



Crawley, J. (2016) *Post-compulsory teacher educators: connecting professionals*. St Albans: Critical Publishing.

This document contains only the first chapter of this book for non-commercial research and private use. For more information please refer to the Critical Publishing website at this URL:

<http://www.criticalpublishing.com/post-compulsory-teacher-educators-connecting-professionals>

ResearchSPAce

<http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/>

This book chapter is made available in accordance with publisher policies.
Please cite using the reference above.

Your access and use of this document is based on your acceptance of the ResearchSPAce Metadata and Data Policies, as well as applicable law:-

<https://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/policies.html>

Unless you accept the terms of these Policies in full, you do not have permission to download this document.

This cover sheet may not be removed from the document.

Please scroll down to view the document.

CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCING THE 'INVISIBLE EDUCATORS'

Jim Crawley

CRITICAL ISSUES

- *What is unique about post compulsory education (PCE) teacher education and about PCE teacher educators (TEds)?*
- *What makes PCE TEds 'invisible educators'?*
- *What are the characteristics of PCE TEds?*
- *How can we enhance the value of PCE teacher education and PCE TEds?*

Introduction

The professional, educational and funding turbulence experienced by teacher education and teacher educators (TEds) across all sectors since 2008 has been significant. Austerity financing and increasing government intervention have provided many new and difficult challenges. At the same time, evidence is building that the quality of teaching is the most important contributor to the quality of learning and achievement (BERA-RSA, 2014). Teacher education is demonstrably one of the most important influences on that teaching quality. International research suggests that teacher education in the UK and internationally continues to support improvements in the quality of teachers and teaching despite operating in challenging times and circumstances (BERA-RSA, 2014).

At the same time, research suggests that TEds do not have a strong professional identity, and that they are 'semi-academics' who do not engage as often as other academics in research, and their activity as a coherent community of practice is limited (Boyd et al, 2011). A combination of these factors can render TEds to what could be described as 'invisible educators'. PCE TEds, even within the world of teacher education, often have the lowest visibility of all (Crawley, 2013, 2014; Noel, 2006).

This chapter introduces the key ideas and themes of this book and how the authors have combined to present a more visible, confident and outward-facing set of perspectives on the community of PCE TEds. The book is evidence of a shift in our psychology, approach and self-confidence, which although not at this stage seismic, is important and of significance to the cause of teacher education, and which forms a call to action for PCE.

What is unique about PCE teacher education and PCE TEds?

PCE teacher education and PCE TEds are both situated in a working environment which is particularly diverse, complex, dynamic and challenging. In Chapter 3, Orr charts and analyses this context when considering what the sector is for, who the sector is for and how the sector is changing. His account reinforces how difficult it is to answer these questions precisely, especially because of the bewildering frequency of change. In Chapter 4, Machin provides the historical context of the key policies affecting PCE teacher education from Butler in 1944 to Lingfield in 2012. Machin echoes Orr's conclusion that PCE has become 'pivotal' for governments in preparing people to gain the appropriate skills for the UK to compete in a global economy, and how government actions have not often been seen to help that aspiration.

In Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, Dennis et al, Orr, Machin, Duckworth, and Robinson and Skrbic all include analysis of how PCE teacher education is inevitably affected by the sector context and close attention from governments. Being a part of a sector which is described as the 'filling in the educational sandwich' and the 'Cinderella' sector (Chapter 3, Orr) inevitably affects teacher education and these chapters explore those effects, and introduce some developments which have helped to mitigate their effects.

PCE teacher education

What is it?

This book uses an adapted version of Crawley's (2010) definition of post compulsory education to define PCE teacher education, which is:

If you are training teachers in further education, adult and community learning, workplace learning, 14–19 provision, public services training or offender learning which is not delivered by school teachers, you are working in post compulsory education teacher education.

At the time of writing, teacher education qualifications have been revised for the third time in 12 years, as outlined in Chapter 4 (Machin). They are at a range of levels, worth differing amounts of credit, and offer a step-by-step pathway to full qualification, usually to diploma at higher education (HE) level 5 or higher. Since 2012, gaining these qualifications is no longer a legal requirement for teachers, as is also described in Chapter 4. Qualifications are offered by universities and awarding organisations on a part-time and full-time basis. This combination of short and longer qualifications is unusual across global teacher education, but not thought to be entirely unique by Crawley (2013 and 2014).

Where does PCE teacher education happen, on what scale and in what conditions?

In Chapter 3, Orr makes it clear that good quality data about PCE is difficult to come by, but there have been some improvements in this area recently and it is possible from a number of sources to provide at least some data about PCE teacher education. It takes place in universities and in almost all other provider organisations across PCE including colleges, adult education services, private training providers, public sector organisations, prisons and armed forces establishments. Education and Training Foundation (2015) counted 829 providers in England in 2012/13. Crawley (2013) drew together data for each of the three consecutive years of 2008/9 to 2010/11. As many as 45,000 teachers in PCE were registered for teacher education qualifications in England for each of these three years. Almost 90 per cent of them were part-time in-service participants and over 55 per cent gained their qualifications through universities (LLUK, 2009, 2010, 2011). Although these numbers are difficult to compare with school teacher education, because of different funding, attendance and data gathering regimes (school teacher education has a 'comprehensive' governance regime and PCE does not), they clearly represent a significant amount of activity. Even with the impact of austerity measures and budget cuts, over 30,000 PCE teachers still gained teaching qualifications in 2012/13 (ETF, 2015).

In Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7, Dennis et al, Orr, Duckworth, Robinson and Skrbic, and Elishoo, respectively, all highlight how the PCE sector conditions and mixed model of delivery are to some degree unique but that there are difficulties many TEds appear to encounter wherever they are working and whichever of the phases of teacher education they carry out. These include: a lack of research visibility and professional status; limited negotiating power and influence due to significant and growing government interference; and an ambivalence of position. It is possible for TEds to be seen as advocates for critical thinking, while at the same time part of the controls of managerialism afflicting the education sector. This uncertain terrain for teacher education is not unique to PCE, but is present in a more direct way when training teachers than when working as a teacher.

PCE TEds

If PCE is the Cinderella of English education more broadly, then PCE teacher education has always been the Cinderella of English teacher education. Time after time, PCE TEd practitioners attend conferences, events, consultations and other occasions where keynote national and international speakers, who are addressing *all of teacher education*, do not mention PCE teacher education, or the closely related vocational teacher education (even when they actually have very successful PCE provision within their own institution's portfolio). When ministers speak of teacher education, or governments report on teacher education, or teacher development in universities, PCE teacher education is rarely mentioned, partly due to the 'other people's children' problem but also due to the 'Cinderella' nature of the

sector (both of these factors are further discussed in Chapter 3, Orr). The recent Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training (DfE, 2015), for example, mentions the word 'school' 366 times in its 81 pages. The word 'college' is mentioned, but not in any way associated with PCE. The report's foreword mentions how schools are '*at the heart of every community*' (DfE, 2015, p 1), but gives no mention to the colleges and other providers who also work hard to be part of that community.

It could be argued that PCE is different and requires different attention, but this is not an isolated incident. There have been specific reviews of policy and funding for PCE teacher education, but these have never been as wide-ranging as, or on a similar scale to, school-based teacher education. The funding of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) in 2007 was generous in PCE terms at £30m over three years, but pales into insignificance when compared to the £300m over five years made available to universities to develop Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).

In Chapter 2, Dennis et al demonstrate how this low sector profile is reinforced by a particularly low visibility in research activity and publication, or a '*scholarly silence*', and in Chapter 4, Machin outlines a history of change and reorganisation which has beset PCE TEds for more than 60 years. It is these factors which have conspired, along with the difficult professional and sector context, to make PCE TEds almost 'invisible' and in Chapters 2 and 6, Dennis et al and Robinson and Skrbic examine this invisibility in some depth.

When we review UK and international research, however, a series of positive shared themes, values and pedagogies do emerge for all of teacher education. In Chapter 2, Dennis et al discuss a quality which has been attributed to TEds called '*even more*' by Crawley (2013) and '*more than*' by Swennen (2014), which suggests the breadth and depth of their roles and responsibilities. In Chapter 5, Duckworth emphasises the significance of working towards improved social justice and empowering teachers through practitioner research and in Chapter 6, Robinson and Skrbic analyse modelling and the degree to which TEds can act as '*connecting professionals*' through their pedagogical principles and practices. In Chapter 7, Eliahoo uses international research evidence to explore the challenges and benefits of attempts to develop local, national and international collaboration between TEds and the ways in which this could enhance professional visibility and confidence for English TEds.

Overall the reflections on PCE teacher education and on the practices and principles of PCE TEds in this book reinforce the complexity, turbulent history and diverse challenges of their particular context and characterises their dispositions and values. A picture emerges of a group that has adopted a set of strategies, techniques and values to continue with their work, training a new generation of teachers, and contributing positively to the economic and human communities within which we live and work despite that difficult situation. This demonstrates their singular commitment to PCE, but also their recognisable connections and relevance to and for all of teacher education. In Chapter 8, Crawley explores this notion of TEds as connecting professionals further.

Enhancing the value of PCE teacher education and PCE TEds

PCE teacher education has moved forward significantly in the last ten years. The establishment of CETTs in 2009, although a flawed initiative as it was not truly national, and improving Ofsted grades for PCE TEds and their institutions (ETF, 2015; Ofsted, 2014) have raised the standard of initial teacher education (ITE) and contributed to improvements in teacher confidence and feelings of professionalism and the quality and consistency of continuing professional development. The short-lived requirement (from 2001 to 2012) for PCE teachers to become qualified, the mandatory declaration of continuing professional development (CPD) annually and a reasonable level of funding to support these developments all helped. Lingfield (BIS, 2012) dismissed these improvements, but their legacy still remains, and most PCE organisations are still training and qualifying their teachers (ETF, 2015). In Chapter 8 Crawley summarises some of these improvements and proposes next steps which could renew this improvement as the sector moves into an uncertain future.

TELLing our own story

As already indicated, TEds do not have a strong professional identity, and they are considered '*semi-academics*' (Boyd et al, 2011) who do not engage as often as other academics in research. This book is evidence of how the community of PCE TEds has come together in order to enhance the research base of this field of endeavour, and this chapter closes with the story of the Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning (TELL) research network as one example of that effort.

In 2011, with a very small amount of funding, a conference was held in Wiltshire with the express purpose of seeking to establish a specialist research network for Lifelong Learning teacher education (what is called PCE teacher education in this book). No such network existed, and this was a call to the PCE TEd community to join together to take some of their own destiny in their hands. After a successful first meeting with over 50 participants, TELL was established with the objectives to:

- » capture the passion and distinctive vision which permeates PCE teacher education;
- » raise the profile of and celebrate PCE teacher education;
- » build capacity, support and provide opportunities for practitioner researchers and research in the field of PCE teacher education;
- » connect researchers across the UK with each other;
- » promote the achievements and debate the challenges of PCE teacher education;

- » make appropriate use of technology to connect and inform members, publish research information, updates and results; share issues, news and ideas and enable participation in the network, independent of geography;
- » curate and collate PCE teacher education research, history and information including compiling a bank of ideas, publications and resources relating to teacher education and build a legacy of the work undertaken.

At the point of publication, the TELL network now has over 220 members across the country and across the sector. The growing body of research of and by the individual members, the joint ventures such as this book, the lively network meetings which are attended by some 150 people across each year and the improved connections between PCE TEds are all encouraging. Perhaps the most important reason for this is the completely voluntary nature of the network. It is self-managed and has no funding. It takes place because PCE TEds want it to, and it represents one of the few professional areas where we have some professional control over what we do.

IN A NUTSHELL

PCE teacher education operates in a difficult context, as does much other teacher education provision around the world. This situation is not necessarily likely to improve in the near future, and teacher education in England continues to experience more change and reorganisation than in many other countries.

Research on PCE teacher education, and particularly the TEds who work in it, is still relatively rare, and the professional situation of the TEds involved is not supportive for changing that situation. Despite this and because of the qualities and values you will find evidenced in this book, PCE TEds are enhancing their work and their research, and this book is one element of the proof of that.

REFLECTIONS ON CRITICAL ISSUES

There is a degree of uniqueness about PCE teacher education, and the situation of PCE TEds, but this appears to be more to do with the sector context rather than their characteristics, situation, disposition and values. There are however significant similarities between PCE TEds and other TEds, including their emphasis on the importance of social justice as a goal for education, use of modelling, their focus on supporting their students, and their 'evenmoreness'.

The factors which render PCE TEds as 'invisible educators' have been introduced, and these include low status, a low research profile and a lack of recognition even when good levels of improvement are made.

This book offers a practical, coherent, critical vision based on ideas and values around which practitioners can unite. Gleeson, Davies and Wheeler (2005, p 445) argue that difficult times can present opportunities for '*the making and taking of professionalism*', and the authors of this book believe that it is a pivotal moment for such a publication.

REFERENCES

- BERA-RSA (British Educational Research Association – Royal Society of Arts) (2014) *Research and the Teaching Profession – Building the Capacity for a Self-improving Education System*. London: BERA / RSA.
- BIS (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) (2012) *Professionalism in Further Education – Final Report (Lingfield Report)*. London: BIS.
- Boyd, P, Harris, K and Murray, J (2011) *Becoming a Teacher Educator: Guidelines for the Induction of Newly Appointed Lecturers in Initial Teacher Education* (2nd edn). Bristol: ESCalate.
- Crawley, J (2010) *In at the Deep End: A Survival Guide for Teachers in Post Compulsory Education* (2nd edn). London: Routledge.
- Crawley, J (2013) Endless Patience and a Strong Belief in What Makes a Good Teacher: Teacher Educators in Post-compulsory Education in England and Their Professional Situation. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 18: 336–47.
- Crawley, J (2014) *How can a deeper understanding of the professional situation of LLS teacher educators enhance their future support, professional development and working context?* PhD Thesis. Bath: Bath Spa University.
- DfE (Department for Education) (2015) *Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training*. London: DfE.
- ETF (Education and Training Foundation) (2015) *Initial Teacher Education Provision in FE and Skills: Baseline Report*. London: ETF.
- Gleeson, D, Davies, J and Wheeler, E (2005). On the Making and Taking of Professionalism in the Further Education Workplace. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 26: 445–60.
- LLUK (Lifelong Learning UK) (2009) *Further Education Workforce Data for England: An Analysis of the Staff Individualised Record Data 2007–2008*. Coventry: LLUK.
- LLUK (Lifelong Learning UK) (2010) *Further Education Workforce Data for England: An Analysis of the Staff Individualised Record Data 2008–2009*. Coventry: LLUK.
- LLUK (Lifelong Learning UK) (2011) *Further Education Workforce Data for England: An Analysis of the Staff Individualised Record Data 2009–2010*. Coventry: LLUK.
- Noel, P (2006) The Secret Life of Teacher Educators: Becoming a Teacher Educator in the Learning and Skills Sector. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 58: 151–70.
- Ofsted (2014) *Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Further Education and Skills – What Works and Why*. London: Ofsted.
- Swennen, A (2014) More than Just a Teacher: The Identity of Teacher Educators, in Jones, K and White, E (eds) *Developing Outstanding Practice in School-based Teacher Education*. Northwich: Critical Publishing.