This is a peer-reviewed, accepted author manuscript of the following chapter: Kennedy, A., Adams, P., & Carver, M. (Accepted/In press). Measuring quality in initial teacher in the Scottish context: a context-specific endeavour . In *Teacher Education Policy and Research: Global Perspectives* Springer.

# 12 Measuring Quality in Initial Teacher Education in Scotland: a context-specific endeavour

**Aileen Kennedy, Paul Adams & Mark Carver**

Aileen.kennedy@strath.ac.uk, paul.adams@strath.ac.uk, mark.carver@strath.ac.uk

University of Strathclyde

## Abstract

This chapter outlines how measures of quality were devised to suit the national context of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Scotland. Influences include an ITE system led by universities, a distinct policy context, and a national vision for teaching as a profession. Developing a quality framework therefore involved engaging with context to 'Scotify' common measures of ITE quality, balancing the desire for international comparisons with the need for meaningful localised insight. We share two examples of such adapted measures. First is a language proficiency self-evaluation question suited to Scotland's identity as a European country while still being a mostly monolingual English-speaking country. Second is a career intention measure as an alternative to retention figures, responding to the changing contemporary education profession in Scotland. The chapter ends by highlighting how the work to add national nuance to international measures has benefited the policy and educational research landscape in Scotland, informing new directions for debate and building capacity for new research collaborations.

## *INTRODUCTION*

In this chapter, we outline the genesis, development, and findings to-date from 'Measuring Quality in Initial Teacher Education' (MQuITE), a collaborative research project in Scotland. We believe the MQuITE project to be unique in its attempt to develop collaboratively, and then use, a framework for identifying aspects of ITE quality at a national, rather than programme or institutional, level.

First, we set the national context by providing a brief history of ITE in Scotland, including critical analysis of recent developments which have seen a growing diversity in ITE provision following a very long period of relative conservatism and homogeneity. We then go on to explain the MQuITE framework, providing a rationale for its development which draws on Appadurai's (1996) concept of 'vernacular globalisation' in seeking to understand and explain the intertwined influences of both the global meta-narrative and the local historical, cultural, and social context in Scotland. Next, we offer examples of findings from the data so far which show how the framework balances international comparisons and local context, feeding into the public narrative on ITE in Scotland. We conclude the chapter with a commentary on other research relevant to the Scottish context, finishing with the articulation of a number of important issues which, we argue, warrant further research.

### *The MQuITE project*

MQuITE is a six-year, Scottish Government-funded project involving all 11 initial teacher education (ITE) providers in Scotland, together with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). It is framed around two research questions:

1. How can quality in ITE be measured in a Scottish, context-appropriate way?
2. What does this measuring tell us about aspects of quality in different ITE routes in Scotland?

The project emerged from a recognition that, while teacher education is seen as a key factor in enhancing the quality of schooling, there existed very limited means of truly understanding what 'quality' ITE looks like in our own national context, and a lack of data which could be readily compared with other countries. The collaborative nature of the project, involving all ITE providers together with the Scottish Government and GTCS, would ensure not only a product acceptable to the range of key stakeholders, but also a process whereby key stakeholders could use discussions and emerging findings to improve their provision on an ongoing basis.

It has provided a nationwide focus for serious intellectual discussion around ITE quality that did not exist prior to the project in any structured or systematic way.

The project started with a literature review (Rauschenberger et al. 2017). This literature review then formed the basis of discussions to develop the MQuITE framework (discussed in detail later in the chapter). Following this, the empirical work began, designed over five years and enabling a longitudinal study of 2018 and 2019 ITE graduates in Scotland. We have also surveyed school-based teacher mentors and university-based teacher educators.

At the time of writing, we are nearing the end of year 4 of the 6-year project, and have amassed significant amounts of data which are enabling us to speak with authority on some of the pressing issues facing ITE in Scotland, and beyond. In this chapter, we share some of the unique features of Scottish ITE while also taking an outward-looking perspective which allows comparison with ITE across the globe, thereby contributing to our cumulative knowledge.

## ITE IN SCOTLAND: A BRIEF HISTORY

Before going on to provide an overview of ITE in Scotland, it is important to note that Scotland, whilst being part of the United Kingdom (UK), has had separate education legislation since 1885. Since 1999, education has been a devolved function of the Scottish Parliament. This means that, in a country of only 5.5 million people, the policy community is able to interact more readily than might be the case in a larger jurisdiction. However, geography alone cannot be said to be the only influence on how the policy community operates in Scotland. A long-term commitment to equality and meritocracy underpins Scottish social policy more generally, with McCrone and Keating (2007, 18) characterising Scottish politics as 'social democracy', while Cairney and McGarvey (2013) note that public sector spending in Scotland accounts for a much greater proportion of expenditure and employment etc., than it does across the UK as a whole. This combination of structural, geographical, cultural and historical factors contribute to what Cairney and McGarvey (2013, 154) term the 'Scottish policy style', one characterised by dialogue, consultation and involvement of a range of stakeholder groups; what might be referred to as 'network governance'. These observations about Scottish governance as a whole are reflected in how education policy in general, and teacher education policy in particular, are 'done' in Scotland (Kennedy and Doherty 2012). However, while dialogue and consultation may appear to be a very positive feature of governance, studies such as Beck (2016) and Humes (2020a) point to some of the more insidious and potentially negative impacts of working in this way such as a tendency towards 'contrived consensus'.

Education in Scotland has a long academic tradition, with Scottish ITE being entirely university-based since the late 1980s. All programmes of ITE are accredited

by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), entitling graduates to provisional GTCS registration on completion of their ITE programme. The majority of stakeholders in Scottish education hold dear to the idea that teacher education (emphatically not 'training') is both an intellectual and a practical pursuit, with complexities that should be acknowledged and honoured. Indeed, in 2017, when the idea of a school-based, 'Teach First' type route was mooted as a possibility, the schools of education in the universities that offer teacher education, through the auspices of the Scottish Council of Deans of Education (SCDE), commissioned 'The role and contribution of higher education in contemporary teacher education' (Menter 2017). This report concluded that

> Scottish teacher education has many facets that may be acclaimed and that in looking ahead it is crucial to maintain the significant involvement of universities in all provision. This in order to ensure that teachers in Scotland are equipped to face the challenges of the twenty-first century and to play their part in the continuing development of civic culture and in challenging educational disadvantage.
>
> (Menter 2017, 2)

Here, Menter was absolutely clear not to endorse the status quo per se, rather to argue that the evidence suggests the continuing involvement of universities in ITE is central to the innovation and improvement necessary to ensure that teachers are sufficiently well prepared to meet the challenges of contemporary society, in particular the challenge of widespread educational disadvantage for particular groups of children and young people.

Not only do all teachers in Scotland have to be degree qualified, and registered with the GTCS, they may also only teach 'in their field', that is, they are only allowed to teach in the subject/sector in which they hold GTCS registration. Following graduation from ITE, and confirmation of provisional GTCS registration, newly qualified teachers then go on to complete an induction period where they work towards full GTCS registration. Most qualifying teachers are entitled to a place on the Teacher Induction Scheme, which entitles them to one-year full-time, teaching post with a reduced timetable, a dedicated mentor ('supporter') and a programme of professional development organised by the local authority education department (see Shanks 2020).

It is evident that Scottish teacher education is tightly regulated, based on sets of practices that have long been considered to be central to maintaining high standards. This long and proud tradition has arguably led to an element of conservatism. Humes (1986), in his earlier work, attributed this in part to the existence of a 'leadership class' in Scottish education which encouraged conservatism, risk-aversity and anti-intellectualism, something he appears to believe is still the case today, arguing that there is 'a serious deficit in the quality of thinking at the top', and that 'Too many of those in senior positions are ineffective time-servers, compliant functionaries or political opportunists' (Humes 2020b).

The history of teacher education in Scotland, up until very recently, could be seen to reflect this in terms of its conservatism and homogeneity (Hulme and Menter 2013; MacDonald and Rae 2018), however, the publication of '*Teaching Scotland's Future'* (Donaldson 2010), also referred to as 'The Donaldson Report', saw significant change in primary undergraduate programmes, with recommendation 11 (of 50) stating:

> In line with emerging developments across Scotland's universities, the traditional BEd degree should be phased out and replaced with degrees which combine in-depth academic study in areas beyond education with professional studies and development. These new degrees should involve staff and departments beyond those in schools of education.
>
> (Donaldson 2010, 88)

This resulted in one of the biggest sector-wide changes in ITE in recent times. Responses to this recommendation saw the shape of undergraduate provision diversifying much more than had previously been the case, in terms of both the ways in which the education components relate to the wider university components, and in the various models of school-based practicum adopted (MacDonald and Rae 2018).

These changes were followed quickly by increasing public scrutiny of ITE, evident in the report of the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee's inquiry into teacher workforce planning (Scottish Parliament 2017). Around the same time, the Scottish Government raised concerns about teacher education which were driven primarily, but not exclusively, by recruitment concerns in some subjects and some geographical areas. This led to an invitation from the Cabinet Minister for Education to all ITE providers to propose a series of 'new and innovative' routes which would help to address a range of concerns, including: a quick resolution to the recruitment crisis quickly; recruiting and retaining a more diverse and representative teacher workforce; and addressing longer-term cultural and structural changes in teacher education. Resulting programmes have led to increasing diversity in the range and structure of ITE routes available, and although all routes still require teachers to be degree qualified, some routes now offer full Masters qualifications (Kennedy 2018), while others seek to get new teachers into the profession more quickly in order to support recruitment concerns. Some of these new routes are captured and analysed in Shanks' (2020) edited volume 'Teacher preparation in Scotland'.

This period of rapid change, accompanied by significant investment of resources, was not, however, accompanied by any strategic plans to research the impact of such changes. While there were no specific plans for researching the impact of these developments, it is important to understand that ITE was already subject to a range of quality assurance mechanisms, across both university and professional spaces. In the university space, mechanisms include compliance with the UK-wide Quality Assurance Agency requirements, involving the use of external examining systems.

In the professional space, ITE programmes are subject to GTCS accreditation against the Standard for Full Registration (GTCS 2012) and, more recently, are required to share progress against a new self-evaluation framework developed by Education Scotland and the Scottish Council of Deans of Education. In order to take cognisance of, but also to go beyond, statutory quality assurance systems, the MQuITE project was proposed – an endeavour that would not only seek to identify quality in ITE in general, but would involve all eleven ITE providers in the process, thereby including a significant capacity-building element. In the following section we consider how 'quality' was conceptualised for these purposes.

## *CONCEPTUALISING MEASURING QUALITY IN ITE*

As ITE in Scotland is university-based, it draws upon many existing notions of quality and evaluation frameworks. However, this brings challenges: since the 1980s, higher education globally has often been judged in terms of the vagaries of the Evaluative State (Neave 1998), bringing with it attempts to systematise the higher education experience for both staff and students. Such definition of the place, form and purpose of higher education carries significant central surveillance tactics and output measures that provide challenges to long-held ideas of the university as a place for intellectual and social development and personal growth. Locating ITE in such institutions thus orients the preparation of teachers in similar terms: ITE programmes often speak to both the emancipatory (the development of teachers committed to social justice through the development of the self); and the provision of labour and research for economic growth (Bleiklie 1998). Importantly, it is often the case that these two aims of ITE are framed as harmonious when, in practice, they often conflict.

Wrapped up here are political (and Political) ideas that improving teaching rests on a marrying of policy and practice through the provision of 'what works' and 'best practice' (Adams 2008), often through centrally defined targets and diktat. For teacher preparation, this is often couched in terms of student teachers being 'classroom ready' at the end of their 'education' or 'training' so they might 'hit the ground running'. Despite a common emphasis on ITE being 'fit for purpose', the purpose of ITE is rarely made explicit. Hence, there exist a plethora of mechanisms to ensure 'quality': inspections by external agencies; audits of hours assigned to studying 'key skills' such as literacy; and over-simplistic proxies of ITE programme or individual teacher quality such as pupil test scores. At the heart of such oft-competing mechanisms lies a common desire to ensure both the suitability and sustainability of ITE in terms of knowledge and skills.

With this common desire in mind, the MQuITE project seeks to develop a contextually-relevant way of both understanding and identifying quality ITE. Importantly, what we are seeking is a way of describing quality coterminous with teacher education across the professional lifespan. To address these considerations, we define quality across three dimensions (Adams and McLennan 2020):

1. *Identifying teaching*: the underpinning philosophies, judgements and ways in which individuals are accorded access to the profession. Here the 'right' individuals are conferred with student-teacher status through mechanisms that seek to admit. Often this extends into some form of 'induction' period and may even continue throughout a teacher's career through the provision of 'standards' or 'competencies' that determine ongoing membership of the profession. It is important here, though, to recognise that such measures are exigencies that appropriate certain Big-D/Discourses (Gee 2012); political, cultural and social matters that determine what teaching 'is about'. In many instances, such exigencies are accepted by teachers and student teachers alike. Occasionally, though, there are those who challenge the contradiction inherent in teaching; the way we are subject to both continuity and change, possibilities and constraints (Dall'Alba 2009).
2. *Doing teaching*: teaching is a social act. To be a teacher is to be *in the world with others* and act *on the world for others*. Little-d/discourse, or '…stretches of language which "hang together" so as to make sense to some community of people, such as a contribution to a conversation or a story' (Gee 2012, 112) is central to teachers' work. As we note elsewhere:

   > Through interactions with children, young people, other students, colleagues, the student-teacher acts on and in her environment; she invites others into her world and is permitted entry into the world of others. By doing, the student teacher engages in the world and on the world in order to gain entry into an aspect of the world (the profession).
   >
   > (Adams and McLennan 2020, 7)

   Part of such work revolves around categorisation: how teachers define themselves and are defined. However, such categorisation involves an understanding and positioning of oneself not only in terms of being, for example, a 'maths teacher' but also in terms of being a 'not-maths teachers'. This involves the definition of 'maths pedagogy' as much as it does the defining of acceptable behaviour, noise levels, etc. that in many instances are the ways in which teachers are judged by others. In effect, doing is governed by much more than a simple interpretation of the observable against pre-existing categorisations for judgement for such categorisation is itself subject to varying interpretations and exigencies.
3. *Knowing teaching*: the above two aspects take us into the realms of the contextual. What these define are the ways in which the local plays a role in determining quality. As we note,

> Such matters imbue with often fleeting meaning; certain knowledge forms construct pedagogical and educational notions. In effect, though, what is resonant and redolent 'here', may not be so 'there'.
>
> (Adams and McLennan 2020, 7)

> This presents challenges for teachers both new and experienced for it seemingly challenges how theory can ever be put to use in the classroom. Indeed, Roth (2002) notes how beginning teachers often bemoan the quantity of theory in their ITE. What often ensues then are overly-simplistic attempts to both minimise the role for theory in education whilst at the same time seeking to bolster the deployment of certain methodological forms of research.

What is important to note are the ways in which a teacher comes to understand their world through the lenses available to them: in effect, they construct theoretical positions informed by personally and/or locally held ways of understanding teaching. Such praxis offers positions to be taken up-resisted or amended (Harré 2004) as the professional deems fit. Through such positioning, teachers come to understand the world *in that moment, at that time*. They learn to engage in responses that fit with the here-and-now.

This is an issue that rests on the relationship between student and context; the creation of local theoretical positions, through praxis, that enable the student to orient her work meaningfully. But this requires the conjoining of personally held understandings and social, cultural, political manifestations. Such theory-making is inextricable tied to practice; it is praxis lived. Such positions might well call for ITE to occur in schools alone, however:

- the generation of local praxis alone can close professional experience;
- theories about, for example, class-control, have roots in matters other than just, presentation, voice, etc. They are part of the web of theory expressed through discussions about poverty, ethnicity, gender, etc.;
- education provision that is based solely on praxis has the potential to be mere whimsy or ideology.

> It may well be that race-theory ideas are not 'held in the moment', but what these form are ways of living with meaning and intent: they call for reflection in/on praxis; consideration of the ways in which locally formed praxis is expressive of wider educative moments. They are not before or after praxis, they are with theory: they garnish personal construction.
>
> (Adams and McLennan 2020).

Identifying 'quality' in ITE is necessarily complex, permeating national, institution, programme, and individual levels. The MQuITE team had the challenge of developing a framework able to bridge competing ideologies to provide practical utility in terms of shaping the empirical phase of the project.

## *THE MQuITE FRAMEWORK*

Building from this multi-layered conceptualisation of ITE quality, the MQuITE framework prioritised providing an overall 'health check' of ITE in Scotland which could take into account the values and structures upon which Scottish education is based. The framework correspondingly conceptualises teacher education, and new teacher graduates, as part of a wider social system. It is therefore not intended as a toolkit for auditing individual programmes or judging the effectiveness of individual teachers or teacher educators. This approach, we believe, is much more likely to result in an ongoing process of learning and enhancement than would be offered by a performative, individualised accountability mechanism. Consequently, it was deemed unsuitable to simply lift processes from performative frameworks. Specifically, MQuITE rejected 'value-added models' (VAM), despite their popularity in many states in the US. VAM approaches to measuring quality rely on a rationalist economic model, supporting an epistemological stance that believes the input of the individual teacher cause the output of pupil learning, and that that 'added-value', i.e. pupil learning, is something that can be controlled for and measured statistically (Amrein-Beardsley and Holloway 2019). The idea that such a measurement of a new teacher's practice could then be attributed to the quality, or otherwise, of their ITE programme is not something that fits epistemologically with our beliefs about teaching and teacher learning.

The starting point for the framework was the MQuITE literature review (Rauschenberger et al. 2017). Each member of the project team engaged with this thematic review, summarising how they felt this could inform development of the MQuITE framework. Following intensive discussion and debate as a team, we settled on using the categories identified by Feuer et al. (2013) as a starting point. We then went through a process of contextualising, or 'Scotifying' each of the categories, engaging in what Appadurai (Appadurai 1996) calls 'vernacular globalisation'. An example of this would be that when we considered Feuer et al.'s (2013) category of 'faculty qualifications', we considered the wider concept of 'teacher educator' which encompasses both university and school-based colleagues involved in the support and development of student teachers. We also looked at what specific learning teacher educators had undertaken, rather than simply their qualifications. There were very many similar examples where we changed the original categories to align more clearly with the Scottish context.

Feuer et al. (2013) identified 6 categories:

1. Admissions and recruitment criteria
2. Quality and substance of instruction
3. Quality of student teaching experience
4. Faculty qualifications
5. Effectiveness in preparing new teachers who are employable in the field
6. Success in preparing high-quality teachers

Our project team reorganised and renamed these categories to better fit our context, but in the process, also identified two categories that were not present in Feuer et al.'s analysis, namely: partnership and institutional context. The resultant framework comprised eight categories:

1. Partnership
2. Admissions, recruitment and retention
3. Programme design
4. Practicum/fieldwork
5. Teacher educators
6. Initial destinations
7. Post-registration
8. Institutional context

For each of these 8 categories, we then identified a number of related specific dimensions that we would seek to investigate empirically, matching each of these dimensions to one of 7 data collection tools. The full framework can be found on the project website at www.mquite.scot.

At the time of writing we are on our third (of five) years of data collection, using the framework to guide, but not stifle, our data collections plans. One of the exciting things about having a dynamic and adaptable framework is that we are able to take into account issues that arise during the life of the project. For example, the 2020 data capture added a question into our annual cohort survey about responding to sudden changes in light of the Covid-19 context. Other questions were adapted to enable analysis focused more explicitly on issues of race education and anti-discrimination in light of the national drive to diversify the teaching profession (Scottish Government 2018) and the global Black Lives Matters movement, all the while contextualised within the broader narrative of social justice that is already well-established in Scottish ITE.

## *SOME 'SCOTIFIED' MEASURES OF QUALITY IN ITE*

In this section, we give examples of how the aim of exploring national priorities while enabling international comparisons is being addressed in data collection and analysis. In these examples, our approach was to first look to the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)(OECD 2018), keeping comparisons open where possible and adding nuance where needed. As well as enabling some international comparisons that may be of interest to Scotland, this also serves to remedy Scotland's lack of representation in OECD datasets, whose 'United Kingdom' sample only comprises schools and teachers from England. These examples are intended to show how the framework may operate as MQuITE becomes established in Scotland's ITE, balancing national interests and current ways of researching ITE in Scotland with measures enabling greater international comparison.

### Foreign language preparedness

Much of Europe committed to the Barcelona Agreement in 2002, establishing a common framework for assessing language competency, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and enabling international comparisons through the European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC; European Commission 2016) by testing students and asking their opinions about foreign language learning. The Barcelona Agreement went beyond promoting greater foreign language learning, aiming for cross-curricular applications and plurilingual classrooms which normalise the use of "at least two foreign languages from a very early age" (Barcelona European Council 2002, 19). However, this policy emphasis on learning languages from an early age is only measured in ESLC at the end of secondary education, meaning that measurement is only of higher levels of proficiency. Nevertheless, this data suggests that progress is going well (an average of 42% of students achieve independent user level in a second language, 25% for a third language). It is also almost universally the case that the second language of choice is English (the exceptions are Belgium and England, who both adopt French as the most common second language).

While ESLC includes England in its sample, it is difficult to translate foreign language policies to English-speaking countries since there are strong cultural and economic factors surrounding English as a world language. Adopting ESLC measures into MQuITE may therefore simply show what is already known to be a low level of foreign language learning in much the same way as is presented for England, where only 10% of students achieve independent learner status in a foreign language – far below the 42% European average, and the lowest of the 16 ESLC countries. Looking at Scottish exam entries suggests that we might find a similar

result in Scotland, since fewer than 15% of learners enter a foreign language exam in Scotland (which have around an 80% pass rate, for around a 12% proficiency rate).

As an alternative measure, MqUITE directly asks teachers about their own proficiency, specifically if they can "communicate beyond beginner level" in any additional languages. This reflects how Scotland came late to the Barcelona Agreement, passing its equivalent "1+2" policy ten years later (Scottish Government 2012), so these changes will not have been fully experienced by those now starting ITE programmes, making it appropriate to consider progress in teacher language proficiency even when below independent user standard. This also reflects a different context in that Scotland is an English-speaking country, which may limit the economic imperative to develop higher levels of proficiency English or devote substantial curricular time to a foreign language (Saiz and Zoido 2005; Caplan 2012), consequently allowing teachers to offer an appropriate level of language exposure even if their own proficiency is only slightly ahead of that of their learners (Little 2011).

Using this 'beginner level' measure across the 3 years of MQuITE, we see that around a third of teachers can offer at least some additional language. While the sample revealed 31 different languages offered, students are only likely to have reliable access to French, Spanish, German, or Gaelic. This provides insight into the sustainability of the 1+2 policy, an important measure as it was intended to require no additional funding by 2020. In short, the MQuITE measure shows that teachers are only able to reliably offer a narrow range of languages to students as they progress through school, but that policy goals of cultural and linguistic diversity may be more readily achievable.

The annual data capture of newly graduating teachers in MQuITE is also a convenient proxy of efforts to increase language proficiency in schools. The proportion of teachers offering an additional language has increased in each of the 3 years of MQuITE (23% in 2018, 25% in 2019, 29% in 2020), which could show the gradual feeding-in of students who started to be offered greater access to foreign languages from 2012 as they worked their way through schools and into ITE. As an additional measure, MQuITE also asks teachers how prepared they feel in different subject areas, including additional languages. This compares against the norm in TALIS of asking about areas of teacher efficacy, such as the ability to assess, differentiate, or manage behaviour. Asking about subject area reflects current discussions around Scotland's new curriculum and the extent to which subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy should be prominent in ITE. Again, the ability to look at one cohort across several years as well as two cohorts of graduates enables some analysis of change over time that could not otherwise be made.

The headline finding is concerning, with languages the area in which teachers feel least prepared. On a five-point scale from 1 (not at all prepared) to 5 (very well prepared), 2018 graduates gave a mean score of just 2.86, with 16% reporting not feeling at all prepared. In the 2019 graduate cohort, this worsened slightly to a mean of 2.59, although there was a slight reduction in those feeling not at all prepared (12%). As those graduates took on their first teaching roles, we find that the 2018 graduates lost even more confidence – a mean of 2.63, with 21% not at all prepared. After another year of teaching, the mean has recovered slightly to 2.88 with 19% not at all prepared. In contrast, the 2019 graduates saw an improvement to a mean of 3.17 with only 6% feeling not at all prepared. These comparisons, while at an early stage of data collection and analysis, suggest that cohorts of new teachers may differ from each other as the increase in language learning in schools starts to feed into ITE. The data also suggests that language proficiency may continue to improve in the early stages of a teaching career rather than being entirely reliant upon language learning during school or ITE years, but that the experience here may be highly variable. As MQuITE continues to collect data as more students become teachers, the proportion of teachers feeling able to communicate beyond beginner level should start to reflect the substantial increase in foreign language exam entries in Scotland (a 58% increase since 2011, though much of this is due to exam reform which increased entries in all subjects by 51%). This may require reconsidering the measure of proficiency and what level of language teachers require, and may even make the ESLC 'independent user' measure more appropriate, enabling greater comparisons across Europe.

## Career intention

Measuring teacher retention is fraught with difficulties, with no one measure suitable for the range of decisions that can be made based on retention data. The approach in MQuITE is novel in that it moves away from the hard data of what teachers are doing at snapshot data capture points, instead adapting questions from TALIS to ask about the range of options that teachers feel might be open or attractive to them over the next 5 years. To explain the advantages of this approach, this section first details some of the limitations in how retention is currently measured and compared and then outlines some of the findings from our 'softer' data.

The MQuITE approach was heavily inspired by Weldon's (2018) damning critique of retention statistics in Australia in which he traces citations of retention figures typically putting attrition around 50% through various Australian and British publications, finding circular references, poorly defined concepts, and unfounded estimates that become established through repeated citation. We believe that simply counting the proportion of teachers employed in state schools in Scotland is oversimplistic, which combined with the flaws pointed out by Weldon (2018) argues

that there is scope to improve the measure by making it more nuanced. It is also easier to argue for nuance at the expense of international comparisons when the retention data in other countries is likely to be similarly flawed and often uses the same citations that Weldon discredits.

Part of the problem is that teacher supply and attrition are often mixed together in analyses. In a report for the OECD, McKenzie and Santiago (2005) helpfully explained how teacher supply was about shortages in key areas and high attrition among early career teachers rather than being a problem of having enough teachers more generally. Analysis of teacher vacancies showed this to be true of England and Wales, that the actual number of teachers exceeded demand despite subject and location shortages (See et al. 2004), a finding supported by similar analysis in Scotland (Hulme and Menter 2014). Thus, the issue of teacher supply encompasses both a supply of teachers who schools want to hire and teachers who want to work in those schools. This is supported by a study of teachers in England which found that more than half of teachers leaving state schools actually stayed in the education sector, most commonly "teaching in private schools, becoming teaching assistants and taking up a non-teaching role in school" (Lynch et al. 2016, 4). Counting these teachers as no longer retained in the profession therefore reflects a too-narrow concept of the teaching profession as being limited to class teachers.

In addition to being technically difficult to measure, retention and attrition are politically sensitive. In her review of teacher retention in England, McDowall (2013) shows how this can lead to a confusing array of percentages and accompanying claims or inferences. For instance, England's Teach First claims a "uniquely high" programme completion rate of 95% as a measure of "completion and retention during training". However, the same report also specifies 42% "long-term retention", 54% who "remain teaching in the UK [although this actually just means England and Wales]", 57% "still in teaching 5 years after training", and 68% who "remain employed in education" (Parliament UK 2012).

Beyond these issues around what the retention figure might be, it can also been questioned how useful the measure is since it assumes that staying in a classroom teaching role reflects positive ITE or career experiences. Two US studies illustrate the problem well: Manning (2016, 2) suggests that "staying in post might ultimately be a 'non-choice'" for many teachers for personal or financial reasons, while Kelly and Northrop (2015, 648) find that more highly qualified graduates have "an 85% greater likelihood of leaving the profession than less selective graduates in the first three years of teaching". This is supported by Lynch et al. (2016) finding that far more teachers think about leaving the profession than actually do, hinting at a potentially hidden crisis of teacher dissatisfaction not reflected in current attrition estimates.

As a simple measure, we asked teachers to select from a range of possibilities for where they saw themselves in five years' time. These included measures which would relate to traditional retention measures of teaching in a state-funded school in Scotland, but also included a wider range of possibilities such as working in other sectors, other countries, education-related professions, or returning to advanced-level study (see table 1, below).

Table 1 Teachers' career intentions

| Intention | On graduation | End of induction year | End of 2nd year |
|---|---|---|---|
| Class/subject teacher in Scotland | 71.9% | 67.4% | 62.5% |
| Middle leader | 34.9% | 32.9% | 36.9% |
| School leader/Headteacher | 4.2% | 1.9% | 1.2% |
| Not teaching at all | 6.5% | 8.8% | 9.5% |
| Teaching outwith Scotland | 22.9% | 17.6% | 15.5% |
| Working in Further or Higher Education | 6.7% | 7.5% | 7.1% |
| Working in education but not teaching | 11.3% | 11.6% | 11.3% |
| Studying for, or having achieved, a Masters degree in education | 32.2% | 24.1% | 23.2% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Studying for, or having achieved, a doctorate in education, e.g. PhD or EdD | 4.3% | 2.8% | 3.0% |
| Studying for, or having achieved a Masters or Doctorate in a non-education-related field | 3.3% | 1.9% | 2.4% |
| Other | 3.4% | 5.0% | 3.0% |
| Sample size | 645 | 319 | 168 |

Comparing with traditional retention estimates of around 50% across the first five years, we found that only 71.9% of our 2018 and 2019 graduates thought they would still be teaching in a classroom in Scotland in five years, and that this reduces slightly after each additional year of teaching. Indeed, a positive sample bias – those leaving teaching are not kept in the sample for subsequent years – could mean this is an optimistic picture. These figures are broadly similar to the standard retention rates calculated from teacher workforce data, suggesting that there is helpful comparability in our question. Perhaps more importantly, it suggests that attrition may not be a sudden dramatic life event but is something that teachers anticipate several years ahead. It is therefore helpful to consider what else teachers think they might be doing. Perhaps most striking is the expectation that teachers' careers may take them abroad - 23% consider this a possibility upon graduation, though this soon reduces after the first year teaching in Scotland. Teachers are also open to a range of possibilities that clearly have value to an education profession even though these are not teaching roles, perhaps therefore unfairly blaming ITE or the teaching profession for 'wasting' these teachers. The more nuanced data also shows potential for success in meeting national aspirations for teachers to increasingly take on leadership roles in their early careers (over 30% of early career teachers seeing this as a possibility). There may also be some cause for concern in the sharp reduction in teachers considering further study, particular to doctoral level.

By looking at whether teachers see these as possibilities, rather than just looking at the numbers of teachers who actually go on to do these things, we are able to offer a broader view of how teachers view their careers, which we argue may be more helpful for policy planning. In particular, planning for flexibility in teacher supply as birth and immigration rates vary may usefully engage with the broader idea of an education profession and the range of experiences that teachers may engage with beyond the traditional classroom teacher role. If this can lead to more nuanced policy approaches to teacher supply than simply leveraging the distribution

of ITE places, then there may be positive impact on other factors such as teacher under- or un-employment.

## *NO 'FINAL' REPORT: THE ONGOING IMPACT OF MQUITE*

The collaborative nature of MQuITE has been crucial in building research and development capacity across the 11 university schools of education, as well as creating a forum for the discussion of ITE policy and practice. MQuITE was established not just to work within the national policy context, but to help to shape that context. Although currently only in year 4 of 6, its impact has already been felt in terms of providing valuable empirical data to refute some of the negative assumptions laid at the feet of ITE. For example, when in 2017 the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee highlighted concerns over graduating teachers' capacity to teach numeracy (an area of responsibility of all teachers under the *Curriculum for Excellence* policy), MQuITE was soon able to share empirical evidence that pointed to graduating teachers and their mentors actually being *least* concerned about competence in this area. The project team's close working with policymakers through, for example, regular reporting to the national Strategic Board for Teacher Education (www.gov.scot/groups/strategic-board-for-teacher-education/), means that empirical findings can be introduced straight away into discussions at national level. A more recent development for MQuITE has been to seek, wherever possible, to locate our own national findings within the broader international context, such as the comparative findings discussed above relating to foreign language competence and career intentions. This has helped ITE stakeholders to access a wider perspective on local/national developments.

The existence of the MQuITE project has also helped to shape developments in national quality assurance mechanisms for ITE. For example, following the report of the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee's inquiry into the teacher workforce in 2017, the Scottish Government was charged with ensuring the development of a new national evaluation of ITE. What originally started looking like another inspection audit mechanism has ended up being a national conference where ITE providers and other relevant stakeholders get together to look at progress and challenges relating to particular themes identified as priorities against an ITE self-evaluation document that the universities themselves use, rather than have imposed upon them. In 2019, the national theme was numeracy, and in 2020 the theme is diversity and wellbeing. This national approach to evaluation is suggestive of a mature system in which trust forms a major role, and which is underpinned by a collaborative desire to enhance ITE provision nationally.

While the above discussion points to the many positive aspects of the MQuITE project and its impact on the system, it should also be acknowledged that the project is far from able to provide a definitive statement on the health of ITE. The more we uncover, the more there is to explore, and project team member have identified a number of aspects worthy of deeper investigation. We are also regularly in receipt of suggestions from other stakeholders about areas that we could focus in on in more depth. The scope of the project is not big enough to incorporate all of these suggestions, but the framework provides a common springboard to help align spin-off projects. For instance, a Masters student at the University of Edinburgh is currently using her thesis to look at the data on the experiences of physical education teachers across Scotland, and supplementing this with her own primary data collection; a doctoral student at the University of Strathclyde is beginning to look at what the data says about mentoring, and again will supplement this with her own primary data collection; and two members of the project team (at the University of Stathclyde and the University of Aberdeen) have won UK funding through BERA to explore the data relating to how new teachers are dealing with Covid-related changes to their practice.

The project does not see a final report as the pinnacle of its impact; rather, MQuITE has shaped itself very much as a research and development project, capable of expanding beyond its initial brief. We believe this to be a fairly unique project internationally, and it is perhaps only possible due to the 'Scottish policy style' outlined earlier in the chapter. We are fortunate to work within a system where stakeholder and policy makers are prepared to work in partnership, taking into account contextual factors, towards ends that benefit us all.

## REFERENCES

Adams, Paul. 2008. Considering "best practice": The social construction of teacher activity and pupil learning as performance. *Cambridge Journal of Education* 38: 375–392. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640802299635.

Adams, Paul, and Carrie McLennan. 2020. Towards initial teacher education quality: Epistemological considerations. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. Taylor & Francis: 1–12.

Amrein-Beardsley, Audrey, and Jessica Holloway. 2019. Value-added models for teacher evaluation and accountability: Commonsense assumptions. *Educational Policy* 33. SAGE Publications Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA: 516–542.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.

Barcelona European Council. 2002. Presidency Conclusions. https://doi.org/10/1/11 REV 1.

Beck, Anna Dorothy. 2016. Policy processes, professionalism and partnership: an exploration of the implementation of'Teaching Scotland's Future'. University of Glasgow.

Bleiklie, Ivar. 1998. Justifying the Evaluative State: New Public Management Ideals in Higher Education. *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 4: 87–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.1998.12022016.

Cairney, Paul, and Neil McGarvey. 2013. *Scottish politics*. Macmillan International Higher Education.

Caplan, Bryan. 2012. The Numbers Speak: Foreign Language Requirements Are a Waste of Time and Money. *The Library of Economics and Liberty*.

Dall'Alba, Gloria. 2009. Learning professional ways of being: Ambiguities of becoming. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 41: 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00475.x.

Donaldson, Graham. 2010. *Teaching Scotland's Future. Report of a review of teacher education in Scotland*. *Education*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

European Commission. 2016. *First European Survey on Language Competences: Final Report*.

Feuer, Michael J, Robert E Floden, Naomi Chudowsky, and Judie Ahn. 2013. *Evaluation of Teacher Preparation Programs: Purposes, Methods, and Policy Options.* Washington DC: National Academy of Education.

Gee, James Paul. 2012. Discourse Versus discourse. *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Major Reference Works. https://doi.org/doi:10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0332.

GTCS. 2012. *The Standards for Registration: mandatory requirements for Registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland*.

Harré, Rom. 2004. Positioning Theory.

Hulme, Moira, and Ian Menter. 2013. The evolution of teacher education and the Scottish universities. In *Scottish education*, ed. Tom Bryce, Walter Humes, Donald Gillies, and Aileen Kennedy, 4th ed., 905–914. Edinburgh University Press.

Hulme, Moira, and Ian Menter. 2014. New professionalism in austere times: The employment experiences of early career teachers in Scotland. *Teachers and Teaching* 20. Taylor & Francis: 672–687. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2014.885707.

Humes, Walter. 1986. *The leadership class in Scottish education*. Edinburgh: John Donald.

Humes, Walter. 2020a. Re-Shaping the Policy Landscape in Scottish Education, 2016-20: The Limitations of Structural Reform. *Scottish Educational Review* 52: 1–22.

Humes, Walter. 2020b. Two attainment gaps in Scottish education. *Sceptical Scot*.

Kelly, Sean, and Laura Northrop. 2015. Early Career Outcomes for the "Best and the Brightest": Selectivity, Satisfaction, and Attrition in the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Survey. *American Educational Research Journal* 52: 624–656. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831215587352.

Kennedy, Aileen. 2018. Developing a new ITE programme: a story of compliant and disruptive narratives across different cultural spaces. *European Journal of Teacher Education* 41. Routledge: 638–653. https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2018.1529753.

Kennedy, Aileen, and Robert Doherty. 2012. Professionalism and partnership: Panaceas for teacher education in Scotland? *Journal of Education Policy* 27: 835–848. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2012.682609.

Little, David. 2011. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: A research agenda. *Language Teaching* 44: 381–393. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000097.

Lynch, Sarah, Jack Worth, Susan Bamford, and K Wespieser. 2016. *Engaging Teachers: NFER Analysis of Teacher Retention*. Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research.

MacDonald, A, and A Rae. 2018. Initial teacher education in Scotland. In *Scottish education*, ed. Tom Bryce, Walter Humes, Donald Gillies, and Aileen Kennedy, 5th ed., 836–846. Edinburgh

University Press.

Manning, Alexandra. 2016. Urban Science Teachers: Exploring how their views and experiences can influence decisions to remain in post or not. King's College, London.

McCrone, David, and Michael Keating. 2007. Social democracy and Scotland. In *Scottish social democracy: Progressive ideas for public policy*, ed. Michael Keating, 17–38. Peter Lang.

McDowall, S. 2013. An investigation into which forms of early teacher learning are most effective with respect to retention, motivation, commitment and job satisfaction for new entrants to the school teaching profession. University of Birmingham.

McKenzie, P, and P Santiago. 2005. *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris: OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264018044-sum-sv.

Menter, Ian. 2017. The Role and Contribution of Higher Education in Contemporary Teacher Education. *Scottish Council of Deans of Education. URL: http://www. scde. ac. uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Report-Ian-Menter-2017-05-25. pdf (accessed 10.10. 2018)*.

Neave, Guy. 1998. The Evaluative State Reconsidered. *European Journal of Education* 33: 265–284.

OECD. 2018. TALIS teacher questionnaire.

Parliament UK. 2012. Education committee: Further written evidence submitted by Teach First.

Rauschenberger, Emilee, Paul Adams, and Aileen Kennedy. 2017. *Measuring Quality in Initial Teacher Education: a literature review*. Edinburgh: Scottish Council of Deans of Education.

Roth, Wolff-Michael. 2002. *Being and becoming in the classroom*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Saiz, Albert, and Elena Zoido. 2005. Listening to what the world says: Bilingualism and earnings in the United States. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 87: 523–538. https://doi.org/10.1162/0034653054638256.

Scottish Government. 2012. *Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach*. Edinburgh.

Scottish Government. 2018. *Teaching in a diverse Scotland: increasing and retaining minority ethnic teachers*.

Scottish Parliament. 2017. *Teacher Workforce Planning*.

See, Beng Huat, Stephen Gorard, and Patrick White. 2004. Teacher demand: crisis what crisis? *Cambridge Journal of Education* 34. Taylor & Francis: 103–123.

Shanks, Rachel, ed. 2020. *Teacher preparation in Scotland*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Weldon, Paul. 2018. Early career teacher attrition in Australia: evidence, definition, classification and measurement. *Australian Journal of Education* 62: 61–78. https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944117752478.