CHAPTER 4

Professionalism, Professionalisation and Continuing Professional Development in the Adult Education Arena

Introduction

The reshaping of public sector professionalism has been an aim of governments in a number of countries, including England and New Zealand. The schooling sector has been at the forefront of the struggle between practitioner and policy perspectives on professionalism since the late 1980s (Lawn and Grace 1987; Codd 1999, 2005; Seddon 1997; Ball 2000; Fitzgerald 2008; Beck 2008, 2009). Central to this struggle are issues of control and accountability, autonomy and standards within a policy climate increasingly dominated by managerialism (S. Ball 2000, 2003, 2008a, b, 2012). From the late 1990s, particularly in England, the professionalising spotlight fell on formal post-compulsory education (Avis 1999, 2005; Lucas and Nasta 2010; Lucas et al. 2012; Bathmaker and Avis 2012). And although informal adult and community education has been marginal to the debate – reflecting the marginal status of adult education more generally – adult educators have not been left untouched by the discourse of professionalism, qualifications and standards.

This chapter begins by describing how different forms of 'professionalism' have been defined, refined and developed and applied to formal education more generally. It moves on to compare how policies on professionalisation and professional development have been played out in relation to adult educators in England and New Zealand. In England the focus has been on the (ultimately unsuccessful) imposition of a

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prescriptive form of *governmental* professionalism across the whole post-compulsory education sector, including adult and community-based education (Lucas and Nasta 2010; Bathmaker and Avis 2012). In New Zealand, the focus has been on introducing a 'softer' form of professionalism, 'owned' by the sector itself, which promotes professional development as a means of enforcing greater coordination and standardisation of provision across the ACE sector (Tobias 2003). In both countries, I suggest, policy pronouncements and expectations around professionalism have been utilised as a way of increasing government and (in the case of England) management control by holding out the promise of improved status and conditions for adult educators which has not been delivered. In both countries too, while the policy rhetoric about professionalisation has waned, the regulation of adult educators' work has not.

Discourses of Professionalism in Formal Education

The literature which defines professionalism and discusses its application to education is plentiful, stretching back for a century or more. This section presents four prominent discourses of educator professionalism. First it outlines a *traditional* or elite discourse which dominates the early literature of professionalism. It then describes the rise of a more *process-oriented* discourse within which continuing professional development and reflective practice are seen as important elements of the process of professionalisation. It goes on to discuss the growing prominence of a discourse of *governmental* or *organisational* professionalism from the 1990s which has shifted the policy agenda from occupational autonomy to external regulation and legislative control. This has been supported by a deficit discourse around teachers (Beck 2008; Fitzgerald 2008) which has characterised them as requiring *professionalisation* by means of greater regulation and performance management. Finally, it describes how some teacher educators, academics and teacher representatives have attempted to wrest the definition of professionalism back from policy makers and return it to practitioners, reformulated as *principled* or *transformative* professionalism. These discourses are not always easily disentangled; there are contradictions, ambiguities and overlaps between them, and it is not uncommon for one explicitly articulated discourse to mask or imply another. However, their identification helps us to 'read' policy and compare developments in different geographical, political and cultural contexts.

Traditional Discourses of Professionalism

Historically, the term 'professional' has been used to demarcate occupational areas on the basis of their ethos, the skills and knowledge they require for their proper performance, the autonomy they enjoy and the status they carry for the individual so named. *Traditional, elite* or *classical* discourses of professionalism have defined a profession by the extent to which it possesses a number of key characteristics (Flexner 1915; Millerson 1964; Eraut 1994) including:

- A specialist knowledge base
- A requirement for specialised and (usually lengthy) training and study
- An ethic of public service
- A means of controlling and regulating its own membership through a recognised and autonomous professional body

A functionalist view of professional status thus defined suggests that it provides a means by which certain groups of workers (primarily lawyers and doctors) maintain their standing in society through assurance of their competence, trustworthiness and commitment to the public good. Control of entry to, and regulation of performance within, the profession were vested in the profession itself. Professional status may also have been accompanied by a level of remuneration and respect deemed commensurate with a high social standing. A more critical view suggests that it has been a means by which a certain section of the population seeks to maintain class privilege by restricting entry to its professional ranks (Larson 1979). There is therefore a debate to be had about whether professionalism is primarily a way of maintaining an elitist status quo. If this is the case it can be argued that the traditional formulation of professionalism cannot appropriately be applied to public service occupations, including adult education, which are associated with social justice and the equal distribution of opportunities.

Process Discourses: Professionalism as 'Becoming'

In the second half of the twentieth century, with the expansion of the range of jobs in the public sector requiring advanced education and training – for example in nursing, social work and teaching – definitions

of professionalism became more dynamically conceived (Etzioni 1969; Houle 1981; Tobias 2003). Professional status was conceptualised as a *process* rather than as a set of preordained criteria. Thus, while certain ethical, educational, and organisational characteristics might indicate a degree of professionalism, professional status is more fluid: in the process of being achieved rather than achieved absolutely. *Professionalisation* (Hoyle in Gordon et al. 1985) as a process of 'becoming' thus takes on a less elitist and more democratic tone, and opens up the possibility of occupational mobility for those prepared to seek it. It follows from this that those aspiring to professional status would be expected to engage in refining their skills and knowledge. It also opens the way for the promotion of professional development: 'The process whereby a practitioner acquires and improves the knowledge and skills required for effective professional practice' (Hoyle 1985: 44). Continuing professional development (CPD) and ongoing reflection on practice have therefore become part and parcel of discussion around professionalisation in the public sector generally and in education in particular (see for example Ghaye and Ghaye 1998; Day 1999; Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse 2009). However, as Tobias (2003: 148) has argued, a process definition of professionalism still remains open to the criticism that it is driven by a desire to maintain a status separation between the professional few – although rather more than in the traditional formulation – and the non-professional many. Moreover, while a process approach to professionalism may appear more democratic and fluid than a traditional approach, it opens up the possibility, within the newer public sector professions, of government intervention in defining what standards, training and forms of accountability might be expected of workers whose activities are prescribed by legislation and funded by government.

Government Intervention and the Reconstruction of Professionalism

The discourse of professionalism in education has taken a new turn in the past 20 years, and this has been reflected in the formal education systems of both England and New Zealand. *Governmental*, *organisational* or 'managed' *professionalism* (Fitzgerald 2008; Beck 2008, 2009; Lucas and Nasta 2010; Bathmaker and Avis 2012) has substituted notions of professional autonomy and self-regulation with an externally imposed and bureaucratised version of professionalisation which can be used a tool for the exercise of managerial authority. Tanya Fitzgerald (writing from a

New Zealand perspective) and John Beck (from an English perspective) have described the processes through which governmental professionalism has taken hold. First it has been predicated on casting teachers as inherently problematic, potentially incompetent and probably untrustworthy in the exercise of professional judgement. This has served to undermine their claims to autonomy and self-regulation and pave the way for regulation from above (Lucas and Nasta 2010). Second, it has involved the government introduction of regulatory measures at all levels of educational organisation including:

- Regimes of *institutional* inspection and grading which differentiate institutions on the basis of their performance against externally set criteria, creating competition between them for 'customers' in an educational quasi market
- Centralised specification of *curricula and qualifications* and of the anticipated outcomes from education
- Bureaucratic control of *teachers*' qualifications, performance, conduct and ongoing training.

Governments in both countries have, by these means, been able to de-professionalise, while claiming to professionalise, imposing external control in areas where there was formerly some professional autonomy. The dominance of governmental professionalisation has been enabled through encouraging competition between and within institutions. It has been further supported by inculcating a climate of fear among teachers, whose work is subject to constant scrutiny and individualised performance management systems, ensuring their compliance with regimes of regulation, inspection and training. It has been assisted too by the fragmentation of educators' industrial organisation (Beck 2009) which has impeded their capacity to utilise industrial strength to resist.

'New' Teacher Professionalism: Responses to Governmental Professionalism

In response, there have been attempts to reclaim teaching as a profession. Goodson and Hargreaves for example (in Goodson 2003: 126) try to resolve the twin issues of teachers' historical failure to gain professional recognition and the continual restructuring and direction

of their work from without by distinguishing between 'professionalisation' and 'professionalism':

> I see the project of professionalisation as concerned with promoting the material and ideal interests of an occupational group – in this case, teachers. Alongside this, professionalism is more concerned with the intricate definition and character of occupational action – in this case the practice and profession of teaching.

Goodson (2003) goes on to propose a new form of 'principled' professionalism, which he argues may emerge from the ashes of traditional professionalism (based on claims to a discrete knowledge-base) and process or 'practical' professionalism (based on the idea of the teacher as experienced, reflective practitioner). This notion of principled professionalism, which foregrounds the ethical dimensions of teaching, is asserted as being characterised by:

- Engagement with moral and social purpose
- Exercise of discretionary judgement
- Collaborative collegial cultures
- Collaboration with parents, students and the wider community
- Commitment to an ethic of care
- Self-directed continuous learning
- Reward for the recognition of high task complexity

Similarly, from an Australian perspective, Judyth Sachs (2003) has attempted to salvage 'transformative' teacher professionalism, sensitive to the criticism of the elite professions and yet responsive to the policy rhetoric of 'standards', accountability and measurable outcomes. She, like Hargreaves and Goodson, asserts the possibilities for professionalism to be redefined in:

> more positive and principled post-modern ways that are flexible, wide ranging and inclusive in nature. (Sachs 2003: 35)

For Sachs this new professional identity is founded upon principles of 'learning, participation, collaboration, cooperation and activism' and stands in contrast to traditional professionalism associated with the exclusivity and high status, and to governmental professionalism characterised

by individualism, competitiveness and responsiveness to externally imposed managerialist standards. However, it may be argued (Avis 2005) that this optimistic perspective on the possibilities for professional agency downplays the political, economic and institutional realities which constrain teachers. Further, it fails to recognise how teachers' working conditions have been reconfigured in the educational marketplace and the impact of performative regimes on their ability to claim space for the kind of activist professionalism which Goodson and Sachs describe.

Policy, Professionalism and Adult and Community Education in England and New Zealand

While much has been written on the impact of policy on the professional lives of educators in the formal education system, including the post-compulsory sector (see for example Avis 1999, 2005; Jephcote and Salisbury 2009; Lucas and Nasta 2010; Bathmaker and Avis 2012; Lucas et al. 2012), the challenges to educator professionalism in the non-formal adult and community education sector have received little attention in recent years. This is scarcely surprising given the contraction of adult education as a field of practice and, correspondingly, as a field of study. This section therefore focuses on the development of policy around professionalism and professional development in the field of adult and community education in England and New Zealand since the end of the 1990s. In England community-based adult education has become caught up in the policy debates around teacher professionalism in the wider post-compulsory sector; it is therefore impossible to discuss adult and community education without reference to the sector as a whole. In New Zealand, because there has, until very recently, been policy recognition of adult and community education (ACE) as an area of practice distinct from the wider field of tertiary education, it is easier to untangle the specifics of ACE professional development, as will be seen below.

Policy, Professionalisation and Post-Compulsory Education in England

On the one hand, the debate around professionalism in post-compulsory education in England arose from a desire on the part of educators and their trades unions to secure parity of esteem, remuneration and working

conditions with school teachers (UCU 2012). On the other hand, it arose from a desire by government to control teacher performance more tightly. From the late 1990s concerns about the state of the UK economy and the growing policy concern around training and skills for national economic competiveness threw the spotlight on professionalism in the post-compulsory sector (Lucas and Nasta 2010; Bathmaker and Avis 2012; Lucas et al. 2012). The reform of post-school education became a focus of the Labour administration which came to power in 1997. This was reflected in a consultation exercise on the introduction of standards and qualifications for teachers in further education (Lucas et al. 2012) which led to the formation of FENTO (Further Education National Training Organisation) and the publication of national standards for teaching and supporting learning (FENTO 1999). Following on from this, in 2001 a requirement was placed on new teachers in this sector to hold a nationally recognised and regulated teaching qualification (DfES 2001). At the same time, inspection regimes, which were already familiar in the schools sector, were introduced into post-compulsory education, with The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) becoming responsible for learning and skills (vocational training), while the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) assumed responsibility for inspecting community-based adult education provision, including local authority and voluntary sector adult education. From the outset it was therefore clear that this was governmental professionalisation from above – and that it was to be accompanied by a regime of externally imposed bureaucratic accountability (Table 4.1).

The period from 2001 to 2007 was a hectic one in terms of moves towards governmental professionalism. In 2002, the Institute for Learning (IfL) was set up with trade union support as an independent and voluntary professional body for further education teachers, tutors and trainers. Its membership included adult and community educators as well as college lecturers in the training and skills sector. Following the publication of *Equipping our Teachers for the Future* (DfES 2004), the IfL became fully established and from 2007 was charged by government with registering all teachers in the skills and further education sector (including those working in adult and community learning) who were now required by law to qualify as teachers and to undertake a prescribed annual minimum of professional development. By this means, a body set up to represent the professional interests of adult educators became co-opted into enforcing governmental professionalism. And while the kind of professionalism on offer was clearly not like that enjoyed by the traditional professions,

Table 4.1 Timeline: Governmental professionalism and post-compulsory education in England

1997–1999	■ Labour government consultation on introducing standards and qualifications for further education teachers
1999	■ Inauguration of FENTO (Further Education National Training Organisation) as standards body for the post-compulsory sector ■ Publication of sector standards for teaching and supporting learning
2001	■ New teachers in the sector required to gain teaching qualification ■ Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) given inspectorial role in further education ■ ALI (Adult Learning Inspectorate) given inspectorial role in respect of adult and community education
2002	■ Institute for Learning (IfL) established as the professional body for teachers in the sector, including adult and community learning ■ Subject specifications established for teaching in ESOL, adult literacy and numeracy following the Moser Report (DfES 1999)
2003	■ Ofsted report critical of quality of training of teachers in the sector
2004	■ Government Report: *Equipping Our Teachers for the Future* proposed reforms to teacher training in post-compulsory sector including: – requirement for new and experienced teachers – whether full-time, part-time or fractionally employed – to become qualified – requirement for teachers to undergo continuing professional development – requirement for registration with IfL for the purposes of monitoring qualifications and CPD – a promise of parity with school teaching
2005	■ Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) replaced FENTO developing and monitoring standards across the lifelong learning sector, including ESOL, literacy, numeracy and community-based education
2006	■ New standards for the sector published by LLUK ■ Publication of consultation on *The Professionalisation of the Learning and Skills Sector* recommending compulsory 30 hours per year CPD
2007	■ Mandatory assessments published for initial teaching qualifications ■ The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations introduced Qualified Teacher Status for the Learning and Skills Sector (QTSLSS) and a compulsory CPD requirement ■ Adult Learning Inspectorate merged with Ofsted
2009	■ IfL 5-year plan published; reports of dissatisfaction around requirement for membership of IfL ■ Government Report *Skills for Growth* indicated that IfL would need to become self-funding
2010	■ Conservative-led Coalition government confirmed requirement for IfL to become self-funding ■ IfL announce plan to introduce membership subscriptions to be paid by individuals

(*continued*)

Table 4.1 (continued)

2011	■ University and College Union (UCU) boycotts IfL over imposition of compulsory subscriptions
2012	■ Evaluation of teachers' qualifications in the further education sector ■ *Lingfield Review* of professionalism in the FE and Skills Sector recommended: – confirming withdrawal of funding from IfL – revoking mandatory qualifications and CPD to be replaced by discretionary advice to employers on qualifications and CPD – simplification of qualifications framework – setting up of Further Education Guild – an employer-led partnership for maintaining standards and professionalism
2013	■ Government announces funding support for (employer-led) Further Education Guild
2014	■ IfL ceases operation, passing its assets to The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) ■ ETF produces *Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training – England* ■ Society for Education and Training (SET) becomes the professional membership arm of the ETF, open to practitioners working in the post-16 education and training sector

Equipping Our Teachers for the Future held out to adult educators the promise of parity with school teaching, which would have been attractive to those in the post-compulsory sector subject to relatively poor terms and conditions of service:

> The reforms set out in this document will raise the standard of teacher training across the whole sector. Over time they will result in greater public esteem for teachers, their institutions and their sector; they will help achieve joint working with schools, leading to parity of status and professionalism. (DfES (Department for Education and Skills) 2004: 5)

The IfL was enthusiastic in its support of regulation as a means to professional status:

> Now, as in other professions, CPD is seen as a hallmark of the professional and, like most professional bodies, IfL requires evidence of the individual's commitment to CPD. (IfL 2009: 4)

However, from 2005 onwards regulation and inspection were tightened, while educators' faith in the realisation of professional status within post-compulsory education waned. A highly critical Ofsted report (Ofsted 2003) on standards of further education teacher training precipitated the end of FENTO and its replacement by another body, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), which was charged with monitoring qualifications across the whole post-compulsory sector, including ESOL, literacy, numeracy and community-based education. In another move, which was highly significant for adult education as a distinct field of practice, the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was abolished and Ofsted took on the inspectorial role for all educational provision, signalling an inspection regime which, with its focus on accredited outcomes to be achieved within prescribed timescales, was likely to be less than sympathetic to the flexible and open ended approaches favoured in community-based adult education.

As compulsion was introduced into professional registration, so the then Labour government signalled its intention to withdraw its subsidies from the IfL within 3 years (BIS 2009). This meant that the IfL, if it were to survive, would need to pass costs directly on to its membership. IfL members were already becoming increasingly critical of the performance of their professional organisation (Hunt 2011) and when the IfL introduced fees, members of the Universities and Colleges Union (which had supported the setting up of the IfL in the first place) voted to boycott the IfL. This move potentially brought adult educators in breach of the law stipulating registration with IfL as a condition of continued employment as a qualified teacher.

Matters came to a head in 2011. The recently elected Conservative-led Coalition Government appointed Lord Lingfield to review professionalism in the further education sector, to examine the regulations on qualifications and professional registration and to consider the functioning of the IfL (BIS 2012a, b). The Lingfield Committee's reports were followed by further government-commissioned reports which focused on qualifications for sector workers (BIS 2012c, d). The outcomes of all these activities were the revocation of the regulations on teacher qualifications, the confirmation of the withdrawal of funding to IfL and the proposal to simplify qualifications in the sector. The Lingfield report argued for a change in the debate: 'from professionalisation of FE to supporting and enhancing professionalism which we consider already exists…' (BIS 2012b: 6) suggesting that it 'should be a matter between employer

and employee'. This was in line with the new government's strategy of deregulating some aspects of the public sector; however, it did not free educators from regimes of inspection and performance management. And it has passed regulation back to employers, and not to educators themselves. Starved of funding and lacking membership support, the IfL ceased to exist in 2014, passing its assets to the Education and Training Foundation, an employer-led, government-funded organisation among whose aims are to 'support and enhance the quality, professionalism and efficiency of the education and training system'. The production of a statement of professional standards for teachers in the sector (ETF 2014), including adult educators, was one of its early tasks. In turn the ETF set up a self-funding membership organisation, the Society for Education and Training (SET). While SET presented itself as having taken on the legacy of the defunct IfL, it is essentially owned by management, rather than by its membership. And while its stated aims encompass promoting the professional status of workers in the post-compulsory sector, its activities are focused on qualified teacher status, continuing professional development and practitioner networking. And, significantly, there is little reference to adult education which takes place outside the remit of formal education and training providers – particularly in further education.

The Impact on Adult and Community Education

The UK government's own reports (BIS 2012c, d) attested to the challenges experienced in non-formal adult education, where adult educators' contracts and financial resources were frequently so constrained as to make compliance with an imposed professional qualifications framework unrealistic. These reports suggested a divide within adult and community-based education between 'compliant' organisations (which tended to be government-funded and therefore in the main, providers of accredited and vocationally oriented education for adults) and 'minimally compliant' organisations, which were unlikely to be funded by government and which continued to offer non-accredited non-vocational provision. One thing which was never clear from the limited evidence available on the qualifications of workers in English adult and community-based educator was how many adult educators actually held qualifications in their specialised subject area which were equivalent to, or higher than, the basic qualification required under the regulations imposed from 2001. While the removal in 2012 of the requirement for professional registration,

qualification and continuing professional development arguably took the pressure off adult educators, they have, since then, been rendered almost invisible in discussions around professional status. Parity with school teaching was not achieved for any in the post-compulsory sector, least of all for adult educators. More important for those concerned with pay and conditions rather than status, that there has been no improvement in the career prospects of adult and community educators; indeed their marginalisation has increased. But there has been a significant increase in the amount of regulation laid upon them (Groves 2012).

Professional Development and Adult and Community Education in Aotearoa New Zealand

In New Zealand the impetus to professionalise adult and community education has been more limited than in England and more focused on ACE as a distinct sub-sector. There are two possible reasons why the issue of professionalism has not impacted as strongly in Aotearoa New Zealand as it has in England. The first is that because of the historically voluntarist nature of much adult education, the number of full-time staff employed specifically in adult education work has been relatively small and scattered and as Tobias suggests,

> the vitality of the field of adult education was seen to rest on its voluntary character and on the fact that it was to a large extent based on the work of a diverse array of voluntary organisations as well as on the work of gifted amateurs out to change the world. (Tobias 1996a: 98)

From this perspective forms of professionalism associated with credentialisation and centralised monitoring regimes stand in opposition to transformative non-formal adult education. Second, from the late 1940s until 2011 the bulk of formally organised ACE provision was based in schools. It tended to be coordinated by paid staff who were school teachers, only a small portion of whose employment contracts were designated to organising educational activities for adults. They were therefore as likely to identify professionally with school teaching, as with adult and community education. And, as in England, the majority of adult education tutors and teachers (as opposed to organisers) have been employed part-time for only a few hours a week and qualified in their subject specialism rather than as teachers. The policy focus in recent years has therefore been on

professional development in the ACE sector rather than professionalisation in Goodson's (2003) sense of the word.

The election of a Labour Alliance government in 1999 signalled a benign but interventionist approach to professionalism and standards in ACE. A key moment for the sector was the publication of the government-commissioned report *Koia! Koia! Towards a Learning Society: The role of Adult and Community Education* (TEC 2001). *Koia! Koia!* acknowledged the importance of adult and community education in social, cultural, economic, community and individual development. However, it argued that the potential of ACE was underdeveloped and that the coordination of provision was patchy. It also suggested that the professional development of ACE practitioners – coordinators, organisers, tutors, managers and volunteers – had been given insufficient priority compared with other sectors of education. Capacity building, coordination and professional development were the key aims of a proposed strategy for the ACE sector. In order to address the professional development aims of this strategy, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which was responsible for funding all forms of post-compulsory education, set up a professional development working party which co-opted practitioners working in the sector to drive forward its plans. An *ACE Professional Development Strategy and Action Plan* was published in 2005 (TEC 2006). Its stated aim was

> to build ACE sector capacity through a well-focused and resourced approach to professional development.

One of the key assumptions of the TEC was that the ACE sector should drive its own professional development, working in the main through regional Adult and Community Education networks. These networks, which were set up by the TEC, were seen as the key to providing local coordination for ACE activity and funding under the TEC's oversight. In this sense professional development was both carrot (because it was to be funded by government) and stick (because it was predicated on expectations about regional coordination of the sector and the introduction of a more outcomes-based approach to ACE activity) (Bowl 2011). Professional development was to be geared to meeting government priorities; it was to be more about sector coordination and rationalisation than it was about individual professionalisation (Table 4.2).

The ACE Professional Development working party pursued the professional development strategy in the main by commissioning projects which

Table 4.2 Timeline: Professional development and adult and community education in New Zealand

2001	■ Publication of *Koia! Koia!: towards a learning society* focused on Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector capacity building and: 'A managed approach to training and professional development' in the sector. Recommendations: – identification of key skills for ACE practitioners; – review of training opportunities; – attention to biculturalism; – establishment of a Professional Development Working Group with membership from the sector and Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to develop 'sector-led' coordination of professional development.
2005	■ ACE Professional Development Strategy and Action Plan (2006–2010): – vision: success, performance and shared good practice across the sector through ACE professional development; – identification of required skills and competencies; – a 'communities of practice' approach to professional development through funding of regional ACE networks; – support for professional development 'champions'; – sector-led coordination and strategy monitoring.
2007	■ Report on ACE sector networks and professional development advocated: – a broad definition of professional development activities; – consistent funding for professional development activities and professional training; – paid support for part-time tutors to undertake professional development; – funding for a national tutor training scheme; – acknowledgement of informal professional development already taking place.
2008	■ ACE Aotearoa assumes responsibility from TEC for implementation of the Professional Development Strategy responsible for: – administering grants for professional development activities among ACE organisations; – sponsoring an annual hui/fono (conference) for Māori and Pasifika practitioners; – creating web-based opportunities for professional development; – distributing a Professional Development Resource Handbook for practitioners.
2009	■ Election of National Party-led coalition: large-scale budget cuts in ACE provision
2010	■ Evaluation of the ACE Professional Development Strategy noted: – impact of budget cuts and ACE network restructuring on plans for professional development; – lack of sector infrastructure; – lack of national impact of increased professional development activity.
2011–2016	■ ACE Aotearoa continues to administer government funds to support ACE organisations to address their professional development (PD) priorities.

consulted with a range of ACE organisations and individuals to identify the skills and competencies in the sector. It provided funds and support for professional development through the TEC regional networks and national conferences. It also commissioned a pilot scheme to develop a core group of regionally based professional development 'champions' who were experienced practitioners able to offer advice and support to ACE practitioners. Some of these schemes were limited both in their impact and in their duration. Underlying problems remained: lack of funding for ACE itself and a lack of 'buy in', from part-time, hard-pressed, poorly remunerated or unpaid adult educators, to what was still essentially a top-down professional development strategy (Bowl 2007; Synergia 2010).

In 2008 the funding and responsibility for implementing of the professional development strategy were handed over to the sector's national organisation ACE Aotearoa which continued, under TEC scrutiny, to pursue the professional development strategy. However, the rightward-leaning coalition government elected in 2009 imposed severe budget cuts to the ACE sector and revised its priorities towards supporting a much narrower range of adult education activity (TEC 2010b). Low-level funding for regional and national professional development events has continued through to 2016. ACE Aotearoa continued too to explore the feasibility of establishing professional standards for the sector as a whole (Prebble 2012). ACE Aotearoa has also prioritised the collection of 'quantifiable data on ACE learner outcomes' (ACE Aotearoa 2012:3) to persuade government of the value of adult and community education – an indication of the extent to which concerns about professional development have been overtaken by concerns about prescribing, imposing and certifying professional standards and monitoring learner outcomes. Meanwhile, the idea of a nationally coordinated ACE sector with increased capacity and improved funding is far from being realised as the number of schools offering ACE activities has fallen back, and government subsidised adult education has declined across the board.

Summary: Professionalism: Two Versions – One Outcome?

In different ways adult educators in England and New Zealand have been co-opted into forms of governmental professionalism. In New Zealand, particularly in the early days of the Labour Coalition, professional development policy had a softer edge. It encouraged, consulted

Table 4.3 Two government approaches to professionalism

Professionalising processes	*England*	*New Zealand*
Discourse	Professionalisation	Professional development
Mode of introduction	Imposed	Consultative
Focus	Individual performance	Sector coordination
Level of control	Compulsory registration/CPD (condition of employment)	Mandatory participation (condition of funding)
Mediation	Professional association – Institute for Learning: registering body	Sector national organisation – ACE Aotearoa: coordination and distribution of funds

and offered incentives. It was focused on encouraging organisations to participate in processes designed to promote greater coordination across a fragmented sector. It also sought to involve practitioners in defining and organising professional development to meet their own needs. And while ACE organisations' participation in regional networks and their professional development activities was originally stipulated as a condition of receiving government funding, it was a stipulation which was not enforced: indeed, it was not well enough defined to be enforced and not well enough monitored to be enforceable. However, funding cutbacks have so heavily impacted on the sector as to render the hoped-for regional coordination at best patchy, and at worst non-existent. In England, policy had a much harder edge and was more clearly focused on controlling individual performance by imposing tightly prescribed standards and qualification frameworks. But the current government's keenness to 'deregulate' large parts of the public sector has meant that the dictates of ideology and policies of financial stringency have brought an end to direct government intervention in the professionalising project (Table 4.3).

In both countries, government sought to use mediating agencies to implement policies – giving the appearance of a hands-off approach while ultimately in control. In both countries too, changes of government have precipitated policy changes which have derailed professionalising strategies. However, the centralising impetus to specify, control and measure the outcomes of adult education has remained strong, while the discourse of professionalisation has done little to improve the status, conditions or pay of adult educators, as Chapter 6 will demonstrate.