by a central co-ordinating body and would be responsible for policy, strategy, quality assurance and regulation, as well as funding for teacher education provision within the overall teacher education numbers allocated by DE. Degrees would be awarded by the universities to programmes accredited by the GTCNI and validated and approved by the Federation. However, all current providers would be able to retain responsibility for their own overall budget. Each would have appropriate representation on the co-ordinating body, which would have an independent chair and would appoint a Director. The allocation of initial teacher education numbers by the Federation would depend on performance. There would be scope for greater efficiency, with some rationalization of staffing provision resulting from both a reduction of duplication and an increase in cross-institution collaboration in the planning and delivery of programmes at each level. The Federation would offer a single, integrated master's and CPD programme, which would be delivered at the different institutions as appropriate. The Federation would also develop a single integrated research strategy.⁹

8.36 All the institutions within the Federation would be eligible for DEL research funding to support their efforts to work together effectively within the overall framework of the Federation. The creation of such a Federation would also encourage interaction among staff across all the institutions in the sector, thereby helping to encourage research collaboration and the dissemination of good practice.

8.37 While the Federation option was considered by Osler in 2005 to be “worth detailed study”, the Taylor/Usher review of 2004 was more enthusiastic. That latter review saw merit in the creation of “a fully integrated and federated structure with overarching responsibility for all of the provision of initial teacher education”. It envisaged that

⁹ Annex 4 case-study 3 provides an example of this kind of arrangement elsewhere.

such a Federation would form a “real centre of excellence...well founded on the strengths of existing provision; it would bring together within its ambit the best research, scholarship and educational thinking from all of the providers, and would harness these strengths to a fully inclusive and comprehensive vision for education in Northern Ireland for the twenty-first century”. The Federation would also have the potential to become an international centre of excellence in education for social cohesion.

Assessment

- 8.38 In relation to the quality criterion, the Federation option would represent significant progress towards the creation of a world-class system of teacher education in Northern Ireland. By coordinating the activities of all the institutions currently providing initial teacher education in Northern Ireland, this kind of Federation would make possible a significantly more strategic approach to such provision. It would also help to ensure common standards of excellence across all providers. The Federation could also potentially provide a mechanism for DEL and DE to work together in the formulation of policies to support the development of world-class provision. This option also scores reasonably well in terms of the diversity criterion since, within the overall oversight of a central coordinating body, the Federation could remain a loosely-coupled body in which the different characteristics and priorities of each institution would still be retained.
- 8.39 This option also starts to encourage efficiency to the extent that it would allow each provider to play to its strengths whilst helping to encourage integration, innovation and collaboration between colleagues across the sector. Moreover, although DEL and DE would continue to exercise control in relation to funding and student numbers respectively, they would work closely with the leadership of the Federation on future teacher supply and so help to reduce the current over-supply of new teachers. However, this option is also likely to be relatively expensive and to add to the overall bureaucracy involved in determining funding. Moreover, achieving these benefits is unlikely to be straightforward, so that, in terms of practicability, this is a more challenging option, which would require strong leadership from the centre to realise its full potentialities.

Option D: A Northern Ireland Institute of Education

- 8.40 In this option, initial teacher education across Northern Ireland would become the responsibility of a single institution - the Northern Ireland Institute of Education (NIIE). The Institute, which would have a single budget, a single suite of academic programmes, and a single set of academic and support staff, would have responsibility for coordinating and quality assuring the delivery of initial teacher training and in-service provision across the whole of Northern Ireland. As such, it would need to be formally part of a host university¹⁰.
- 8.41 The governance of the Institute would be constituted to ensure the long-term protection of the historic mission and existing religious ethos in initial teacher education. This obligation could be further reinforced, where appropriate, by the provision of a separate religious pathway in the BEd degree, by the activities of chaplains, and by the continued availability of a chapel for worship wherever the Institute is located. A high level Religious Education Foundation¹¹ could be constituted within the Institute with responsibility for ensuring both the protection of faith-based interests and the active pursuit of diversity in line with explicit Executive policy.
- 8.42 Courses could be provided across a number of sites with CPD being offered in suitable centres across the whole region. The NIIE would be responsible for overseeing both policy and the organisation of supply. The inclusion of all providers in one common organization would require the development of common standards for courses such as the PGCE and in practices such as quality assurance and assessment. A common research strategy would provide significant leverage for growth in the volume and excellence of research activity.

Assessment

- 8.43 The establishment of the NIIE would create a single centre of excellence for Northern Ireland. Experience elsewhere¹² suggests, however, that it would also still be possible to protect a pluralist ethos in the system as a whole and to sustain the particular ethos of individual institutions and their curriculum priorities through the introduction of the

¹⁰ See Annex 4 case study 4

¹¹ See Annex 4, Case studies 5 and 6

¹² See Annex 4 case studies 5 and 6.

kind of specific arrangements outlined above. Thus, this option scores reasonably well on the diversity criterion.

- 8.44 In requiring a common emphasis on the selection of high-achieving candidates, a shared policy of each provider working in close partnership with a smaller number of local training school partners, shared research activity, and the application of the most expert research insights concerning how student teachers learn to teach, the Institute would emulate some of the best international practice. As such, it would represent the single best option in relation to the quality criterion in creating the infrastructure of a world-class system of initial teacher training in Northern Ireland.
- 8.45 As is noted in Annex III, the Chilver review of 1980 maintained that the creation of a single centre for teacher education in Northern Ireland was justified on purely academic and economic grounds. However, such a single centre, that review maintained, would create an “insuperable problem”: it would not be able to protect “a voluntary and denominational element”. Some of the case studies presented in Annex IV suggest that it is possible to protect a distinctive faith-based mission within a much larger multi-disciplinary and multi-faith institutional context.
- 8.46 In addition to these significant advantages, the creation of a single organisational structure for the delivery of teacher education in Northern Ireland also scores highly on the criterion of efficiency since it would bring much greater coherence to ITE and CPD provision. The NIIE would provide for a high degree of quality control and enhancement, increased synergy, coordination and collaboration between both individual members of staff and between institutions as a whole. The substantial cost savings achieved by this reduction of duplication would result in substantial additional funding becoming available to support the investment needed to achieve world-class standards of initial teacher training, increased provision of CPD, greater investment in research, and the creation of a two-year PGCE. Of all the options, however, it scores the lowest on practicability, as the setting up of a single organisation to deliver teacher education in Northern Ireland would require a significant degree of willingness on the part of the institutions involved to embrace the opportunity for teacher education in Northern Ireland to liberate the resources for investment that would become available through such a partnership and thereby to create a system that would rank among the

best in the world, a system capable of responding to the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and of playing a key part in realising its current ambitions.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In conclusion, we once again return to our terms of reference, which required the Panel to “examine the case for reform of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland and whether the funding being provided could be used better by the teacher training institutions if they were prepared to move towards a more shared or integrated system”. Having carefully scrutinised the findings of the earlier Stage One Report of this Review conducted by Grant Thornton, which was explicitly concerned with funding matters, the Panel has engaged with the teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland, as well as a range of other stakeholders, both in person and through reading a wide range of submissions, in order to evaluate current provision against international best practice so that it can deliver to the Minister “options for the future shape of initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland”.
- 9.2 Each of the four options discussed in the previous section builds on these considerations. Each is assessed against the principles discussed in Section 6 concerning their potential to enhance both the quality and the efficiency of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland. We believe that each of them - albeit to different degrees - would contribute to the further development of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland so that it can increasingly demonstrate the characteristics of world-class provision whilst taking full account of the priorities and traditions of this particular context, especially the need to respect the religious ethos in teacher education where it currently exists. The options are not discrete entities: some of their elements could be pursued in part, as well as in the form set out here. Such possibilities will undoubtedly feature in the discussions that will follow the publication of this report.
- 9.3 The options outlined therefore offer four different ways forward. All of the options take into account the very particular circumstances of the Northern Ireland context and the consequent need for any future arrangements to respect the legitimate concerns of its different communities and the espoused policies of the Northern Ireland Executive.

- 9.4 We are mindful that previous recommendations for change in this respect have not been implemented because they have not found support from all parts of the Northern Ireland community. We have therefore been careful to ensure that, in different ways, the distinctive historic missions of the various existing institutions are maintained. Indeed, we have sought to capture the very real desire that we have been made aware of to move forward in a partnership that is respectful of existing differences whilst building a greater measure of mutual understanding.
- 9.5 In formulating our options in the light of international trends we have also been very aware of the complexity of the issues involved and, although our specific concern is with the infrastructure of such provision, we have argued that this cannot be effectively considered without reference to other key aspects of provision. These include the content of initial teacher education in both the formal and informal curriculum; the role of research and inter-institutional collaboration more generally; opportunities for economies of scale in all three aspects of teacher education - *Initial, Induction and In-service*; the physical location of training provision, and, not least, issues of governance, autonomy and accountability in relation to the providing institutions. Underpinning all of these considerations is the need to make the best use of limited financial resources in training and developing a teaching force for Northern Ireland that is truly world-class. Given what we have learned about the commitment to achieving that objective that already exists in Northern Ireland, we believe there are good grounds for being hopeful.
- 9.6 We therefore hope that this Report will provide the starting point for a constructive engagement between providers, stakeholders and politicians in Northern Ireland. We recognise that there will be many points of detail that will need to be addressed if real progress is to be made. Equally, however, we hope that there will also be a growing consensus that there is a great deal to be gained for current and future citizens, if a way can be found to build a truly world-class system of teacher education and development that respects the culture and ambitions of contemporary Northern Ireland.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (undated), *Catholic Intellectual Tradition*.
www.accunet.org

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (undated), *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-evaluation Instrument*. www.ajcunet.edu

BERA-RSA (2014) *The Role of Research in Teacher Education: Reviewing the Evidence*. Interim Report of the BERA-RSA Inquiry. London: British Educational Research Association.

BERA-RSA (2014) *Research and the Teaching Profession*. Final Report of the BERA-RSA Inquiry. London: British Educational Research Association.

British and Irish Governments, Northern Ireland political parties (1998) *The Good Friday Agreement*. Belfast

Campbell, F. (2014) *Faith and Education in a Pluralist World*. Address presented at St Mary's University College, Belfast, on 6th May, 2014.

Chilver, H. (1980) *The Future Structure of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: HMSO.

Committee for Employment and Learning (2013) *Teacher Training Infrastructure Report: Briefing from Grant Thornton*. (Hansard). Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly, 3rd July 2013.

Committee for Employment and Learning (2013) *Initial Teacher Education Review: DEL Briefing*. (Hansard). Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly 23rd October 2014.

Committee for Employment and Learning (2014) *Review of Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure Review: Departmental Briefing*. (Hansard). Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly, 26th March 2014.

Community Relations Council (2013) "Equality and Inequality in Education", Chapter 4 of *The Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report, 2013*. Belfast: Community Relations Council.

Connelly, P., Purvis, D., and O'Grady, P.J.(2013) *Advancing Shared Education*,. Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group. Belfast: Department of Education.

Conroy, J., Hulme, M., & Menter, I. (2014) "Developing a 'Clinical' Model for Teacher Education", *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy*, 39:5. 557-573.

Coolahan, J. (2013) "Towards a New Era for Teacher Education and the Engagement of the Teaching Profession", *Irish Teachers' Journal, Vol 1 no 1*, 9-26.

Department of Education and Skills (2012) *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland*. Dublin: Department of Education and Skills.

Department of Education and Department for Employment and Learning (2010) *Teacher Education in a Climate of Change: The Way Forward*. Belfast: DE/DEL.

Donaldson, G. (2010) *Teaching Scotland's Future*. Report of a Review of Teacher Education in Scotland. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Education and Training Inspectorate (2009- 2012) *Reports of Inspection of Aspects of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: ETI.

European Commission (2013) *Supporting Teacher Educators for Better Learning Outcomes*. Brussels: European Commission.

Farry, S. (2011) *Ministerial Statement on Teacher Training*. Hansard 28th November, 2011. Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly.

Farry, S. (2013) *Ministerial Statement on Teacher Education Infrastructure*. Hansard, 21st May, 2013. Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly.

Farren, S. (2012) *Should We Ignore Our Past? Reflections on Teacher Education in Ireland*. GTCNI Annual Lecture. Belfast: GTCNI.

Furlong, J. (2013) *Education - Anatomy of the Discipline*. London: Routledge.

Grant Thornton (2013) *DEL Study of the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: DEL.

House of Commons (2012) *Great Teachers: attracting, training and retaining the best*. Ninth Report of Education Committee. London: House of Commons.

International Federation of Catholic Universities (2014) *Strategic Plan 2013-2016*.

James, E. (1972) *Teacher Education and Training. Report by a Committee of Enquiry Appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science*. London: HMSO.

Kirk, G. (1999) "The Passing of Monotechnic Teacher Education in Scotland", *Scottish Educational Review*, Volume 31. Number 2. 100-111.

Menter, I., Hulme, M., Elliott, D., Lewin, J. (2010) *Literature Review of Teacher Education in the 21st Century*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

McMinn, R. and Phoenix, E. (2005) *The Chilver Report: unity and diversity*. Belfast: Stranmillis University College.

Musset, P. (2010), "Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Training Policies in a Comparative Perspective: Current Practices in OECD Countries and a Literature Review on Potential Effects", *OECD Education Working Papers, No. 48*, OECD Publishing,

National Institute of Education (2009) *TE21: A Teacher Education Model for the 21st Century*. Singapore NIE.

NICIE (2013) *Shared Classrooms Deepening Learning*. Final Project Evaluation Draft Report. Belfast: Macaulay Associates Network. Ltd.

Northern Ireland Executive (2012) *Programme for Government 2011-15*. Belfast: Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

OECD (2014) *Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Northern Ireland*. Paris: OECD.

Office of the First and deputy First Minister (2013) *Together: Building a United Community*. Belfast: OFMdFM.

Osler, D. (2005) *Policy Review of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: DEL.

Sahlberg, P. (2012) *Becoming a Teacher in Finland: Traditions, Reforms and Policies*. In L. Darling-Hammond & A. Lieberman (eds.) *International Teacher Education: Practices & Policies in High Achieving Nations*. New York: Routledge

Schleicher, A. (2011) *Building a High-Quality Teaching Profession: Lessons from around the World*. Paris: OECD.

Tabberer, R.(2013) *A Review of Teacher Training in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Teaching Council (2011) *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*. Maynooth: The Teaching Council

Taylor, D. and Usher, R.(2004) *Aspects of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: DEL.

Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (2012) *Teacher Education in Northern Ireland: A UCET(NI) Position Paper*. London: UCET.

Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers/ The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (2010) *Teaching as A Master's-level Profession. A Joint UCET/GTCNI Position Paper*. London: UCET.

University of Glasgow (2001) *The University of Glasgow and St Andrew's College Post-Merger Evaluation*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow.

Waldron, F. et al (2012) *Re-Imagining Initial Teacher Education*. Dublin: The Liffey Press.

(1998) *The Good Friday Agreement*. Belfast.

Annex I

Assignment Terms of Reference

1. This assignment focuses on the need to examine the case for the reform of teacher education provision in Northern Ireland and whether the funding being provided could be used better by the teacher training institutions if they were prepared to move towards a more shared or integrated system.
2. An expert panel of international standing in the field of higher education has been appointed to conduct this review. A summary of the work expected of the panel is shown below.
3. The panel will:
 - a. Provide an overview of the most current developments in the field of initial teacher education provision which represents best practice internationally
 - b. Compare what is considered best international practice with the current provision in Northern Ireland. This will be done by:
 - inviting each of the ITE providers and other stakeholders to put forward papers outlining its vision of the structures necessary to create a world-class system of initial teacher education in Northern Ireland which also enhances and improves sharing and integration within the sector; and
 - conducting a series of in-depth interviews with each of the five ITE providers and relevant stakeholders.
 - c. Produce a paper which builds upon the ITE Stage 1 study and which draws on the views of the ITE providers and the stakeholders. This would involve an examination of the options/visions put forward by providers/stakeholders, critically assessed against international best practice as outlined above.
 - d. Following engagement with ITE providers and stakeholders, produce a final report on the work carried out and set out for the Minister options for the future shape of initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland.
4. At the outset of the assignment, the panel will prepare an assignment action plan setting out the major elements of the work to be undertaken and to agree deadlines for their delivery.

Outcome

5. The final output from this assignment will be a report setting out for the Minister options for the future shape of initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland. This will allow the Department to enter into further dialogue with the various institutions, with the intention of finding an agreed way forward.

Support

6. Policy advice and administrative support will be provided by staff from the Department's Higher Education Division.

GTC(NI) Initial teacher education graduate analysis for Northern Ireland

March 2013

	Totals for all Institutions, all programmes and all subjects					
Year of Graduation	No of Graduates	Currently Registered	% of total graduates who are currently registered	Currently Registered with an Open Job Record	% of those registered who are currently employed	% of those who graduated who are currently employed
June 2012	632	475	75.16%	78	16.42%	12.34%
June 2011	649	528	81.36%	161	30.49%	24.81%
June 2010	681	541	79.44%	243	44.92	35.68%
June 2009	691	561	81.19%	335	59.71%	48.48%
June 2008	735	594	80.82%	380	63.97%	51.7%
June 2007	812	648	79.80%	485	74.85%	59.73%
June 2006	807	640	79.31%	516	80.63%	63.94
June 2005	815	601	73.74%	517	86.02%	63.44%
June 2004	795	621	78.11%	553	89.05%	69.56%

February 2014*

Totals for all Institutions, all programmes and all subjects						
Year of Graduation	No of Graduates	Currently Registered	% of total graduates who are currently registered	Currently Registered with an Open Job Record	% of those registered who are currently employed	% of those who graduated who are currently employed
June 2013	595	476	80.00%	110	23.11%	18.49%
June 2012	633	485	76.62%	196	40.41%	30.96%
June 2011	649	509	78.43%	254	49.90%	39.14%
June 2010	681	527	77.39%	299	56.74%	43.91%
June 2009	691	545	78.87%	364	66.79%	52.68%
June 2008	735	594	80.82%	413	69.53%	56.19%
June 2007	812	644	79.31%	501	77.80%	61.69%
June 2006	807	630	78.07%	529	83.97%	65.55%
June 2005	815	593	72.76%	519	87.52%	63.68%
June 2004	795	611	76.86%	551	90.18%	69.31%

GTCNI collects data on the employment position of teachers based on a “snapshot” of those registered with the Council

*Please note that while the February 2014 data points to an increased number of recently qualified teachers securing employment, the impact of the 2-year OFMdFM Literacy and Numeracy Signature Project which includes newly qualified teachers who have been employed on a temporary contract needs to be taken into account

Previous Attempts to Reform the Teacher Education Infrastructure in Northern Ireland

1. **Suggestion 1: The status quo.** This “do nothing” option, as it was dubbed by Taylor/Usher, the only one of the reviews to propose it, barely features in the other reviews. Indeed, Osler considered that “it would be difficult to find reasons to support the status quo”. Taylor/Usher justified the option on the grounds that they had received evidence from those who were deeply sceptical about the motives for change and who maintained that, unless the case for change was “overwhelming”, no action should be taken in case it endangered the quality of an already effective system of teacher education.
2. **Suggestion 2: The status quo+.** This option, one of those identified by Taylor/Usher, was seen as an incremental change, the progressive building on, and extensions of, existing forms of collaboration, particularly between the two colleges and QUB, for example in master’s degree provision and in some areas of undergraduate programmes.
3. **Suggestion 3: The status quo++.** This option, preferred but not so labelled by Osler, envisaged the retention of existing institutions, and the extension of their role to include new responsibilities in order to strengthen the work of the institutions “within the wider field of teacher education”. The key extension of role would engage the institutions in providing training to support the needs of teachers and others for continuing professional development. An “essential element” of that option was that staff in institutions would be contractually committed to combine periods of work in schools with their HEI-based work, thus strengthening their professional credibility and enriching the quality of their programmes. The option was seen as a much more valid way of coping with over-capacity of provision than diversification into non-teacher education areas. In effect, Osler sought a significant strengthening of the existing institutions by developing them into major centres of educational innovation, research, curriculum development, and professional development, and establishing close ties with schools through shared staffing and other forms of academic and professional interchange. And in the process Northern Ireland’s commitment to the three *Is* of Initial teacher education, *Induction*, and *In-service* would be reinforced. A variant of

this option, “desirable but not essential to the model”, was the absorption of both colleges of education into the Faculty of Education of QUB.

4. **Suggestion 4: Two centres.** This option was preferred by the Chilver review. It envisaged one centre of teacher education in the north-west of the Province, based on the institutional antecedents of the UU, and a second in Belfast, which would bring together into a single institutional framework the colleges of education (including the merged St Joseph’s and St Mary’s Catholic colleges) and QUB teacher education provision, to create the Belfast Centre for Teacher Education. That Centre would be based on the Stranmillis campus.
5. Chilver adduced several arguments for a centre of teacher education in the north-west: it protected the principle of flexibility of provision; it facilitated teachers’ access to CPD, and, most importantly, the provision in the then polytechnic was fully integrated into its wider academic activities, with students having the ability to postpone entry to a teacher education programme until they had completed two years of academic study, a form of teacher education provision which Chilver strongly favoured and which, that review maintained, should be more widely adopted. However, the endorsement of a teacher education presence in the north-west was subject to two important conditions: firstly, the provision should continue to be embedded in a major institution, which would enable relatively small enrolments to remain viable; and, secondly, the overall intakes to teacher education were such that provision in the north-west did not put the viability of provision in Belfast at risk.
6. The creation of the Belfast Centre was seen as the only way of maintaining the viability of colleges that were too small to be self-sufficient. Indeed, Chilver argued that purely academic and economic arguments pointed to the need for a single institution: “The total numbers concerned would be well within the capacity of a single institution, and one that would be stronger in purely academic terms and more attractive than smaller separate institutions”. However, such an arrangement presented an “insuperable problem”: it would not protect “a voluntary and denominational element”. Accordingly, Chilver decided in favour of an institutional arrangement which involved the strengthening of provision through the sharing of staffing and other resources and through the academic collaborations that would follow and be enriched and facilitated by the “physical proximity” of being based on the single campus at Stranmillis. A key

feature of the option was that, even although they would operate on a single site, the colleges would retain their institutional autonomy and identity.

7. A variant of this option was considered by Osler. As a way of rationalising existing provision, he saw the value of locating teacher education within the universities, with the consequent closure of the two colleges. He declared that “this has to be seen as the cost effective option, *if no other considerations are taken into account*” (Osler’s italics). However, he continued at once, “this option would cause deep distress, particularly in the Catholic community and it would be important to consider whether the resultant controversy would help or hinder the transition to new arrangements for high quality teacher training in Northern Ireland”.
8. **Suggestion 5: Federation.** The fifth option was postulated but not recommended by Taylor/Usher, and was considered by Osler to be “worth detailed study including risk assessment”. The Taylor/Usher review saw merit in the creation of “a fully integrated and federated structure with overarching responsibility for all of the provision of ITE”. This supra-institutional agency, which was not elaborated and whose precise institutional machinery was not disclosed, would form a “real centre of excellence...well founded on the strengths of existing provision; it would bring together within its ambit the best research, scholarship and educational thinking from all of the providers, and would harness these strengths to a fully inclusive and comprehensive vision for education in Northern Ireland for the twenty-first century”.

Government responses to these suggested changes *at that time*

9. In retrospect, the status quo appears to have been the approach favoured by successive Northern Ireland governments: the only three significant infrastructural changes in teacher education over the period since 1980 were the merger of St Joseph’s College with St Mary’s College in 1983 to create a consolidated Catholic college for both men and women, in line with the Chilver recommendation, the establishment of St Mary’s and Stranmillis as university colleges of QUB in 1996, and the proposed merger of Stranmillis with QUB in 2010. However, all three of these developments represented initiatives by the institutions themselves rather than any government policy imperative to re-shape the system.

10. The government response to the Chilver review appears to have set a pattern. It is fair to claim that the recommendation on the centralisation of teacher education provision in Belfast on the Stranmillis site, even although the autonomy of the separate institutions was protected, was vigorously opposed by the Catholic Church and its political allies. It was interpreted as a direct attack on the right of the Church to determine who should teach in its schools and therefore jeopardised the whole Catholic school system. The government response was to drop the Stranmillis site proposal and to content itself with the more modest streamlining of Catholic teacher education within a single institution, a proposal that the two institutions, supported by the Catholic Church, had already accepted.
11. It is perhaps not surprising, given the reaction to Chilver, that subsequent reviews were extremely hesitant about recommending institutional re-alignments of any kind. Given the broad consensus on the nature of the problem faced by subsequent reviews, which might be characterised as too many institutions chasing a declining student population, with the consequent threats of uneconomic and scattered provision that endangered its quality, it is noteworthy that neither review recommended institutional mergers. The key question therefore became: assuming that all institutions should continue with their autonomy protected, what are the most appropriate moves to minimise diseconomies of scale, to create viable centres of academic and professional strength, and so to protect, if not enhance, the quality of teacher education in Northern Ireland?
12. The proposal in 2010 to merge Stranmillis University College with QUB was again a further attempt to address questions relating to the infrastructure of teacher education. That merger proposal had been developed collaboratively by the two institutions concerned: it envisaged a major centre of excellence in teacher education on the Stranmillis site; and it was buttressed by a convincing business case for merger. However, the required legislation to give effect to the merger could not attract the necessary degree of support and it was abandoned. The proposal was attacked from both sides of the political divide. On the one side, it was argued that the two university colleges should be treated equally and that therefore Stranmillis could not be merged with the university unless comparable arrangements were made for St Mary's; on the other side, it was contended that the merger of Stranmillis would inevitably lead to the absorption by the university of St Mary's and therefore had to be resisted.

Case studies associated with the different Options

Case study 1: Roehampton Institute of Education (now the University of Roehampton)

While to the best of our knowledge there are no current examples in the UK of Collaborative Institutional Partnerships of the type proposed in Option A, there are a number of important historical precedents. One of those is the Roehampton Institute of Education, now the University of Roehampton. The Roehampton Institute, founded in 1975, was formed by the coming together of four established teacher education institutions: Whitelands College, founded in 1841 by the Church of England; Southlands College, founded in 1972 by the Methodist Church; Digby Stuart college, established in 1874 as a training college for Roman Catholic women; and Froebel College, established in 1892 to further the values of Friedrich Froebel, the German educationalist. From 1975 to 1984, these four colleges offered degrees validated by the University of London; from 1984 to 2004 they became a constituent college and then an equal member of the federal University of Surrey. In 2004 they became an independent university, Roehampton University.

In the early days of their collaboration the four colleges maintained their independent status with separate governing bodies and funding arrangements; they also admitted and taught their own students. At the same time, however, all four institutions moved progressively towards closer and closer collaboration on their curriculum such that by 1984 they were in a position to join the University of Surrey as a single body with a common curriculum taught across all four sites.

Despite this progressive coming together on key aspects of their work, the four constituent colleges have continued to retain their historically distinctive missions; they still do so today as constituent colleges of the University of Roehampton, where each is home for staff and students for a distinctive group of academic subjects. For example, Digby Stuart focuses on the arts and social sciences and, while it is open to all, aims to preserve its distinct Catholic identity and to encourage the ethical and spiritual ideals of a Catholic community across the university as a whole. Southlands College, which today is the home to Business, Media and Music, maintains a strong commitment to the ethos of its Methodist foundation. The college is committed to the causes of equality, social justice and community engagement, with projects supported from the Southlands Methodist Trust.

Case Study 2: The University of Cambridge Faculty of Education and Homerton College.

The new Faculty of Education at Cambridge was formed in 2001 by the coming together of three long established but separate bodies in Cambridge. These were the University Department of Education (established 1878), which, from the 1960s onwards, focused its teaching on the PGCE and higher degrees; the Cambridge Institute of Education (established in 1949), which focused primarily on in-service education, particularly the MEd; and Homerton College focused primarily on undergraduate provision – the BEd. From 2001 onwards, these three institutions came together to form a single Faculty of Education; and a new Faculty building was opened on the Homerton site in 2005.

The position of Homerton College is particularly relevant to Option B. Homerton traces its history back to 1730, when it was established as a centre for the education of young men wishing to become ministers in the Congregational Church. In 1850 it was re-founded by the Congregational Board of Education in Homerton in East London as an institution for the training of teachers; in 1894 the college moved to Cambridge. Following the McNair Report of 1949, Homerton, along with a number of other teachers college in East Anglia, joined a loose federation of colleges associated with the University of Cambridge. That relationship was strengthened substantially in the 1968 once the University agreed to validate a BEd degree taught jointly by Homerton and the University Department of Education. Nevertheless, despite this collaboration, Homerton, at that point remained an independent and separately funded teacher education college.

In 2001, Homerton underwent a major transformation with the formation of the new Faculty of Education. The majority of Homerton's academic staff were transferred to the Faculty of Education and became university lecturers; in this move, they joined staff from the two existing university departments – the Cambridge Institute of Education and the University department of Education. Homerton itself received a royal charter as an independent college of the University of Cambridge; as such it now accepts students from a range of different disciplines though it still has a strong commitment both to its Congregational traditions and to the field of education.

Case study 3 The Training and Development Agency for Schools (England)

Although not an exact parallel with Option C, a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Federation would have some features in common with England's former Teacher Training Agency/ Training and Development Agency for Schools (TTA/TDA).

The TTA was established as a non-departmental public body in September 1994 by the Education Act of that year. As a consequence of that act, funding for all initial teacher education was transferred from the Higher Education Funding Council for England to the TTA. But the new body was much more than a funding agency: it was also responsible for the oversight and leadership of the sector in relation to the government's priorities. In its initial remit, the TTA was explicitly charged with using funding selectively to encourage improvements in the quality and efficiency of all routes into the teaching profession. It was also charged with contributing to raising the standards of teaching and providing information and advice on teaching as a career. Subsequent remit letters elaborated those priorities in line with changing government agendas.

In September 2005 the TTA was re-launched as the TDA for Schools, under the Education Act 2005. As part of its expanded remit, the TDA was made responsible for improving the training and development of the entire school workforce. Again, within the policy and resources framework set by the Secretary of State for Education, the TDA board was responsible for setting strategic priorities and providing leadership for the whole sector and giving advice to the Government on matters relating to the education workforce.

On 1 April 2012, the Teaching Agency was established as an executive agency of the Department for Education, replacing the TDA and parts of the General Teaching Council for England. The Teaching Agency became responsible for initial teacher training in England, as well as the regulation of the teaching profession. In 2013 this Agency combined with the National College for School Leadership to become the National College of Teaching and Leadership.

Where a Northern Ireland Teacher Education Federation, as proposed in Option D, would differ significantly from any of these English agencies is that it would be formally independent of government. It would however combine a responsibility for managing funding with leadership of the sector with the aim of enhancing both quality and efficiency.

Case Study 4: Initial Teacher Education in Singapore

Singapore is often used as a model for teacher education reformers. OECD, for example, associates much of Singapore's impressive and rapid transformation of its entire education system to be one of the most successful internationally to its professionalised teacher education system. The Ministry of Education in Singapore selects prospective teachers from the top of the country's upper secondary school graduates. Successful candidates must have a strong academic foundation and also a commitment to the teaching profession and to work in diverse and demanding conditions. Accepted students are entitled to a stipend that equals 60% of a teacher's salary. After graduation they are required to commit to teaching for at least three years.

All teachers receive initial teacher education at the National Institute of Education at Nanyang Technological University. Initial teacher preparation programmes in Singapore offer three alternative options: primary, secondary or junior college levels. Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science Education programmes prepare students for occupations at primary or secondary schools. The National Institute of Education also has the Postgraduate Diploma in Education for university graduates with three tracks: Primary school, Secondary school and Junior College and the Diploma in Education for people with pre-university qualifications mainly for teaching in the primary school. The National Institute of Education recently introduced a part-time Bachelor of Education programme for teachers currently teaching at the primary and early childhood levels but have not yet graduated.

There is a close working relationship between the Institute and schools, where master teachers mentor every new teacher for several years. All teachers in Singapore are entitled to 100 hours of professional development every year. CPD provided by the National Institute of Education focuses on subject matter and pedagogical knowledge and leads towards higher degrees. Professional development is primarily school-based, led by school professional development staff, whose responsibility is to identify issues in the school that need improvement.

Case Study 5: St. Andrew's College and the University of Glasgow

In the early 1990s the block grant funding of the centrally funded teacher education colleges in Scotland moved in favour of activity contract funding. The consequence for all institutions was a marked decline in stable funding and a consequent reduction in staffing levels. In the case of St. Andrew's College this resulted in a loss of some 30% of staffing. Allied to a rapid decline in student numbers this resulted in ongoing structural fragility. In a parallel series of events, Colleges of Education moved from Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) accreditation to university accreditation. At this stage, St. Andrew's College became an accredited institution of the University of Glasgow. This opened up a number of possibilities for joint degrees including an innovative Bachelor of Theology with Teaching Qualification (subsequently an MA in Religious and Philosophical Education). A further factor came into play in the mid-1990s: recognition that the main research centres in education were dissociated from practice and vice-versa. The consequence of these factors culminated in a recognition that the Catholic teachers' College (along with the other teachers' colleges) was operating out of an increasingly weak intellectual and practical base.

These considerations culminated in a decision by the Board of Governors in 1997/8 for St. Andrew's College to seek a merger with the University of Glasgow, other teachers' colleges in Scotland, such as Moray House in Edinburgh, having already followed a similar path. The Glasgow discussions lasted for some time and there was substantial engagement with the Catholic hierarchy, including private conversations between the Government, the Principal of the University and the Cardinal Archbishop of Glasgow. In 1999, the decision was finally made to join the existing Department of Education in Glasgow University and relocate to the main university campus. The move carried some risks and the merger was widely reported in the Scottish press. From a Catholic perspective, central to the discussion was the potential loss of a distinctive religious educational identity; non-Catholics were equally concerned about the amalgamation of a religious foundation into what had been a secular institution. In the ensuing merger a range of structural mechanisms were created so as to ensure that the Catholic concerns were appropriately and systematically addressed while at the same time recognising the rights of those of other faiths or none. These included:

- (1) the creation of a Board of Catholic Education, which reported to the Senate Office and which was charged with the oversight of provision of those students who wished to teach in Catholic schools;
- (2) the appointment of a senior member of staff with responsibility for practical oversight of Catholic education;
- (3) the creation of a distinctive course in the formation of Catholic teachers;
- (4) a distinctive and substantial curriculum for Religious Education with robust options both for those wishing to teach in a Catholic school and those wishing to teach in the majority non-Catholic school system; additionally, the School offers a Certificate in Religious Education for Catholic teachers as well as a very successful online course (CREDL);
- (5) the appointment of a lecturer in Catholic teacher formation; and
- (6) liaison committees for the Catholic primary (CHAPS) and secondary (CHAS) associations; with regard to the Board of Catholic Education the agreement was, and remains, that the Board is chaired by a Bishops' Conference representative and there are four other appointees of the Bishops' conference together with senior officers of the university including the Dean, a Vice-Principal, the Clerk of Senate, staff and student representatives.

The merger evaluation report of 2001 indicated that these measures were proving effective.

In the intervening 15 years since the creation of the Faculty, the University has changed its structure to a College and School system. However, the main features have not only been retained but, in important respects, enhanced. Today the School is large and diverse and has an international reputation for its teaching and educational research in a wide range of areas (<http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/>). One of its five research centres (Creativity, Culture and Faith) undertakes research in religion and education generally, including Catholic schooling. In consultation with the Board of Catholic Education, and in order to recognise the growth of research and scholarship in the field, in 2012 the university established the St. Andrew's Foundation (<http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/standrewsfoundation/>). The Foundation is grounded in the partnership between the Catholic Church in Scotland, the University of Glasgow and the Scottish Government. The Foundation promotes the interests of Catholic teacher education and Catholic education generally through a variety of activities.

Case Study 6 Teacher Education Colleges as a new Institute within Dublin City University

Planning is well advanced for the incorporation of the denominational colleges of education - St Patrick's College , Mater Dei Institute and the Church of Ireland College - in association with the Education Department of Dublin City University (DCU), as an Institute of Education within DCU. The new Institute of Education will recognise the need to respect the formation of teachers for denominational (Catholic, Church of Ireland/reformed faiths), non-denominational and multi-denominational schools.

While DCU is a secular university, in order to ensure that the distinctive identity and values of teacher education in both the Catholic and Church of Ireland/reformed faiths are maintained on an ongoing basis, two Centres for Denominational Education are to be established within the Institute (a Centre for Catholic Education and a Church of Ireland Centre). The core curriculum for teacher education is to be common to all but will, also, allow for the delivery of modules to prepare teachers appropriately for denominational schools. The Denominational Centres within the Institute of Education will have specific responsibility for delivering their respective denominational modules as well as engaging with their respective denominational schools.

As part of the governance framework, there will be representation of the three incorporating institutions on the Governing Authority of DCU. At faculty management level, the respective heads of the two Centres will be members of the Institute of Education Management Committee, chaired by the Executive Dean. To recognise the importance of respecting and supporting the distinctive ethos and traditions of the religions involved, it is planned that each Centre will be supported by an Advisory Board, appointed by the relevant Archbishop/Church authorities.

While a number of defined functions will be reserved to each Centre relating to its distinctive values and beliefs, the bulk of the subject material to be taught to student teachers will be provided in common to all students in the wider setting of the Institute of Education.

Panel Member Biographies

Dr Pasi Sahlberg: is currently visiting professor at Harvard University and former Director General of the National Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation in the Ministry of Education and Culture within the Finnish Government and has been an active figure in promoting educational changes in Finland and beyond. Dr Sahlberg has been an adviser to several governments and provided high-level strategic advice to policy-makers, prepared and reviewed education reforms and institutions, analyzed education reforms, and addressed the public and professionals about education and training around the world. In 2012, Dr Sahlberg chaired the international panel established in the Republic of Ireland to advise the Minister for Education and Skills on the structure of initial teacher education provision.

Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE is currently Professor of Education at the University of Bristol, where she has previously been Head of the School of Education, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for Education. She was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire until 2010. She has written widely in the field of assessment and comparative education and has contributed both nationally and internationally to education policy and teacher development. She has served as a Council member of the Economic and Social Research Council and is currently a trustee of a number of national charities. Professor Broadfoot is an Academician of the Academy of Social Science and was awarded the CBE for services to Social Science in 2006.

Professor John Coolahan is Professor Emeritus at the National University of Ireland Maynooth. He has lectured extensively in Ireland and abroad, is author of three books, has published over 120 articles in Irish and international journals, and has edited several educational publications. Professor Coolahan has had extensive involvement in a public service capacity as an adviser on educational policy in Ireland. At international level, he has been a consultant on education to the EU Commission, the Council of Europe, the World Bank and the OCED. He was main author of, or contributor to, OECD Reviews of Education in nine countries. He was author of the Irish Country Background Reports for the OECD reviews on Teachers Matter (2003) and on Higher Education in Ireland (2004). He served on the Review Body on Post Primary Education in Northern Ireland (2000/01). He has recently

chaired the National Forum on School Patronage and Pluralism, and is current Chairman of the Arts and Education Charter Group.

Professor John Furlong is an Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Oxford and Emeritus Fellow of Green Templeton College, Oxford. John Furlong began his career as a schoolteacher before becoming a research fellow, working first at Manchester University and then at Brunel University. In 1981 he moved to Cambridge University, where he was a lecturer in the sociology of education for 11 years; he was also director of studies in Social and Political Sciences at Corpus Christi College. In 1992 he moved to Swansea University to take up his first Chair. In 1995 he moved to Bristol University and then joined the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University in January 2000. He became Director of the Oxford University Department of Education in 2003, a post he held until December 2009. Professor Furlong is an active member of BERA and served as President during the academic years 2003-5; he is a member of the UK REF education panel and is Chair of the Hong Kong RAE education panel. His current work for BERA includes being chair of the Steering Group for the BERA/RSA Inquiry into Research and Teacher Education.

Professor Gordon Kirk OBE is Emeritus Professor of Education at The University of Edinburgh and Academic Secretary to the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers. Having served as a secondary school teacher in Glasgow, Professor Kirk had spells in the University of Aberdeen and Jordanhill College of Education, before becoming Principal of Moray House Institute of Education in Edinburgh in 1981. He became the Dean of the Faculty of Education and subsequently Vice-Principal at The University of Edinburgh following the merger of Moray House with the University in 1998. He has been closely involved in the development of teacher education for over 35 years. Throughout his career, Professor Kirk has served on a number of national bodies; he has written or edited some 40 books, mainly concerned with teacher education and professional development, and the professional culture of teaching; and he has contributed in excess of 100 articles to professional and academic journals. In 2003 he was awarded the OBE for services to teacher education and in the same year he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Paisley.