

# *The History of Initial Teacher Education in Wales: Lessons from the Past?*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the historical context within which the current reforms to initial teacher education in Wales can be viewed. The first section sketches the main historical developments before exploring three key themes which continue to have strong resonance today: the rationale and curriculum for teacher education, the nature of school/University collaboration in teacher preparation and the development of educational research within initial teacher education, at University and school partnership level. The central argument is that if teacher educators are to contribute fully to the wider reforms which are taking place within the education system in Wales, they would be wise to critically reflect on past experiences of the three themes discussed. The paper concludes that a failure to do so might leave providers ill-informed, underprepared and always reacting to change rather than taking a proactive and well-defined role in influencing the future of education in Wales.

**Key words:** history, initial teacher training and education, curriculum, research

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*Historical sketch*

Given the rich heritage of teacher training and education in Wales, it is disappointing that there is no general history which traces the major developments over more than three centuries. While there have been excellent contributions on the general history of education in Wales by the likes of Gareth Elwyn Jones and there are a good number of institutional accounts which document local achievements and struggles,<sup>1</sup> we lack a broader perspective on enduring themes that have shaped modern-day provision. In part, this is due to the tendency to subsume developments in Wales within the policy context of England (Rich, 1933; Dent, 1977; Robinson, 2006). It also reflects the neglect of the history of education as an academic study in Welsh universities, tacitly acknowledged by its reappearance in the programme for initial teacher education (ITE) as set out in the Welsh Government's accreditation criteria (Welsh Government, 2017). In this paper, we argue that reflecting on the history of initial teacher education in Wales offers unique insights into current debates. This first section sketches the historical context before examining three key themes. Given the scope of this paper, both in chronology and content, it is inevitably based largely on secondary rather than primary sources.

Broadly speaking, the chronology of teacher training in Wales bears close resemblance to developments in England (see Appendix). This is not surprising given that prior to Welsh devolution, legislation and policy for England and Wales was determined by central government, despite the creation of a Welsh Department within the Board of Education (1907) and a Welsh Office (1964). Hence, the origins of teacher training in Wales mirrored England with religious societies responding to the dire state of mid-Victorian education by opening training colleges with grant aid from the state. The earliest of these were those run by the Anglican National Society at Carmarthen (1848) and Caernarfon (1856), followed by the non-denominational British and Foreign School Society's colleges at Bangor (1858) and Swansea (1872), the latter being the first for prospective women teachers in Wales.

For most of the nineteenth century there were two routes through which prospective teachers trained. The first was introduced in 1846 as a school-based apprenticeship scheme whereby 'pupil teachers' (aged 13–18) were trained by an experienced teacher for five years. The more academically able candidates then sat an examination in the hope of winning a scholarship to attend a teacher training college for two years. This second and less common route was offered through the training colleges.

Unsuccessful candidates, or those who could not afford to attend college, could remain in school as uncertificated assistants.

It was not until the 1890s as a result of the expansion of secondary education that discreet training provision was developed for teachers intending to work with this age group. Cardiff (1890) and Aberystwyth (1892) became the first Welsh universities to open departments of education to train teachers on non-residential courses. These provided a more personalised, traditionally academic 'liberal' education and could attract higher-attaining students than the older training colleges.<sup>2</sup> This development highlighted different views of teacher preparation, as being either 'training' or 'education', which have persisted up to recent times. Although the Cross Report (1888) saw the benefits of the existing provision, the pupil-teacher system was criticised for reducing teaching to learning set techniques and routines, while the residential colleges bred narrow, uncritical views. There was a growing feeling that training needed to be refreshed and schools equipped with modern, better educated, more flexible, and academically able teachers.

The steady development of secondary school provision, following the Welsh Intermediate Education Act (1889), provided the basis for a new student-teacher route into the profession introduced in 1907. Those who qualified for a bursary could spend four days a week in an elementary school while the fifth was devoted towards continuing academic study in the secondary school before attending college. Further diversification followed the opening of local authority-maintained colleges in Barry and Caerleon in 1914, thereby creating a tripartite system. This period also saw the Universities adopting a 'consecutive model' of teacher preparation where students undertook one year of professional preparation following their three-year subject degree, with most of these qualified teachers entering the expanding private and public secondary education system.

Over the next half a century and more, the uneasy relationship between university education departments and teacher training colleges was governed through oversight by the former over the curriculum and assessment processes of the latter. The Robbins Report on Higher Education (1963) strengthened the influence of the expanding university system over the colleges where courses were extended from 2 to 3 years and eventually to 4 years for the most academically able students who were able to read for the Bachelor of Education degree.

The long period of expansion in education and teacher numbers came to a temporary halt in the 1970s against a background of a growing oil crisis,

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economic recession and pressures on public spending to rationalise ITE. This led to the closure of many colleges or their merger with local universities. These developments and the end of the binary divide between Universities, Polytechnics and Institute of Higher Education in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, accelerated the movement towards teacher preparation being located solely within University institutions.

This did not mean, however, that the philosophical divides over the purpose of teacher preparation came to an end. This continued through the more 'academic' and 'theoretical' approaches present in the older universities (which generally offered only one-year PGCE courses) compared to the more 'practical' and 'professional' emphases of the newer universities where both undergraduate and PGCE provision was located. These different traditions and ethos continued following the James Report (1972) on teacher education and training, but its recommendations did accelerate the move to teaching becoming an all-graduate entry profession.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, successive administrations at Westminster and Cardiff introduced far greater regulation of ITE covering student numbers, curriculum and assessment arrangements. These were moves which some critics interpreted as undermining the universities' academic autonomy (see Robinson, 2006). The discourse moved away from the binary theory/practice divide towards conceiving teacher preparation and professional knowledge in terms of a competency-based model. Some of the subsequent developments were more fully pursued in Wales than others: the change from a 4-year to a 3-year undergraduate degree was adopted across the board in Wales, for example, but various forms of school-centred teacher training, other than the Graduate Teacher Programme, were not taken up.<sup>3</sup>

By the early 2000s, although there were examples of good quality ITE in Wales (Estyn, 2001a, Estyn, 2004), the general picture conveyed by inspection reports was that too many trainees were entering schools ill-prepared, while partnerships with schools remained underdeveloped (Estyn, 2001b; Estyn, 2002; Estyn, 2003; Estyn, 2005). Following a review of the sector (Furlong, 2006), commissioned by the Welsh Government, provision was next rationalised into three regionally-based centres of training, partly to accommodate a significant reduction in primary trainee teachers. Unfortunately, a further review undertaken seven years later, reported that the centres had made slow progress in developing a more coherent and collaborative approach to the training of teachers (Tabberer, 2013). Subsequent Estyn reports on the three centres confirmed that

significant challenges remained, with all requiring follow-up monitoring visits (Estyn, 2012; 2013; 2015). A third review of the sector followed (Furlong, 2015) that has led to the introduction of more robust criteria for accreditation (Welsh Government, 2017). This has resulted in the accreditation of new ITE programmes that will commence in either September 2019 or September 2020. Interestingly, the outcomes of this process will have resulted in the expansion of the ITE sector in Wales, with two new providers – Swansea University and Chester University (in partnership with Bangor University) – and all universities in Wales now having some involvement in ITE.<sup>4</sup>

Within this historical sketch, it is possible to identify enduring themes which have strong resonance today. These include ongoing debate over the rationale and curriculum content for ITE, the nature of school/University collaboration in teacher preparation and the place for educational research within initial teacher education, at University and school partnership level. These three themes are discussed in the rest of the paper.

### *1. The rationale and curriculum for initial teacher education*

During his recent review of teacher training in Wales, Professor Ralph Tabberer reported that he struggled to find a rationale for the design of most programmes, beyond meeting government-imposed Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (Tabberer, 2013). Arguably, without an intellectually rigorous rationale, it is difficult to justify decisions and plan a curriculum which is sustainable beyond what is in vogue. The lack of such a rationale is neither a Wales-only problem nor a new one (Travers *et al.*, 1951). Taking a long historical perspective, much of the philosophical argument around ITE revolves around the basic issue of whether prospective teachers should be ‘trained’ or ‘educated’. As Hayes (2011) points out, these are often used as synonyms, ignoring their different meanings. Put crudely, while teacher training is closely associated with instruction in the acquisition of classroom skills, teacher education is set within a broader notion of professionalism and the academic study of education. While there is a consensus that both have a place, the emphasis has shifted periodically from one to the other. Retracing why this has happened and how such views have influenced the curriculum informs our understanding of the present state of initial teacher training *and* education in Wales. This is not an obsolete discussion, as evidenced by

the different emphases of training and education in policy documents and other publications.<sup>5</sup>

*Teacher training: preparing competent teachers*

The primary goal for initial teacher training has always been to provide a sufficient supply of competent teachers for the educational system. As Lord Sandon succinctly put it to Parliament in 1843, this has also proved the greatest challenge: 'to get good teachers in schools, and to keep them there'.<sup>6</sup> Generally, the oldest residential colleges at Carmarthen, Caernarfon and Bangor found recruitment more challenging than the non-residential university departments established in the 1890s, which were able to attract higher-attaining students on entry.<sup>7</sup>

While the definition of 'good' or 'competent' teaching has varied over time, the essential elements of subject knowledge, classroom skills and professional dispositions have remained largely intact since the nineteenth century. The relative importance and relationship between these elements, however, has triggered enduring debates framed by competing philosophical views on the nature of knowledge and political priorities over what students should know by the end of their courses.

The development of the ITE curriculum has not been well researched (Seaborne, 1974; Thomas, 1983b). Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the training college curriculum left little room for creativity, for as one ex-student put it: 'orthodoxy could not be flouted' (Llewelyn, 1943: 191). This is despite repeated calls by inspectors for 'less knowledge and more education'<sup>8</sup> and criticisms about students' cramming for examinations. In 1889, one HMI observed that within the Welsh teacher training colleges 'information and memory' took precedence over 'developing thought, ideas and originality' which is borne out by the testimony of former students (e.g. Davies, 1923). For their part, training college staff were under enormous pressure to produce good examination results upon which their success was judged.

Even after the Board of Education relaxed its grip on curriculum and assessment arrangements during the first half of the twentieth century, training college staff were slow to innovate. Despite regular criticisms, lecturing and note-taking remained the mainstay of teaching and learning (as arguably they do today).<sup>9</sup> In submitting evidence to a parliamentary Select Committee in 1970, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) asserted that the training college curriculum had hardly

**Table 1. The ITE curriculum in Wales, 1854–2017**

1854	1906	1949	1979	2017
Reading English Penmanship Languages Arithmetic Physical Science Scripture History Geography Vocal Music Industrial Occupations Geometry (m.) Algebra (m.) Higher mathematics (m.) Domestic Econ. (f.) Drawing (f.) Needlework (f.)	Reading English Welsh Euclid Arithmetic Practical Elem. Science Religious Knowledge History Geography Singing and Music Theory Drawing Drill Physical Training	English Welsh Mathematics Practical Elem. Science Divinity History Geography† Music Arts Health Education Physical Education	Language and Learning Mathematics Subject Studies Professional Studies Professional Studies Wellbeing	Core Studies Subject Studies Professional and Pedagogical Studies Wellbeing
School Management (which involved teaching a class in the presence of an inspector)	School Management Theory of Teaching Teaching Practice	Education Teaching Practice	Education Studies School Experience	Teaching Experience

Sources: CCE (1854: 16–17); Ministry of Education (1949: 4); HMI (1979), Welsh Government (2017)

†Social studies in some colleges

changed since the Second World War. It expressed its surprise that so little curriculum development originated within the training colleges or universities.<sup>10</sup> While this may have overstated the case, it is true that examples of curriculum innovation in Wales before the 1960s are limited.<sup>11</sup> In curriculum design, higher education institutions struggled to break out from the same old trinity of main subject, educational theory and teaching practice. The NFER was most disturbed to find students who left college to teach in infant schools had followed much the same course as those who taught as specialist teachers in the upper secondary school. Such conservative tendencies are reflected in the continuities rather than radical changes evident in the curriculum for student teachers (Table 1).

The endurance of this emphasis on producing competent teachers through ‘training’ them reflects a technical paradigm in which teaching is seen as a craft with the key task being to assist teachers in mastering classroom technical skills. A contrasting rationale focuses on the *education* of prospective teachers. It is rooted in the broader tradition of a liberal education, with its emphasis on personal and intellectual growth.

*Teacher education: (a) cultivating students’ personal and (b) intellectual growth*

While acquiring technical skills is clearly essential to good teaching, it has long been argued that prospective teachers need more than this. Those admitted to Brecon Normal School in 1846 were expected to possess ‘gentleness of disposition’, ‘religious character’, and ‘activity and energy’, without which ‘no man can make a good teacher’.<sup>12</sup> For much of the history of ITE in Wales, selection and initial training had a strong moral slant and was framed within a narrative of character formation, directed from above, rather than building on students’ own strengths, interests and ideas. In 1843 James Kay-Shuttleworth, the architect of teacher training in England and Wales, explained: ‘the main object of the Normal School ... is the *formation of the character of the schoolmaster*’ (Horn, 1978: 89). Those following the monitor and pupil-teacher apprenticeship schemes were required to gain ‘Certificates of Character and Conduct’ at the end of each of their five years of school-based apprenticeship. This meant demonstrating habits of ‘punctuality, diligence, obedience, and attention to duties.’<sup>13</sup>

Training colleges and university departments were reminded under the 1904 Board of Education Regulations that ‘the function of the College in relation to the students is the formation of character no less than the giving

of practical or intellectual instruction.<sup>14</sup> The theme continued well into the twentieth century, although character formation morphed into what the James Report (DES, 1972) called a cycle of ‘personal education’ in recognition of the need to strengthen students for the demands that the profession made on their lives.<sup>15</sup> The White Paper on *Teaching Quality* (DES, 1983) conceded something similar:

Qualifications and training alone do not make a teacher. Personality, character and commitment are as important as the specific knowledge and skills that are used in the day to day tasks of teaching (DES, 1983: 8).

The Paper was issued by Margaret Thatcher’s first government, setting out its proposals for teacher supply and training. For Thatcher, character was the basis of good teaching. As a former Education Minister (1970–1974), she deplored the permissiveness of academics in teacher training and when in office, post 1979, unashamedly looked to restore what she regarded as ‘Victorian values’ such as hard work, self-reliance and thrift.<sup>16</sup> Circular 3/84 required institutions to assess all prospective teachers for their ‘sense of responsibility, a robust but balanced outlook, awareness, sensitivity, enthusiasm and facility in communication.’ As was conceded in a contemporary parliamentary select committee discussion over such ‘rosy’ criteria, ‘if every teacher fulfilled all of them, we should, indeed, be on the verge of the millennium.’<sup>17</sup>

Even when a competency-based approach to the assessment of trainees was introduced in 1997, providers were required to ensure that ‘all trainees possess the personal, intellectual and presentational qualities suitable for teaching’ (DES, 1997: 43). The most recent entry requirements for student teachers in Wales stipulate that those *selected* should ‘possess the appropriate personal and intellectual qualities to become excellent practitioners’ (Welsh Government, 2017: 34), while courses should ‘focus on students’ personal development and resilience’ (Ibid., 20).

While the goal of cultivating students’ personal development has been consistently supported over time, initially there was less enthusiasm for encouraging students’ independent and creative thinking. For much of the nineteenth century, the majority view was that students drawn from the same working-class backgrounds as their future pupils should not get ahead of themselves socially and that their focus should be on teaching the basic skills necessary for elementary education (Horn, 1989).

On the other hand, those who supported a broad liberal education wanted to elevate students’ minds. Acquiring professional knowledge and

classroom skills, they argued, would not make teachers cultured persons who could create new ideas or evaluate what was happening around them. Such a view was voiced by twenty-year-old Evan Davies, who took up his post as Principal of Brecon Normal School in 1846. Davies aimed to 'sharpen their [students'] wits, and force them to think on such subjects as are most likely to make them think when out of class.'<sup>18</sup> Taken aback by such youthful vision, the visiting Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales (1847) mused:

The great object in the course of study is to develop the mind, and cultivate sound and healthy habits of thought. This will explain the great prominence given to subjects which are not likely to serve any immediate purpose in common country schools.<sup>19</sup>

As head of a normal school, Davies was unusual in that the tradition of such establishments, which originated in France, was to *train* rather than educate through setting a moral pattern or norm to follow. Davies ventured into areas such as natural philosophy to stimulate critical thinking. In practical terms, senior students had opportunities every Thursday at 8.30 pm to prepare and read aloud an essay on an educational topic to an audience of peers whose role was to offer critical feedback. Topics included: 'What is the best way and best time of teaching ... the alphabet, mnemonic techniques, and remembering events and dates?' Educational theory was taken seriously with 'great pains taken to explain the laws of mind upon which all methods of teaching are founded.'<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, such an early venture in critical thinking did not last. The College moved to Swansea in 1849 and closed in 1851 due to financial difficulties. The nearest the nineteenth-century training colleges came to engaging students in critical thinking took the form of the much-fabled 'Crit. Lesson' where students taught classes in front of their peers. While this had its detractors for instilling feelings of fear and humiliation, it did at least break the monotony of lectures and was an early attempt to bridge the theory-practice divide.

The main shortcoming among students at training colleges was their lack of academic knowledge. It was not until the 1890s, with the creation of university departments of education, that the curriculum for some prospective teachers went beyond elementary-school subject knowledge and professional skills, to include the disciplines of education: its psychology, sociology, philosophy and history. Child psychology gained a foothold in the ITE curriculum, drawing on the work of Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner.

Sociology developed out of concern over how the structures and systems of education worked against particular groups, such as children from low-income families, and moved into micro studies of classroom behaviours. Philosophy and history came to the fore in the 1960s and 1970s, offering students and researchers perspectives from the humanities in contrast to the quasi-scientific approach of educational psychology (McCulloch, 2002).

The university model of ITE, based on its pursuit of knowledge as an end in itself, combined the academic study of education with practical training. Initially, many within universities were ambivalent towards the training of teachers, reflecting their longstanding distaste of vocational-based training and centralized control. However, the guarantee of a regular supply of publicly-funded students, greater autonomy (e.g. in curriculum and assessment arrangements) and the recognition that universities could, effectively, cater for different ‘types’ of students won over more conservative voices (Shakoor, 1964; Tuck, 1973; Lofthouse, 1982).

In his classic study, Rich (1933) considered the introduction of the non-residential training college as one of the most important milestones in the history of teacher training. Undoubtedly, the university departments of education made an important contribution to advancing the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programme. Moreover, their involvement certainly raised the status of teacher preparation and opportunities to ‘academize’ the curriculum (Wilkin, 1996).

This was, however, relatively short-lived as ITE programmes turned to the practical, while universities found it increasingly difficult to maintain departments that did not meet the instrumental focus of neoliberal policies across higher education (Lawn and Furlong, 2009). Moreover, at an epistemological level, questions were being asked about the nature of teachers’ professional knowledge: was, for example, the pursuit of objective knowledge something that befitted would-be teachers who operated in the ‘swampy lowlands’ (Eraut, 1994: 15) of professional life where much of their knowledge was implicit? Far better, it was argued, to focus on teacher competences and seeking to make the teachers’ craft knowledge explicit, rather than abstract disciplinary-based knowledge espoused in the university-based departments of education.

It can be suggested that the new criteria for the accreditation of ITE in Wales (Welsh Government, 2017), therefore, seek to resolve the often shifting, and sometimes competing, intellectual and philosophical precepts that have underpinned teacher preparation in Wales since the late

nineteenth century. This is captured in their requirement that ‘core studies, professional studies and pedagogical studies, school experience and subject studies should be carefully planned and integrated’ (ibid., 2017: 22) with each of these elements being informed by a ‘range of theories, research and other intellectual resources’ (ibid., 22). Achieving such equipoise will be challenging enough for the new ITE courses, but they will also need to encompass the new school curriculum in Wales (Donaldson, 2016), be mindful of new approaches to professional learning for teachers (Welsh Government, 2018a) and the likelihood of changes to the induction and early professional development of teachers (Welsh Government, 2018b).

## *2. The nature of school/University collaboration in teacher preparation*

The common metaphor of a swinging pendulum sums up the historical relationship between schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) over the last two hundred or so years (Robinson, 2006). Broadly speaking, the nineteenth century was one in which school-based apprenticeship models held sway, initially in the form of monitors and pupil-teachers, which gave headteachers a central role in conducting on-the-spot training. For much of the twentieth century, the pendulum swung back towards training colleges and universities having the lead role with schools receiving students for practical placements. Increasingly from the 1990s, however, government requirements have led to a more prominent, albeit redefined, role for schools, to the point where the newly accredited ITE courses that will commence in Wales in 2019 will be offered by joint University/School partnerships. Whatever arrangements have been in place over time, achieving the right balance of inputs between HEIs and schools has been the most enduring of challenges.

The early pupil-teacher and student-teacher schemes offered practical first-hand experiences, although the quality of school-based training varied considerably. Moreover, candidates were constrained by the often-narrow outlook of the one elementary school within which they worked. It was hoped that the development of pupil-teacher centres in the 1890s would provide, in the words of the Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales, ‘valuable centres of intellectual life’ where young teachers had time and space away from the classroom to access the best teaching apparatus, develop study habits and exchange teaching ideas.<sup>21</sup> Universities such as

Aberystwyth supported the venture by offering pupil-teachers access to lectures, designed to address their deficiencies in knowledge and improve their prospects of passing examinations.<sup>22</sup>

Those who followed the pupil-teacher and student-teacher schemes were generally positive about their experiences. The main complaints, conveyed in inspection reports, related to the variable quality of school-based training. Tom Jones who entered Bangor Normal College in 1920 spoke highly of the pupil-teacher scheme because of the practical experience it provided, but he felt at an academic disadvantage compared to those, like his brother, who attended secondary school (Ellis, 2014: 77). Mary Boston, a student-teacher from Pen-y-graig (Glamorgan), felt better prepared when entering training college than a friend who had chosen to stay on at sixth-form in school – who was ‘almost scared of the class teachers’ (Gardner, 1995: 430). By the mid-1920s, at its hiatus, the student-teacher schemes accounted for seventy per cent of total recruits (Jones, 1924).

By the eve of the Second World War, the gradual demise of these school-based training schemes was rooted in broader changes in how teacher preparation was perceived (Gardner, 1995). The growth of teaching as a profession valued the status associated with the higher education of teachers. A new professionalism emerged which saw a swing towards the colleges and universities, rather than schools, as the main locations for training. In two-year training courses, the total time spent on teaching practice could be as little as six weeks (Gardner, 1993).

The concept of partnership *per se* has its origins in the McNair Report (Board of Education, 1944: 50) which called upon universities to ‘accept new responsibilities for the education and training of teachers’ by establishing Schools of Education.<sup>23</sup> It was envisaged that these would take overall responsibility for teacher training, which would include developing ‘an active partnership of those already engaged in the work and of others who ought to be engaged in it’ (Ibid., 50). The McNair Report also supported the view that there should be ‘a partnership of equals’ between the older training colleges and the universities, through the creation of Joint Boards of Study (Crook, 1995; Crook, 1997).

Despite such rhetoric, it was not until 1992 that it was made a requirement that provision of all initial teacher education should be achieved through formal partnership arrangements between individual HEIs and individual schools (DES, 1992). The conclusion of Roy James, then Chief Inspector for Schools in Wales, has resonance today: ‘it is unclear whether

the appropriate balance has been struck between the higher education contribution to initial teacher training and that of schools' (OHMCI, 1994: 2).

Surveys showed mixed feelings among HEIs with regard to the swing back to the 'practical turn' (Cochran-Smith, 2005; 2012) and an increasing role for schools in all aspects of initial teacher training and education (Bernbaum and Reid, 1982; Wilkin, 1996). While there was some support for the notion of 'equal partnership' (Barton *et al.*, 1994), there were concerns over implementation and what Alexander *et al.* (1984: 12) had called 'intractable issues' around different models of professional learning held by schools and universities respectively. HMI (1992) pointed out that while the principle of extending the role of schools was sound, it was essential that this was well defined and adhered to, while HEIs provided the necessary theoretical perspectives.

Critics suggested that beneath the veneer of giving practicing teachers a greater say in the professional training of future colleagues, lay a more sinister sub-plot of undermining the role of higher education and the study of education (Maclure, 1993). Nonetheless, through the 1990s signs of a new relationship between HEIs and schools emerged: serial visits by tutors to schools became commonplace; while 'teaching practice' was largely replaced by alternative terms such as 'school experience' in recognition that training should extend beyond classroom practice to broader aspects of the teachers' role.

For some contemporaries, power and control over ITE remained within HEIs 'under the cloak of 'partnership.' (Wilkin, 1996: 83). The limited nature of collaboration, beyond schools hosting students, was confirmed in the annual reports of the Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales which called for more schools to join partnerships with HEIs (e.g. OHMCI, 1996; 1997). Incidentally, it is worth noting that at this time inspection reports suggested that the quality of ITE in Wales was 'satisfactory or better in *all* courses, including nearly 90% where it was good or very good' (OHMCI, 1999).

Despite the challenges, few would contest that strong collaborative partnerships are central to improving the quality of ITE in Wales (Tabberer, 2013; OECD, 2014; OECD, 2017). Several jurisdictions have invested in a medical model of clinical practice as a way forward, a forerunner of which was the Oxford Internship Scheme (Benton, 1990). Clinical practice aims to integrate the different sources of knowledge into a coherent programme in which student-teachers draw on research-informed perspectives and

classroom practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Burn and Mutton, 2013; Conroy *et al.*, 2013). The narrative moves beyond the unhelpful binary of theory and practice to emphasize the role of a community of practitioners who share the same standards of using research evidence as well as student data to make decisions. One of the underlying principles is that ideas are tested from different sources with an acknowledgement that consensus does not necessarily follow. Clinical practice rejects the idea that teachers can universally apply 'what works' well, given the very different, individual contexts within which they operate.

Whatever partnership models are adopted, the experiences of the past highlight the importance of developing clearly defined roles and responsibilities. It is also critical that in areas such as student mentoring and feedback, a source of longstanding concern (OHMCI, 1997; Estyn, 2016; Estyn, 2018), there are appropriate procedures in place to ensure consistency from one mentor to the next, given the high turnover of school-based mentors. Mentor professional development has too often been conceived and expressed by the HEIs as 'training', reflecting a focus on administrative process rather than the pedagogical skills of mentoring and assessment and this does not support the development of high-quality mentoring in Wales.

While much of the partnership working between higher education institutions and schools has revolved around the placement of students, there is also a history of collaboration in professional development and research. In the inter-war years, the Welsh Department of the Board of Education funded vacation courses for teachers to attend universities in Wales and London on a range of subjects including 'Rural Lore as an Aid to Education' and Welsh Language, Literature and History (Robinson, 2014). In the 1940s, the Ministry of Education subsidized a small number of one-year teacher secondments for research or study at a UK university along with special advanced courses for serving teachers. The Robbins Committee (1963) provided further impetus for closer collaboration between training colleges and universities and the introduction of an all-graduate teaching profession. Local authorities topped up government grants for teachers to attend approved courses. And so, during the 1960s and 1970s, there was a wide range of in-service opportunities for teachers, with newly-established teachers' centres acting as a fulcrum for teachers to access resources and engage in various professional courses, many of which were provided by university staff. Eggleston (1979) viewed their development as an exciting opportunity for teacher educators, professional teachers and their student teachers to focus on the continuing training of teachers,

particularly in the probationary year. However, teachers' centres fell victim to the neoliberal reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the political climate shifted towards greater central control and accountability.

Thus, whilst joint collaboration and partnership between universities and schools in ITE is well established in Wales, the new accreditation requirements for 2019 represent an important step-change in allowing lead partnership schools to 'contribute fully to the leadership and management of the programme, including the design and content of the programme, the selection of students; ... quality assurance and self-evaluation' (Welsh Government, 2016:7). This represents neither a return to the school-led teacher training model of the past (one that has been given new life in recent times in other national ITE systems) nor a continuation of the current University-led partnership model.

The potential for these new arrangements exists to extend beyond ITE into other areas including joint work on the new school curriculum; the possibility of revised induction and early professional development processes for new teachers in Wales; an emerging national accreditation framework for teacher professional learning including Masters' level provision; supporting the civic and community-based role of Universities; and, as will be explored further below, support for 'close-to-practice' educational research.

### *3. The development of educational research*

Historically, the involvement of ITE institutions in Wales in educational research has been limited and this remains a weakness of the system (Schools Council Welsh Committee, 1968; Tabberer, 2013; Furlong, 2015; McCulloch and Cowan, 2018). However, the majority of staff appointed to work in ITE were chosen because they had the professional backgrounds to undertake practical work with students. It was not that they were uninterested in educational research, but they lacked the time and the expertise to undertake this (Mcintyre, 1996). This changed in the 1990s when the UK Government introduced exercises designed to assess the extent and quality of research work within universities, while ITE students spent significantly more time in schools (Furlong, 2013). In principle, all ITE staff are now regarded as potential educational researchers, although the reality in Wales is still some way removed from this aspiration and significant challenges remain in achieving this.

It should also be noted that before the early 1990s, most education writing and research activity in Wales was undertaken by some staff within University Education Departments (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea) rather than the former teacher training colleges (Richardson, 2002). The likes of David Salmon, the Principal of Swansea Training College, were notable exceptions (Salmon, 1904; Salmon and Hindshaw, 1904). This changed with the emergence of a unified University sector and, at least nominally, the involvement of all its institutions (both ITE and non-ITE) in education research.

In the period up to the Second World War one historian of education has highlighted worthwhile scholarly activity in most of the constituent colleges of the federal University of Wales (Thomas, 1992). Cardiff had a particularly strong presence with five Professors of Education appointed between 1904–1940, three of whom were women who became distinguished scholars, notably the educational psychologist, Dame Olive Wheeler. At the University College of Wales Aberystwyth, Henry Holman rose from pupil-teacher to become the first Professor of Education in Wales (1892–1894) before taking up a post as inspector of schools.<sup>24</sup> He was replaced by Foster Watson, who had a prodigious output in a number of fields, making him one of the prominent researchers within any discipline in the University of Wales (Armytage, 1961). At the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, Millicent Mackenzie (nee Hughes) wrote about both the training of teachers (in the United States) and the philosophy of education (Bramwell and Hughes, 1894; Mackenzie, 1909). In 1904 she was appointed as Wales's first female professor of education.

Generally, however, the work of these pioneers of educational research in Wales was not actually focused on the Welsh education system. Again, there were exceptions such as Professor J.J. Findlay's work at Cardiff in the field of science education; and Professor J. A. Green at the University College of North Wales Bangor, who undertook important research in local schools which identified that as teachers often discouraged pupils from using their first language of Welsh, this led to their low levels of achievement. At University College Swansea, there also existed a stronger focus on Welsh education than in the other colleges. It was here that two professors, F.A. Cavanagh and Moses Williams, undertook research on the history of Welsh education.

Statistical comparisons with other UK universities for this period indicate that (on the basis of holding a PhD) the University of Wales Education Departments were relatively more strongly staffed and positioned to

undertake scholarly work than most universities. There were, however, a much smaller percentage of research students in education in the University of Wales compared to these other universities. Several factors impeded the growth of distinctive Welsh education research before 1945 and which continue to have resonance. University leaders did not invest in the systematic development of education research. There was an apparent ambivalence to the distinctiveness of the Welsh education system, along with a lack of funding. Moreover, staff experienced heavy teaching workloads which gave them little time for research.

Whilst such detailed research has not been undertaken on educational research activity in Wales from 1945 up to the introduction of devolution of government to Wales in 1999, the indications are that little changed in these respects. If anything, issues around limited capacity and the lack of a discrete focus on the Welsh education system became more pronounced. Empirical research was virtually non-existent in the non-university institutions and very limited within universities leading to a situation whereby at the dawn of devolution Wales had 'the least developed educational studies literature of a specifically national kind' in the UK (Richardson, 2002: 43).

There were exceptions to these overall trends although these were often associated with individuals within particular departments, illustrating what one participant undertaking the research assessment exercises described as 'a strong impression of individualism and of researchers working in isolation from each other' (Bassey, 1993). In Swansea, under the leadership of Professor Charles Gittins, a reputation for research in the field of educational psychology flourished (Gittins, 1954; Gittins, 1957; Thomas, 1992). Also, at this university (and later during his time at Aberystwyth) the tradition of work in the field of the history of education was taken forward through the seminal work of Professor Gareth Elwyn Jones (e.g. Jones, 1982; Jones, 1991; Jones, 1997). At Cardiff, pioneering work was undertaken in research on school effectiveness and improvement that contributed significantly to what was to become a major UK and international area of enquiry (Reynolds, 2007). At Bangor, a long established tradition of research into Welsh language and bilingual education continued to flourish through the work of Colin Baker (Baker, 1988) although opportunities to create a national centre for research on bilingual education, one of the most distinctive aspects of Wales education system both pre and post devolution, foundered, in the view of one participant and researcher 'on the rocks of local rivalry, which took firm precedence

over the national interest' (Lewis, 1980: 131). This suggests another feature with possible wider resonance in explaining the poorly developed state of educational research in Wales.

Thus, when devolution of government began in Wales in 1999, it could be argued that one of the greatest weaknesses of the 'new' education system was the lack of capacity to support what the political leaders of devolution desired to be 'evidence-based' policies (National Assembly for Wales, 2001). In this context the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers in Wales (UCET Cymru) commissioned a review of educational research capacity in Wales (Furlong and White, 2001). It concluded that in terms of capacity and quality, education research in Wales was not strongly placed with only about one-third of staff in University education departments being 'research active' and there existing only a very small number of research students. Government spending on educational research in Wales was low by UK and particularly international standards. Furlong and White's (2001: 3) overall findings pointed to the 'small size and fragility of the system' with research capacity in some key areas being limited to one or two people. Their report provided a series of recommendations designed to increase research capacity in Wales, a need endorsed in subsequent publications (Daugherty, 2003; Rees and Power, 2007; Daugherty and Davies, 2011).

The Welsh Government/HEFCW responses to these calls for greater investment in educational research capacity have included:

1. the setting up of a Wales Liaison Group for Research in Education and Training (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002);
2. support for participation in the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) 'Teaching and Learning Research Programme' (ESRC, 2006–9);
3. the creation of the Welsh Education Research Network (WERN) in 2007, funded by ESRC and HEFCW (Gardner, 2008; Davies and Salisbury, 2009); and
4. in 2008 the establishment of the Wales Institute for Social and Economic Research and Data (WISERD) as a collaborative venture between a number of universities and including a focus on education research.

All of these central initiatives have been worthwhile and have had some success, but other than WISERD, none have enjoyed a sustained existence. The current state of educational research in Wales is even weaker than 2001 with a recent analysis by WISERD Education researchers describing

it as 'very precarious' (Power and Taylor, 2018:12; see also Power and Taylor, 2017).

However, the Welsh Government has expressed renewed interest and commitment to evidence-informed policy (Welsh Government, 2017). This has culminated in a joint conference held with the British Educational Research Association (BERA/Welsh Government, 2019) and the development of what will be the first National Strategy for Research and Enquiry. This has occurred within the background of new ITE accreditation, a new school curriculum and the National Approach to Professional Learning (Welsh Government 2018). Such commitments have involved the whole of the education research 'eco-system' in Wales: government, local government, a range of specialist national organisations, Estyn and the higher education sector. Such an inclusive approach is illustrated in the development of the school curriculum by the professional learning pioneers working with three of Wales universities.

Given that all of Wales's universities are involved to some extent in ITE, what are the implications of these developments for moving towards ITE provision that is research informed and where ITE tutors and lead partnership schools are engaged in educational research? The potential for such developments is truly exciting but, as in the past, the challenges are considerable. A *modus operandi* needs to be established across ITE institutions which enables staff not only to acquire appropriate research qualifications but also to have the time within their busy work schedules to be active researchers. The possibility of them working alongside colleagues in lead partnership schools to develop 'close to practice' research and enquiry could provide Wales with the empirical evidence base that its education system currently lacks. To enable this to happen will require extensive support involving a better use of existing funding but also additional resource. It will also require a change of culture within ITE departments and in lead partnership schools.

### *Conclusion*

This historical sketch has hinted at several recurring constraints and challenges that the sector has faced. These include resolving the tension between 'trainees' following narrow models of school-based apprenticeship and a broader vision for teachers' professional education; attracting and retaining both high-quality teachers and teacher educators; ensuring

that there is a constructive and proactive dialogue between the various providers of ITE; valuing the diversity of routes into teaching and addressing the status differentials between primary and secondary teachers and their training. While these are not unique challenges, arguably they are exacerbated by the smallness of Wales and its capacity to lead educational reform. It is of course possible to interpret this situation in a more positive light. As Walford Davies observed in 1921, ‘the manageable size and education system’ of Wales makes it possible to achieve things that are more difficult for larger countries (cited by Beauchamp and Jephcote, 2016: 122).

There are certainly salient messages to be drawn from the history of ITE in Wales that can help shape the exciting potential of current reforms. First, it is essential that teacher educators have a clear and shared rationale for their programme design, based on well-conceived principles and values. Put simply, there needs to be a shared statement of intent regarding both the training *and* education of prospective teachers. HEI’s need to demonstrate good leadership in ITE by cultivating a proactive, dynamic and collaborative partnership, for example in relation to curriculum innovation and supporting teachers’ and teacher educators’ professional development.

Second, all those involved in ITE need to fulfill their significant responsibilities of educating the next generation of teachers. In practice this is challenging. As Willey and Madison (1971: 7) conceded: ‘Teacher training has never proved a subject conducive to agreement.’ It is often overlooked that partnerships designed to build collaboration can produce conflict and competition, for example among schools reluctant to share their own ideas, among consortia and between HEI’s competing in the same market. A recent joint review of the role of research in teacher education, conducted by the British Educational Research Association and the Royal Society of Arts, recommends that all those involved in teacher education should avoid ‘competing universes’ to bring an end to the ‘false dichotomy’ between HEIs and schools, theory and practice (BERA–RSA, 2014).

And finally, there needs to be sustained commitment by all parties to foster the vibrant cultures of research and professional enquiry that is essential to developing a high-quality educational system. As will inevitably be implied by many of the contributions to this special edition of the *WJE*, the prize for such a commitment could be both the transformation of professional practice in education in Wales and a significant strengthening in the capacity and quality of education research.

*Appendix – Chronology of teaching training in Wales, c.1811–2019*

1811	National Society for Promoting Religious Education established.
1814	British and Foreign School Society established.
c. 1819	Madam Bevan's Central School (Newport, Pembrokeshire), opened for the training of itinerant teachers. It was already educating local children.
1839	Establishment of the Committee of Council in Education.
1846	Introduction of Pupil-Teacher apprenticeship scheme.
1846	Opening of Brecon Normal School.
1847	Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales (Blue Books).
1848	Opening of the South Wales Monmouthshire Training College (Carmarthen) – which became Trinity College in 1931.
1856	Opening of Caernarfon Training College (for men).
1858	Opening of Bangor Normal College (for men).
1870	Elementary Education Act (Forster) led to compulsory schooling (by 1893) and expansion of educational system and the demand for teachers.
1872	Opening of Swansea Training College (for women).
1889	Welsh Intermediate Education Act.
1890	Opening of Department of Education at University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire (established in 1883, which in 1972 became University College, Cardiff).
1892	Department of Education opened at Aberystwyth University (established in 1872).
1893	University of Wales established.
1893	Opening of St Mary's College, Bangor (North Wales Training College for Women).
1902	Education Act led to creation of Local Education Authorities.
1907	Student-teacher scheme introduced.
1914	Opening of LEA training colleges in Barry (for women) and Caerleon (for men).
1944	McNair Report recommended establishment of area training organizations (in Wales, the University School of Education) in which universities would play a central role in training and assessment of prospective teachers.

- 1963 Robbins Report on Higher Education recommended introduction of four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree alongside three-year course.
- 1965 Introduction of B.Ed degree.
- 1968 Gittins Report on *Primary Education in Wales* (1967 imprint) called for more creative teaching approaches in schools, promoted by colleges of education.
- 1972 James Report recommended introduction of two-year Diploma in Higher Education (Dip. H.E.) and a BA (Ed).
- 1970s–1980s Period of contraction: fall in birth rate led to decline in demand for teachers and major reorganization of the sector with amalgamations and closures.
- 1984 Establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) to oversee initial teacher education in England and Wales, signaled increasing central control over teacher training.
- 1992/93 DES Circulars 9/92 (DfE, 1992) and 14/93 (DfE, 1993) gave secondary and primary schools the ‘right’ to be involved as equal partners in initial teacher training. Competences introduced in the design of ITE programmes.
- 1992 Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) established, responsible for allocation of teacher training numbers, funding and accreditation of initial teacher training.
- 1992 Estyn (Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) formed, responsible for inspecting schools and colleges.
- 2006 Furlong Review of teacher training in Wales included recommendation to reorganize teacher training into three centres
- 2007–9 Welsh Educational Research Network (WERN) project.
- 2009–11 Creation of the South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training (Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of South Wales), South West Wales Centre (University of Trinity St David and Swansea Metropolitan University) and North and Mid Wales Centre (Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities).
- 2013 Tabberer Review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales.
- 2015 Education Workforce Council (ECW) established as independent regulator of teachers in maintained schools in Wales. In 2017 responsibilities extended to accredit programmes of ITE, monitor compliance and (if necessary) withdraw accreditation.

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2015	Furlong Report, <i>Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers</i> , provides options to the Welsh Government to reform ITE.
2015	Donaldson Report, <i>Successful Futures</i> , recommends curriculum reform.
2019	New accreditation introduced for providers of ITE.

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Notes

- 1 See: Lewis (1922a; 1992b); Chapple (1933); Fairchild (1938); Meredith, (1946); Rees (1955); Rees (1969); Lewis (1980); Thomas (1983); Evans (1992); Evans (1994); Grigg (1998); Swansea Metropolitan University (2012); Ellis (2014).
- 2 Report of the Committee of Council on Education (1889), 463.
- 3 The GTP was introduced in England and Wales in 1998 although subsequently replaced in England by School Direct in 2012.
- 4 Cardiff University through its partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University; the Open University in Wales through being the ITE provider for the new part-time and employment based PGCE and Glyndwr University through offering a PGCE Primary course as franchised provision from St Mary's University, Twickenham.
- 5 For example, the Welsh Government criteria for accreditation uses the term 'education' (Welsh Government, 2017), as does Ofsted's latest handbook on inspecting initial teacher education (Ofsted, 2019), whereas Estyn's guidance uses 'training' (Estyn, 2015) along with the most recent House of Commons briefing paper (House of Commons, 2019). In this paper, we use ITE although acknowledge that ITET and ITT has been used at different times in the past.
- 6 Hansard, Commons Sitting of Tuesday, February 28, 1843.
- 7 Report of the Committee of Council on Education (1889), 463.
- 8 Newcastle Report on Popular Education, 1861, p.132.
- 9 One training college principal acknowledged that 'we rather overdo the lecturing system' and failed to devote enough time for students to 'study and digestion'. 1861 Newcastle Commission, 400.
- 10 PP1970, Select Committee on Education and Science: Teacher Training, Volume 1. Evidence submitted by Stephen Wiseman, Director of NFER, 10 February 1970, 217.
- 11 Examples include exchanges of Swansea students abroad in the 1900s to study languages and the use of broadcasting technologies in Carmarthen in the 1930s. Eggleston (1975) cites examples of curriculum innovation during the 1970s, a period of relative professional autonomy, for example inter-disciplinary approaches, developments in educational technology and in-service training.
- 12 1847 Commission of inquiry into the State of Education in Wales [Blue Books], 186–188.
- 13 PP1846 Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 5.
- 14 PP1904, Board of Education Regulations for the Training of Teachers, vi.
- 15 It also acknowledged the potential conflict between personal education and professional training, suggesting that too much could be expected of lecturers trying to fulfil different roles, for example to have the expertise associated with an academic discipline and professional teaching skills.
- 16 Neil Kinnock's retort, as then shadow education minister, was that he believed Victorian values to be 'cruelty, misery, drudgery, squalor and ignorance' *Daily Telegraph*, 23 April 1983.

- 17 PP1986, House of Commons Education, Science and Arts Committee (1986), *Achievement in Primary School*, London: House of Commons, p.457.
- 18 1847 Commission of inquiry into the State of Education in Wales [Blue Books], 186. The College relocated to Swansea in 1849 but closed in 1851. *Ibid.*, 188.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 188.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 188.
- 21 PP 1897. General Report for 1896 by A.G. Legard, 1897: 20.
- 22 *Caernarvon and Denbigh Herald*, 10 October 1890.
- 23 Schools of Education were defined as 'an organized federation of approved training institutions working in co-operation with other approved educational institutions.' (Dent, 1975: 113). The University Colleges of Wales (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea) addressed their geographical difficulties by establishing their own more or less independent Faculties of Education but coordinated through a secretariat based in Cardiff. See Jenkins (1972).
- 24 The University College Wales Magazine, (1894) 'College Notes' XVII, 17.