Chapter 4
Beyond Cream, Off-White, and Beige: Finding Slippages in Accreditation for Innovation in Professional Experience

Jennifer Clifton and Kathy Jordan

Abstract Developed in 2011 by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), the Accreditation Standards and Procedures outline the accreditation requirements for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs. The professional experience features prominently within these requirements, specifically mandating conditions around assessment, the number of days of professional experience, and using practising teachers in program design and supervision arrangements. While introducing these standards and procedures raised concerns about standardisation within professional experience, it also provided a climate for opportunities. This chapter discusses how teacher educators found slippages in, between, and within accreditation requirements to innovate through the design of the Coaching Approach to Professional Experience (CAPE) Model. This chapter details how regulation requirements, supported by Third Space theory, provided the impetus to question long-held approaches to professional experience, elevated the priority of professional experience and partnerships, and provided scope for pre-service teacher agency.

Keywords Accreditation teacher education · Professional experience · Third space

4.1 Introduction

Almost a decade ago, the lead author sat in a cross-institutional meeting where the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) outlined the new accreditation requirements for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers. The accreditation requirements first developed in 2011 presented a significant shift in accountability and governance within ITE. During the meeting, a colleague noted

J. Clifton (✉)
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: jen.clifton@qut.edu.au

K. Jordan
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
e-mail: kathy.jordan@rmit.edu.au

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2022

T. Bourke et al. (eds.), *Reconstructing the Work of Teacher Educators*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-2904-5_4

that all 'ITE programs would look like Richie Benaud suits—cream, bone, white, off-white, and beige' given the prescriptive nature of the requirements. While there was laughter at the Twelfth Man reference about an Australian sporting commentator's outfit, there was then an uncomfortable silence in the room with the realisation of this possibility, especially in the space of professional experience. There was a concern around the possibility that varied, and alternate approaches to professional experience could be jeopardised.

Accreditation is commonly referred to as a quality assurance process, in which standards are met, and the program is then accredited by the appropriate agency (Bourke, 2019; Bourke et al., 2016). National accreditation of ITE emerged as one of the 12 recommendations made by the *Top of the Class* report (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education & Vocational Training, 2007) following its review of teacher education (Bourke, 2019). Recommendation three argued that national accreditation would provide 'greater consistency and rigour, facilitate the portability of teaching qualifications and significantly reduce the duplication of effort' (p. xxiii). This recommendation was enacted, with Teaching Australia established to lead a nationally consistent program accreditation system. In 2009, Teaching Australia became the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) (Bahr & Mellor, 2016). At the time of this publication, AITSL is a public company with the Federal Minister for Education as its only member. Its objective is to deliver on the government reform agenda (Fitzgerald & Knipe, 2016).

Within academic literature and public debate, there are arguments in favour and against national accreditation. Some researchers have argued that accreditation has the potential to enable transparency and comparability across providers providing opportunities for self-analysis, innovative practice, and reform (Bourke, 2019). Fertig (2007), writing about international schools' accreditation, suggests that accreditation may lead to greater self-examination and growth in critical reflective practice, collaboration, and sharing of experience. Others argue on the contrary that accreditation can be a top-down process, it focuses on bureaucratic obligations and compliance to standards rather than excellence, and is not cost-effective nor value-adding (Bourke, 2019). Collins (2015) further suggests that compliance with standards is often assumed to result in improvement. As such, 'accreditation becomes process dominated and tending towards what can be documented as high quality rather than quality itself' (Collins, 2015, p. 142).

This chapter does not seek to argue the pros and cons of the national accreditation of ITE, but rather to explore how the accreditation process stimulated a rethink in the way in which professional experience was conceptualised at RMIT University. Professional experience (also called field experience, placement, and practicum) is the part of an ITE program where pre-service teachers practice their teaching under the guidance and support of a practising teacher. At RMIT University, the professional experience was designed like other universities, with blocks of time allocated across the semester and the placement of pre-service teachers based on administrative and geographic convenience.

Despite fears that professional experience programs would lose distinctiveness and would become like Benaud's suits, we, as leaders and teacher educators within

the ITE program, soon realised that the accreditation process could provide us with the impetus, permission, and the power to rethink our approach. This chapter reports on efforts to design and implement an alternate professional experience model, one based around shared responsibility, co-construction and co-delivery, collaborative approaches to supervising teacher/mentor professional development, and the inclusion of pre-service teacher goals. This chapter outlines the accreditation landscape and professional experience specifically by discussing three themes: connecting theory and practice in ITE programs, partnerships between providers and schools, and the scope of professional experience accreditation in Australia. Supporting the innovations made in the name of accreditation was the theoretical lens of the Third Space theory (Klein et al., 2013; Soja, 1996; Zeichner, 2010). This theory provided a useful conceptual lens to frame pre-service teacher agency and to work across/within the spaces of higher education and schools. This chapter then provides an illustrative example of how accreditation was the motivation for innovation within the professional experience.

4.2 National Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs

National accreditation was agreed to by states and territories in 2011, implemented in 2013, and updated in 2015 and again in 2018. Before 2010, some states, namely New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, had introduced professional teaching standards (Bourke, 2019). Currently, the state and territory regulatory authorities accredit programs (for example, the Victorian Institute of Teaching in Victoria) using the nationally agreed standards and procedures (AITSL, 2019). The accreditation process has two stages. Stage 1 applies to new programs and has a focus on developing a plan for demonstrating impact. Stage 2 applies to existing programs, in which ITE providers demonstrate program impact. Accreditation has three integrated elements: the Graduate Teacher Standards (that describe the knowledge, skills, and attributes of graduating teachers), program standards that ensure these standards can be achieved, and national accreditation processes (AITSL, 2019; Bourke, 2019; Bourke et al., 2016).

In 2014, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) was formed to provide further advice on 'how teacher education programmes could be improved to better prepare new teachers with the practical skills needed for the classroom' (TEMAG, 2014, p. 3). The TEMAG final report, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, released later that year, recommended reform in six key areas, which included professional experience.

Professional experience is highly valued by policymakers, principals, teachers, and researchers alike, with some arguing that it is the most important or most useful component in programs (Zeichner, 2010). The *Top of the Class* report (2007) contended that practicum is 'a critically important part of teacher education courses'

(p. xxv). These views were echoed in the recent TEMAG review (2014), which commented that 'professional experience placements are crucial to the development of new teachers' (p. 15).

Yet the professional experience is also the subject of considerable criticism. The *Top of the Class* report (2007) commented that:

> The problems with practicum have been outlined in nearly every report addressing Teacher Education in the last decade. The fact that these problems have still drawn so much attention to this inquiry indicates the need for major reform in this area. (p. 73)

One of the most common criticisms is that professional experience is not well connected to coursework (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education & Vocational Training, 2007; TEMAG, 2014). This lack of connection is seen as both a literal and a figurative one. Literal in the sense that programs have two separate components (a theoretical component at the university and a practical component in schools) and figuratively, in the sense that university-based learning and school-based learning are pitted as binaries (Forgasz et al., 2018). The report by TEMAG (2014) argued that 'integrated delivery of initial teacher education' (p. vii) was the most significant action to be pursued in improving teacher education. There is widespread agreement in the literature that this separation of theory and practice is highly problematic, calling for greater connection commonplace (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Zeichner, 2010).

Often school–university partnerships between providers and schools are pitched as the means to resolve the perceived disconnect (White et al., 2018). The *Top of the Class* report (2007) argues that many of the issues relating to professional experience stemmed from a lack of shared responsibility between providers, schools, and systems and called for 'the establishment of strong authentic partnerships between all parties' (p. 75). The TEMAG (2014) report similarly argued that 'structured and mutually beneficial partnerships' (TEMAG, 2014, p. 10) were vital to ensuring the connection of theory and practice.

Both the *Top of the Class* (2007) and TEMAG (2014) reports have had a significant influence on the shape of the national accreditation of ITE in Australia. The *Top of the Class* report (2007) supported the continued development of national accreditation, made suggestions regarding improving the professional experience, and championed partnerships to connect theory and practice better and improve the quality of programs. The TEMAG report (2014) led to further reforms in professional experience, including mandating formal written partnerships and greater emphasis on assessment, including clarity in expectations and roles, provision of tools and guidelines, and formal assessment of the Graduate Teacher Standards.

National accreditation requirements for professional experience are documented in Program Standard 5 (AITSL, 2019). There are five elements: (1) partnership arrangements; (2) professional experience components (covering the number of placement days, settings, and supervision requirements); (3) communication strategies between stakeholders; (4) assessment of professional experience (support for assessment, what is to be assessed, and at-risk processes); and (5) professional learning opportunities for supervising teachers and ensuring ITE staff have recent

teaching experience. There have been some shifts in this standard from the initial 2011 documentation, including a move from 'partnerships' to 'professional experience', an added emphasis on the formal written nature of partnership agreements, and a more rigorous approach to the assessment of pre-service teacher performance against the Graduate Teacher Standards (AITSL, 2019).

Despite the potential constraints that accreditation requirements could pose in addressing the issues identified in these reports, academics have agency in determining the design, development, and delivery of programs. Drawing on Archer's (2003) concept of social realism, those designing professional experience programs can strategically discover ways around the issue and define a second-best outcome by being 'deliberate about how to get the most out of propitious circumstances' or by adopting 'a more ambitious goal' (p. 6). Thus, according to Archer's (2003) argument, there are slippages or spaces to manoeuvre and create innovations, if done strategically and deliberately, even within regulatory mandates. Thus, we adopted the Third Space theory drawing from the work of Moje et al. (2004) to set a new, more ambitious goal for professional experience, bridge or navigate across these two spaces of learning of university and school, and create a newly transformed space (Taylor et al., 2014; Zeichner, 2010). This new model became known as the Coaching Approach to Professional Experience (CAPE) model.

4.3 The Innovation: The Coaching Approach to Professional Experience Model

When AITSL was developing the standards and procedures for national accreditation of ITE programs, the School of Education at RMIT University was concluding its state accreditation cycle and was beginning to think about re-developing its suite of programs. At this time, the professional experience was structured in traditional block placements, and there were a few formal partnership arrangements with schools. There were no formal program level links between coursework and placement, little interest in placement by teacher education staff, and a highly casualised workforce. To meet the national standards and procedures, we had to rethink the design and delivery of professional experience programs in the Bachelor of Education Program.

4.3.1 The Context

The Bachelor of Education program is one of the initial teacher education programs delivered within the School of Education and covers several streams (Primary, Disability Studies, and Early Childhood Education). The program has around 800 pre-service teachers across the four-year degree. A systematic focus on professional experience was developed for each year level, and this informed the other

courses studied synchronously. The CAPE model was delivered in the second year of the Bachelor of Education and embedded in the course *Professional Experience: Connected Classrooms,* which focused on lesson sequencing and ICT in practice. The CAPE model was designed to foster partnerships between schools, universities, and government and develop pre-service teacher skills and knowledge through goal-based coaching cycles. The course was delivered to 200–250 pre-service teachers for each of the five years of the program accreditation cycle, beginning in 2014.

The teaching and learning aspect of this course began at the university, where over several weeks, pre-service teachers audited their current knowledge and skills against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Based on these audits, they developed individual goals, which shaped their practicum experience. During their 20-day placement, pre-service teachers were placed in one of 15 partnership schools in small groups (6–18 pre-service teachers). School-based coaches were primarily practising teachers in these partnership schools. They were released from their regular teaching duties to facilitate the on-site workshops and support pre-service teachers' goal development. Teacher mentors, who hosted pre-service teachers in their classrooms, were also encouraged to set a mentoring goal. The school-based coach, in turn, supported teacher mentors by providing skills and strategies to address this mentoring goal.

For RMIT University, this was a significant departure from the previous models of professional experience, which was primarily based on factors such as the geographic location of pre-service teachers, administrative convenience, and availability of teacher mentors. This new model, to align with accreditation requirements and our Third Space theory principles, had differences, as seen in Table 4.1.

4.4 Third Space Theory

Third Space theory is used to explore and understand the spaces 'in between' two or more discourses, conceptualisations, or binaries (Bhabha, 1994). Soja (1996) explains this through a triad where Firstspace refers to material spaces, whereas Secondspace encompasses mental spaces (Danaher et al., 2003). Thirdspace then becomes a space where 'everything comes together' (Soja, 1996, p. 56) by bringing together Firstspace and Secondspace, but also by extending beyond these spaces to intermesh the binaries that characterise the spaces. Third Space theory is used as a methodology in a variety of disciplines and for different purposes. Within educational contexts, Moje et al. (2004) used the Third Space theory to examine the in-between everyday literacies (home, community, and peer group) with the literacies used within a schooling context. Their influential paper summarised the three main ways that theorists have conceptualised Third Space: as a bridge; navigational space; and a transformative space of cultural, social, and epistemological change.

Third Space theory provides a framework to challenge binaries that have typically populated teacher education, including university/school, theory/practice, and teacher educator/school-based practitioner (see, for example, Gaffey & Dobbins,

Table 4.1 Differences between traditional professional experience model and cape model

Previous approach to professional experience	CAPE model
• Compartmentalised (theory done at university; practice done in schools)	• A collaborative approach to the development of core-curriculum content • The curriculum is taught 'on-site' with authentic observations and just-in-time reflection support
• A tendency for 'one size fits all' design, irrespective of school context	• Learning experiences customised to suit the specific needs/particularities of the school and the pre-service teacher by the school-based coach
• Teacher mentor allocation is ad hoc • Teacher mentors have little knowledge of the curriculum/learning set by the university	• Teacher mentors participate in professional learning conversations with the school-based coach and set their mentoring goals • Provides open access to core-curriculum, mentors can connect with the learning intentions in the curriculum • Strategic matching of pre-service teacher goals with teacher mentor skills and knowledge
• Current partnerships are an administrative arrangement • University site 'directs' school role	• Collaborative exchange is intrinsic to curriculum design • Shared responsibility is inherent

1996; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Zeichner, 2010). Further, this theory encourages the integration of these binaries in new ways so that 'an either/or perspective is transformed into a both/also point of view' (Zeichner, 2010, p. 92). Zeichner (2010) suggests that creating a hybrid or Third Space has the potential to bridge the boundaries between these two spaces. He explores various examples, such as bringing teachers into university courses; bringing representations of teacher practice into coursework, including mediated instruction where part of a university course is taught on-site in schools; or having hybrid educators where a course is taught both at the university and on-site; and/or incorporating knowledge from communities. In such spaces, responsibility for teacher education could be shared, as boundaries between practising and university faculty are questioned. Alternative ways of working and learning would give rise to new models, approaches, roles, and positions which would merge and/or reimagine what is considered academic and practitioner knowledge.

Zeichner's argument (2010, p. 89) is that the concept of hybridity enables greater connection:

> This work in creating hybrid spaces in teacher education where academic and practitioner knowledge and knowledge that exists in communities come together in new less hierarchical ways in the service of teaching learning represents a paradigm shift in the epistemology of teacher education programs.

Similarly, Klein et al. (2013) argue that teacher education guided by the Third Space theory attempts to 'address the major criticisms of teacher education, from the theory practice divide, to the unequal status of practitioner and academic knowledge as well

as the teacher and learner knowledge, and the nature of school–university partnerships' (p. 51). Given the potential of the Third Space theory, it influenced how we reconceptualised the accreditation requirements in three key areas: partnerships between schools and universities; the role of practising teachers within the teaching, learning, and professional experience processes; and providing a space for student agency in a highly regulated ITE curriculum.

4.5 Beyond Cream: Principles for National Accreditation: 6—Partnerships

As outlined in Principle 6 of the national standards and procedures, 'accreditation is built around partnerships involving shared responsibilities and obligations among initial teacher education providers, education settings, teachers, employers, and Authorities' (AITSL, 2016, p. 5). Partnerships between providers and schools and industry have long been advocated as necessary to improve the quality of ITE programs (Green et al., 2019) and 'to resolve the issue of the perceived theory/practice divide that has long plagued teacher education' (White et al., 2018, p. 17). For over twenty years, Darling-Hammond (2010) in the United States has argued that one of the critical features of effective teacher education programs is strong school–university partnerships. She advocates an overhaul of university–school relationships, saying that teacher educators must create partnerships with schools, confront and dismantle regularities that prevent investments in strong academic and clinical training, and behave as members of a profession (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Similarly, the *Top of the Class* report (2007) argued that many of the issues relating to professional experience stemmed from a lack of shared responsibility between providers, schools, and systems. It advocated for the encouragement and support of partnerships by the government as a means of achieving high-quality ITE programs, specifically via the establishment of a National Teacher Education Partnership Fund to oversee joint submissions to improve program quality. As it added:

> Over time, a partnership approach to teacher education, perhaps based initially around practicum but ultimately encompassing all aspects and all stages of teacher education, will transform the way in which teachers are prepared and supported in this country. (p. 80)

Some researchers have argued that the Australian policy landscape around school–university partnerships has shifted in recent times. White et al. (2018) commented that 'most recently the Australian Government has moved from incentivising partnerships to now mandating them through the initial teacher education accreditation process' (White et al., 2018, p. 18). The evaluation of school–university partnerships conducted by AITSL as part of its review of the roll-out of TEMAG reforms commented that:

> While the benefits of strong school–university partnerships underpinning high-quality teacher education have been evident for over a decade through a range of innovative initiatives by ITE providers and education jurisdictions, TEMAG reforms have lifted partnerships to a pivotal role in all ITE. (AITSL, 2018*, p. 4)*

The TEMAG (2014) report argued strongly in support of school–university partnerships. Throughout the report, advantages to school–university partnerships are documented: greater connection, supporting employment preparation, improving research, and strengthening the currency of teaching and learning within ITE. It also outlines the impact of partnerships for professional experience, such as the potential to develop teacher mentor skills and the increased role that schools will play in selecting and supporting pre-service teachers and improving the availability and quality of placements.

Developing school–university partnerships is the cornerstone of the CAPE model. The partnership approach was, in part, prompted by the accreditation requirement that ITE providers show evidence of formal partnerships. However, in the CAPE model design, we focused upon the notion of 'shared responsibility' promoted in accreditation documents (AITSL, 2016, p. 5). While not explicitly defined, shared responsibility was framed around formal partnerships, agreed in writing to facilitate ITE programs and elements such as professional experience. In AITSL's *TEMAG Evaluation: School–University Partnerships* report, the following criteria were used to determine quality partnerships: (1) having a shared vision; (2) a partnership agreement; (3) an integrated professional experience model (which outlines the structure, timing, mentoring, staffing, and cost); (4) supports for pre-service teacher and mentor teacher; (5) communication and sustainable relationships; and (6) use of data to assess improvement in ITE outcomes (AITSL, 2018).

The CAPE model certainly met these criteria. For example, over a series of think tank days, the vision, courseware, and assessment were developed between university teacher educators, teachers, school leaders, and industry (curriculum authorities and the Department of Education). The roles and responsibilities of those involved, particulars of the partnership (cost and staffing), and memorandum of understanding were documented on a shared website. Relationships were built and sustained by developing professional learning opportunities within the partnership. School-Based Coaches came together to share practices and celebrate key learning. School-Based Coaches developed a mentoring package to support teacher mentors in schools. A considered, systematic system of staff meetings, principal breakfasts, and school visits was also organised to share the model. The university–school–industry relationship went beyond just the four weeks of professional experience. Indeed, many School-Based Coaches became teaching staff at the university and went on to further study. Teacher educators were invited to serve on school boards, attend principal meetings, and deliver professional development and became research partners with schools.

Thus, while this model met many of the criteria of shared responsibility for school–university partnership outlined by AITSL, more important for us was the framing of these partnerships in less hierarchical ways and developing conditions of trust and reciprocity through a Third Space theoretical lens (Kruger et al., 2009). As discussed

in the literature review, universities/ITE academics have been seen as the qualified experts to teach the theory, and schools are seen as being responsible for the development and teaching of the practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In the CAPE model, the aim was to better connect theory and practice and question the binaries in line with Third Space theory. Where possible, power within the partnership was shared, and what counts as expert knowledge would be challenged, and expertise distributed among its diverse participants, including pre-service teachers. We strategically and deliberately used components of the accreditation requirements to reenvisage agency and support for pre-service teachers while on placement.

4.6 Beyond Off-White: Program Standard 5.5

The *Top of the Class* report (2007) put forward various suggestions to improve the theory/practice divide, including academics needing to be 'more in touch with developments in schools and the classroom' (p. 77). Possible ways to achieve this included employing practising teachers as researchers and teachers, developing joint appointments, involving teachers in 'the design of the curriculum around practicum' (p. 78), as well as the provision of professional learning for staff and ongoing support for teacher mentors. This notion of practising teachers being more involved in the professional experience is evident in the current accreditation document, Program Standard 5.5, which outlines that ITE providers:

> … support the delivery of professional experience in partner schools/sites, including by identification and provision of professional learning opportunities for supervising teachers and communication from, and access to, designated initial teacher education provider staff who, preferably, have current or recent experience in teaching. (AITSL, 2016, *p. 42)*

Aligned with the principle of distributed power, School-Based Coaches were central to the CAPE model. The coach was a newly developed role to connect university and school-based learning and was designed to be undertaken by a practising teacher at the partner school. The literature on professional experience in ITE has extensively reported on the traditional roles of those in the triad of the pre-service teacher, teacher mentor, and university liaison/mentor (see, for example, Gaffey & Dobbins, 1996; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Zeichner, 2010). More recently, new roles that enable 'boundary crossing' between the school and university, sometimes referred to as boundary spanners (Burns & Baker, 2016; Weerts & Sandmann, 2010), boundary crossers (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011), or hybrid teacher educators (Elsden-Clifton & Jordan, 2019; Martin et al., 2011) have been proposed. The School-Based Coach in the CAPE model would be considered a hybrid role within this field of literature.

The professional experience course associated with the CAPE model was designed to be taught on-site both at the university campus and in schools, with the coach's role becoming critical as the boundary crosser between these sites of learning. The coach for each partnership school was chosen by the school leadership and based on a strong

mentoring or coaching skillset. This practising teacher was released from their regular teaching duties to perform this role for the placement duration (4 weeks). Schools were reimbursed via the university and industry funding to enable this release. The following formula was used to determine the rate of release: for every three pre-service teachers, the School-Based Coach was released from teaching for one day a week of the placement to coach the pre-service teacher and support the teacher mentor. For example, if the school had one coach and 15 pre-service teachers, the coach was released every day of the four weeks. If the school had six pre-service teachers and one coach, the coach was released for two days per week for the four weeks of placement. This flexibility with funding meant that a variety of sized schools could be involved in the partnership.

The role of the School-Based Coach was threefold. First, the coach supported and built the teaching capacity of pre-service teachers. The coach's role involved observing them teach, providing them with feedback, and modelling and facilitating professional learning conversations with them and teacher mentors. Second, they were vital in teaching the course *Professional Experience: Connected Classrooms.* On-site, they conducted workshops that developed pre-service teachers' practical knowledge and skills, supported the refinement of their goals based on their learners and school context, and assessed their performance. School-Based Coaches could localise the course's jointly constructed content to suit the specific school context and pre-service teacher needs.

Third, the School-Based Coach supported and worked directly with teacher mentors. When developing the CAPE model in line with Third Space theory, the aim was to disrupt binaries that often position the university as the expert (Elsden-Clifton & Jordan, 2016). Therefore, we did not want to design a professional learning program that was 'done to' teachers, nor did we want a program based on global or non-specific generic skills about mentoring during professional experience. Instead, in the CAPE model, teacher mentors were encouraged to set a goal around mentoring (for example, giving feedback, having difficult conversations, and team teaching). The School-Based Coach provided targeted professional learning based on the goals they had set. This professional learning could take multiple forms, including three-way supervision meetings, modelling and practising the skill, and feedback on their performance as teacher mentors. Rather than a one-off professional learning program each year, teacher mentors could individualise their goals and be responsive to the needs that arose with different pre-service teachers specific to that mentoring experience. Many teacher mentors hosted a pre-service teacher each year of the CAPE model, which meant the professional development they receive could develop and change each iteration they were involved.

Access to funding mechanisms was critical to this model. To be successful, it cost approximately $85,000/year to release School-Based Coaches and develop professional learning in addition to the payment for the supervision of the pre-service teachers. Therefore, additional financial support was provided by the State of Victoria, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, through the Teaching Academy of Professional Practice (TAPP) funding. The TAPP initiative aimed to 'establish leading practice in providing quality pre-service teacher

education, continuing professional learning and research opportunity' (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2013, p. 1). As this funding targeted the professional learning needs of teacher mentors and pre-service teachers' readiness for the classroom, we received $250,000 to support the CAPE model's implementation and evaluation from 2015 to 2018. The explicit and robust link to accreditation in the funding proposal certainly increased the financial and leadership support for the CAPE model.

4.7 Beyond Beige: Australian Professional Standards for Teachers—Standard 6

In attempting to achieve shared responsibility and distributed expertise in professional experience, it was important to also extend to pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers in professional experience are often bound by binaries that place them in limiting positions such as teacher/student, active/passive, expert/notice, and student/learner. They neither 'belong' to the school, nor are they 'at' university. Thus, they are in between these two spaces. Given their positioning in the binaries and spaces, pre-service teachers often have very little agency. The university often determines what key concepts and knowledge they learn, and there is limited scope for individualisation of this curriculum. However, the CAPE model was based on goals and supporting pre-service teachers to achieve their goals through a coaching framework.

Setting goals linked to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers is part of the performance and development culture at the schools, and it guided professional learning as outlined by AITSL (2011, p. 3):

> Teacher standards also inform the development of professional learning goals, provide a framework by which teachers can judge the success of their learning and assist self-reflection and self-assessment. Teachers can use the Standards to recognise their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements.

The self-reflection and self-assessment cycle is reflected in *Professional Standard 6—Engage in Professional Learning,* in which pre-service teachers identify 'their own learning needs and analyse, evaluate and expand their professional learning both collegially and individually' (AITSL, 2011, p. 5). Specifically, this relates to focus area *6.1: Identify and Plan Professional Learning Needs,* which requires pre-service teachers to demonstrate they can identify professional learning needs. This is also evident in focus area *6.3: Engage with Colleagues and Improve Practice,* which asks that pre-service teachers demonstrate how they 'seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices' (AITSL, 2011, p. 20).

As accreditation requires evidence of where these standards are taught and assessed, setting and meeting goals became the basis of the CAPE model and a feature of the course. Goal-based learning (Conzemius & O'Neill, 2006) has a long history in education and focuses on valuing learners' individual needs. In the course

Professional Experience: Connected Classrooms, pre-service teachers audited their past performance on practicum and their current knowledge and expected performance levels based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Pre-service teachers then developed four STEP goals (one goal related to **s**tudent, **t**eacher, **e**learning, and **p**lanning). Accompanying their goals, pre-service teachers submitted 500–650 words which outlined a justification for their goals and the strategies required to enact their goals.

On professional experience, the pre-service teachers enacted their goals in practice. During this time, they were supported by a school-based coach who coached them on reviewing and modifying their goals based on the specific school and classroom context. Further, in these four weeks, the coach led pre-service teachers through a weekly observation and feedback cycle and guided individual and group coaching sessions where goals were refined or revisited. The goal-setting process also allowed some strategic matching of teacher mentors with pre-service teachers based on who could best support pre-service teachers by the school leadership and school-based coach.

Often the curriculum within higher education is set by the university, is strongly influenced by accrediting bodies, and reinforces the teacher/student binary. However, this course was framed by the pre-service teachers' goals, based upon their current knowledge, skills against national standards, and identified professional learning needs. The pre-service teacher's goals shaped their assessment, learning, and which teacher mentor they were placed with. Pre-service teachers had a higher degree of agency in terms of playing an active role in directing their learning on professional experience and making a difference in their learning and development (Manyukhina & Wyse, 2019). This learning and teaching approach encouraged them to engage with curriculum and learning that had personal relevance that linked meaningfully to their previous experiences, interests, and their own values and beliefs about teaching, education, and young people (Manyukhina & Wyse, 2019).

4.8 Implications

> It is our deliberations that determine what we will make of the constraints and enablements we confront, what opportunity costs we are prepared to pay, and whether we consider it worthwhile joining others in the organized pursuit of change or the collective defence of the status quo. (Archer, 2003*, p. 52)*

Accreditation within the Australian context has undoubtedly changed ITE in terms of structure, emphasis, and assessment. It has forced a rethink of our programs' content, scope, and sequence across our ITE programs. Having been key members of the accreditation process, we are aware that at times interesting teaching and learning experiences disappeared in the name of accreditation when it 'didn't meet an APST'. Still, the regulatory process also gave rise to innovations and new approaches within the constraints and enablements of accreditation. This chapter outlined how we acted

strategically to find opportunities within the costs we were prepared to pay, to join the organised pursuit of accreditation (Archer, 2003). Accreditation encouraged us to think about achieving its core ideas and finding possibilities for a more ambitious goal. However, accreditation alone was not enough to achieve these outcomes; it also required a theoretical underpinning. Third Space theory provided this theoretical premise as it can reconceptualise the connection between universities and schools by disrupting binaries and encouraging the continual negotiation and reinterpretation of identities (Bhabha, 1994). Through reconceptualising the spaces of, and between, schools and universities, Third Space theory encouraged us to think in new ways about partnerships, shared knowledge, and ways of working, teaching, and learning.

As this chapter has outlined, the CAPE model blurred and questioned binaries and hierarchies that have traditionally shaped universities and schools generally and professional experience specifically. For example, the CAPE model fostered co-design and co-delivery of courses to better connect theory and practice. This model created hybrid roles such as the School-Based Coach, which challenged traditional positions and distributed expertise. It also provided spaces for pre-service teacher agency in their learning and development.

This chapter began by mapping the field of professional experience within the accreditation landscape. It then discussed how accreditation provided the impetus for innovation in three key areas: school–university partnerships based on shared responsibility for the preparation of pre-service teachers; greater involvement of practising teachers in the design and teaching of ITE; and an approach to professional experience that allowed pre-service teachers to develop their own goals-based approach to the practicum.

Accreditation in ITE can be more than just compliance, a meeting of standards, and accountability. In this instance, when the accreditation process was underpinned by the Third Space theory, it led to a much more ambitious goal, new opportunities, and possibilities. It provided the basis to challenge long-held views of professional experience and led to the discussion and enactment of alternative practicum models. The need to meet accreditation requirements also resulted in some fundamental changes in this field, including robust discussion around what counts as professional experience, who should teach it, and the aims of partnerships. The influence of accreditation raised the profile and authority of professional experience, which resulted in philosophical and fiscal support from leadership and industry. Indeed, the process allowed us to leverage off accreditation to seek funding for initiatives and innovations that may not have been forthcoming without these regulatory mandates. It also legitimised many of the aspirations of professional experience teacher educators, including advocating for the pivotal role of partnership and professional experience in the overall program design, linking theory and practice, and evaluating impact. For our university, the result of accreditation was the development of different and new models and approaches to placement to meet the requirements of the regulation, not the initially feared uniform, beige, or standardised approach to professional experience.

References

Akkerman, S. F., & Bakker, A. (2011). Boundary crossing and boundary objects. *Review of Educational Research, 81*(2), 132–169.

Archer, M. (2003). *Structure, agency and the internal conversation.* Cambridge University Press.

Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2011). *Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia.* AITSL.

Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2016). *Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia.* AITSL.

Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2018). *TEMAG evaluation: School–university partnerships.* Prepared for the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership by PTR Consulting Pty Ltd. AITSL.

Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2019). *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia.* AITSL.

Bahr, N., & Mellor, S. (2016). *Building quality in teaching and teacher education.* Australian Education Review No. 61. Australian Council for Educational Research.

Bhabha, H. (1994). *The location of culture.* Routledge.

Bourke, T. (2019). The changing face of accreditation for initial teacher education programmes in Australia. In A. Gutierrez, J. Fox, & C. Alexander (Eds.), *Professionalism and teacher education: Voices from policy and practice* (pp. 27–47). Springer.

Bourke, T., Ryan, M., & Lloyd, M. (2016). The discursive positioning of graduating teachers in accreditation of teacher education programs. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 53*, 1–9.

Burns, R. W., & Baker, W. (2016). The boundary spanner in professional development schools: In search of common nomenclature. *School-University Partnerships, 9*(2), 28–39.

Collins, I. (2015). Using international accreditation in higher education to effect changes in organisational culture: A case study from a Turkish university. *Journal of Research in International Education, 14*(2), 141–154.

Conzemius, A., & O'Neill, J. (2006). *The power of SMART goals: Goals to improve student learning.* Solution Tree Press.

Danaher, P. A., Danaher, G. R., & Moriarty, B. J. (2003). Space invaders and pedagogical innovators: Regional educational understandings from Australian occupational travellers. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 18*(3), 164–169.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 57*(3), 300–314.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Constructing 21st century teacher education. In H. Valerie & C. W. Lewis (Eds.), *Transforming teacher education: What went wrong with teacher training, and how we can fix it* (pp. 223–248). Stylus Publishing.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). (2013). *From new directions to action: World class teaching and school leadership.* http://ncee.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Vic-non-AV-6-DEECD-2013-From-New-Directions-to-Action.pdf

Elsden-Clifton, J., & Jordan, K. (2016). Reframing professional experience: Adopting a distributed open collaborative course framework to facilitate third spaces. In A. Bertram & T. Barkatsas (Eds.), *Global learning in the 21st century* (pp. 57–70). Sense.

Elsden-Clifton, J., & Jordan, K. (2019). Who is the hybrid teacher educator? Understanding professional identity in school–university partnership. In A. Gutierrez, J. Fox, & C. Alexander (Eds.), *Professionalism and teacher education: Voices from policy and practice* (pp. 71–91). Springer.

Fertig, M. (2007). International school accreditation: Between a rock and a hard place? *Journal of Research in International Education, 6*(3), 333–348.

Fitzgerald, T., & Knipe, S. (2016). Policy reform: Testing times for teacher education in Australia. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 48*(4), 358–369. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2016.1210588

Forgasz, R., Heck, D., Williams, J., Ambrosetti, A., & Willis, L.-D. (2018). Theorising the third space of professional experience partnerships. In J. Kriewaldt, A. Ambrosetti, D. Rorrison & R.

Capeness (Eds.), *Educating future teachers: Innovative perspectives in professional experience* (pp. 33–47). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5484-6_3

Gaffey, C., & Dobbins, R. (1996). Tertiary teacher educators: Do they make a difference in practicum. *PEPE Monograph, 1*, 105–122.

Green, C., Tindall-Ford, S., & Eady, M. (2019). School–university partnerships in Australia: A systematic literature review. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 48*(4), 403–435. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2019.1651822

Guyton, E., & McIntyre, D. J. (1990). Student teaching and school experiences. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 514–534). Macmillan.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training. (2007). *Top of the class: Report of the inquiry into teacher education.* http://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/house_of_representatives_committees?url=evt/teachereduc/report/fullreport.pdf

Klein, E. J., Taylor, M., Onore, C., Strom, K., & Abrams, L. (2013). Finding a third space in teacher education: Creating an urban teacher residency. *Teaching Education, 24*(1), 27–57.

Kruger, T., Davies, A., Eckersley, B., Newell, F., & Cherednichenko, B. (2009). Effective and sustainable university-school partnerships: Beyond determined efforts by inspired individuals. *Teaching Australia.* https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A19413

Manyukhina, Y., & Wyse, D. (2019). Learner agency and the curriculum: A critical realist perspective. *The Curriculum Journal, 30*(3), 223–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2019.1599973

Martin, S. D., Snow, J. L., & Franklin Torrez, C. A. (2011). Navigating the terrain of third space: Tensions with/in relationships in school–university partnerships. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62*(3), 299–311.

Moje, E. B., Ciechanowski, K. M., Kramer, K., Ellis, L., Carrillo, R., & Collazo, T. (2004). Working toward third space in content area literacy: An examination of everyday funds of knowledge and discourse. *Reading Research Quarterly, 39*(1), 38–70.

Soja, E. W. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real and imagined places.* Blackwell.

Taylor, M., Klein, E. J., & Abrams, L. (2014). Tensions of reimagining our roles as teacher educators in a third space: Revisiting a co/autoethnography through a faculty lens. *Studying Teacher Education, 10*(1), 3–19.

Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). (2014). *Action now: Classroom ready teachers.* https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/action_now_classroom_ready_teachers_accessible.pdf

Weerts, D. J., & Sandmann, L. R. (2010). Community engagement and boundary-spanning roles at research universities. *The Journal of Higher Education, 81*(6), 702–727.

White, S., Tindall-Ford, S., Heck, D., & Ledger, S. (2018). Exploring the Australian teacher education 'partnership' policy landscape: Four case studies. In J. Kriewaldt, A. Ambrosetti, D. Rorrison, & R. Capeness (Eds.), *Educating future teachers: Innovative perspectives in professional experience* (pp. 13–31). Springer.

Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college-and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1–2), 89–99.

Jennifer Clifton is an experienced educator and researcher, with national standing in professional experience. Jennifer is well renowned for alternative models of professional experience based on school-university partnership, which focuses on shared responsibility and employability of graduates. She has led several national and state-wide projects, including leading and developing a coaching approach to professional experience. She has a comprehensive research profile of researching with industry in the fields of school-university-system partnership approaches to professional experience, third space and health education.

Kathy Jordan is an Honorary Fellow at RMIT University. She has been an Associate Professor and Deputy Head of Higher Education in the School of Education at RMIT. She has strong research interests in initial teacher education, including the changing policy context that is shaping practice and the importance of work-integrated-learning to pre-service teacher development. She is currently writing about the development and implementation of innovative approaches to school-university partnerships, the use of coaches in supporting pre-service teachers on practicum and third space theory.