

# TEFANZ FORUM

Mahi Tahi: Growing Great Teachers  
Together

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Perspectives on Practicum Partnerships:  
Practices, problems, and possibilities

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**EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL WORK**

# Perspectives on Practicum Partnerships: Practices, problems, and possibilities

INTRODUCTION

FOCUS ON PARTNERSHIPS

FRAMEWORK - Conceptions of teacher learning underpinning  
partnership models:

- Knowledge-practice relationships
- Notions of 'learning to teach'

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS? BREAKOUT DISCUSSION

## Focus on partnerships

Part of the international education reform agenda:

- ▶ Improve quality of teacher education
  - to improve teacher quality - to lift student outcomes
- ▶ Address ‘problem’ of teacher education - overly theoretical, not sufficiently connected to realities of practice
- ▶ ‘Practice turn’

ITE and centres/schools have traditionally partnered around the practicum

BUT policy makers, many teacher educators and centres/schools are calling for something more than the traditional practicum placement model

**The ‘something more’ underpins teacher education reforms internationally and in NZ Aotearoa**

## For example: Norway

2017 New Master programmes to better prepare primary/lower secondary teachers through making teacher education more research-based *and* more practice-oriented by:

- ▶ Strengthening TEI - school partnerships to develop
  - ▶ capable, confident, ‘practice ready’ teachers
  - ▶ who are also research competent - practice-oriented master’s theses that treat research and practice as inter-connected rather than as dichotomous.

# Aotearoa New Zealand:

## New Zealand Ministry of Education's (2013)

Competitive tendering process 'exemplary postgraduate ITE programmes' - more 'practice focused' and grounded in rich partnerships with schools. Additional funding.

## Teaching Council ITE Programme Approval, Monitoring and Review Requirements (2017)

Authentic partnerships so that ITE programmes are well integrated - to avoid theory and practice being enacted separately by different institutions.

## Focus on partnerships challenges how we think about:

- ▶ teacher learning
- ▶ knowledge
- ▶ practice

Because different conceptions drive different ways:

- ▶ learning to teach is constructed in teacher education and
- ▶ the roles the ‘partners’ play in preparing teachers

A FRAMEWORK to consider how different conceptions of knowledge, practice, teacher learning, influence school-ITE partnership relationships, roles, responsibilities:

Knowledge **FOR** practice

Knowledge **IN** practice

Knowledge **OF** practice

Adapted from - Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1999). Relationship of Knowledge and Practice: Teacher learning in communities. *Review of Research in Education*, 24(1), 249-305



# Knowledge **FOR** Practice

An example

Examining the concept

Problems

# Example: 'Traditional model' of practicum partnerships



# Knowledge FOR Practice - Conceptions of:

Knowledge	<p><b>‘Formal knowledge’ generated by researchers/experts <u>for</u> teachers to use for teaching</b></p> <p><b>Knowing more (subject matter, theory, pedagogy) leads to more effective practice.</b></p>
Teachers and teaching	<p><b>Teachers viewed as knowledge users (vs generators).</b></p> <p><b>Teaching seen as a process of applying knowledge to practice.</b></p>
Teacher learning	<p><b>Emphasis on ‘what’ (subject matter, theory, pedagogy) rather than ‘how’ teachers learn.</b></p>
Influence on programme design	<p><b>Focus on the formal knowledge base of teaching - learning as accruing knowledge.</b></p> <p><b>Theory into practice model (traditional approach).</b></p>
Influence on practicum partnerships	<p><b>Focus on practicum partnerships geared to ITE needs - centres/schools as sites for PSTs to put into practice knowledge gained in ITE.</b></p> <p><b>ITE determines what knowledge is valued and assessed.</b></p>

## Knowledge FOR Practice : Some problems

- ▶ Power differentials - TEI decisive voice
- ▶ Hierarchical relationships
- ▶ Sites for practice
- ▶ Forms and types of knowledge by TEI and schools often in collision
- ▶ Binary views of theory/practice
- ▶ Theory/practice divide reinforced
- ▶ Partnership - cooperation

# Knowledge **IN** Practice

An example

Examining the concept

Problems



# Example: An employment-based route into teaching



# Knowledge IN Practice - conceptions of:

Images of Knowledge	<p><b>‘Practical knowledge’ - craft knowledge.</b></p> <p><b>Knowledge embedded in the practice of good/expert teachers.</b></p>
Images of teachers and teaching	<p><b>Teaching as practical competence and as craft.</b></p> <p><b>Teaching expertise comes from experience.</b></p>
Images of teacher learning	<p><b>Teachers draw and reflect on previous experiences and actions.</b></p> <p><b>PSTs access knowledge that is (tacitly) known by expert teachers.</b></p>
Influence on programme design	<p><b>Centre/school focused: PSTs learn from experienced teachers to replicate ‘best practice’.</b></p> <p><b>Theory and practice independent of each other - learning ‘on the job’</b> <b>e.g. Teach First; UK - School Direct.</b></p>
Influence on practicum partnerships	<p><b>Centres/schools/classrooms as sites for teacher students to learn from/access knowledge and replicate practice of experienced teachers - apprenticeship mode</b></p>

## Knowledge IN Practice: Some problems

- ▶ Power differentials - centres/schools decisive voice
- ▶ Sites for practice - learning on the job
- ▶ Theory/practice divide reinforced
- ▶ Partnership - functional relationship



# Knowledge OF Practice

An example

Examining the concept

Problems

Possibilities

# An example: Master of Teaching



# Knowledge OF Practice - conceptions of:

Images of Knowledge	<p>Teachers generate knowledge through inquiring into own practice <u>and</u> using knowledge/theory produced by others.</p> <p>Challenges the view of 2 different kinds of knowledge for teaching (formal and practical). Practice is more than practical - theorise practice.</p>
Images of teachers and teaching	<p>Teachers are agentic - take responsibility for own professional learning and development.</p> <p>Teaching is complex - teachers problematize and inquire into own knowledge and practice.</p>
Images of teacher learning	<p>Inquiring practitioners who engage in systematic, intentional inquiry about their practice and learning.</p> <p>Teachers work collaboratively to develop understandings and skills.</p>
Influence on programme design	<p>Centres/schools involved in programme/courses/practicum design and development.</p> <p>Teacher students viewed as inquiring practitioners - emphasis on problematizing knowledge and practice.</p> <p>Engagement in research aimed at understanding, articulating, changing practice to enhance student outcomes.</p>
Influence on practicum partnerships	<p>Centres/schools- ITE community of practice view of practicum.</p> <p>Partners work collaboratively to provide conditions for teacher students to problematize and inquire into their practice to enhance their learning and development as teachers.</p>

## Knowledge For Practice: Some problems

Takes time, energy, commitment, resources to develop:

- ▶ Collaboration rather than cooperation
- ▶ Shared understandings of purpose, roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Trust

Lack of resource - \$\$, people

Burn-out (juggling multiple demands, Covid)

# Knowledge For Practice: Possibilities

- ▶ Power relationships more balanced - collaborative vs hierarchical/functional
- ▶ Build shared understandings of purpose, roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Expand sites for practice/professional learning (centre/school plus 'classroom')
- ▶ Blur boundaries between TEIs/centres/schools - 'third space'
- ▶ Theory - practice nexus (cf divide)
- ▶ Potential for professional learning for all
- ▶ Potential for authentic partnerships

Whose and what knowledge counts most is at the heart of the different conceptions or partnerships:

Knowledge **for** practice - TEI led - cooperation

Knowledge **in** practice - Centre/School led - functional, cooperation

Knowledge **of** practice - Collaborative

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The right side of the image is dominated by these blue shapes, while the left side is mostly white with a few blue shapes extending in from the edge.

▶ **Comments?**

▶ **Questions?**

▶ **Concerns?**



## DISCUSSION BREAK OUT GROUPS:

Possible discussion points:

- (1) What knowledge-practice relationships are operating, and what notions of ‘learning to teach’ apply, in your ITE/practicum partnerships?
- (2) What possibilities for change are there? What are the challenges? How could they be addressed?



**Thank You!**

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