

# Introduction

*Glenda Kruss*

Any contemporary analysis of development and growth prospects in South Africa quickly moves to highlight the low levels of education and the shortage of critical skills among the population – which in turn shifts the focus to the poor quality of the schooling system. Analysts and activists ponder why it has not been possible to transform more substantially the legacy of the apartheid schooling system. Explanations are sought and strategies have been initiated in relation to unequal financing and resourcing, the nature of school leadership and administration, the controversial change to an outcomes-based curriculum and the quality of teachers. However, there has not been enough sustained focus on the pivotal role of the teacher education system that produces South Africa's future teachers.

After 1994, the recommendations of the National Teacher Education Audit (Hofmeyr & Hall 1995) initiated a process to enhance the ability of the teacher education system to produce quality teachers who can produce quality students – that is, students who can become well-educated citizens able to participate actively in a democratic society and in the modern globalised economy. Over a 10-year period, the teacher education landscape was transformed significantly. As each new policy shift occurred, there has been analysis of the proposed change and its likely implications, but to date there has been little systematic, longitudinal reflection on the impact on individual institutions and the system as a whole over the past decade.

Such was the impetus for the initiation of a research project to investigate the nature of institutional restructuring, and the impact of change on the ability of the teacher education system to produce the kinds of teachers required (Kruss 2008). This monograph contributes to that research agenda, focusing on shifts in the official and espoused curricula of initial professional education of teachers (IPET) programmes – the Bachelor of Education (BEd) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualifications – at institutional level in the context of national institutional and curriculum restructuring. It aims to delineate the conditions of possibility and constraint for the development of future teachers – the opportunities and challenges faced by teacher educators in diverse university contexts.

### **Curriculum restructuring in diverse institutional contexts**

The research project drew on and extended research on systemic change in teacher education begun in the late 1990s by scholars such as Jansen (2002, 2004) and Lewin, Samuel and Sayed (2003), among others (Mfusi 2004; Sehoole 2005). It attempted a broad systemic sweep of the complex interplay between dynamics at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels: the interaction between national policy, institutional strategies and education faculties or schools with their academics. The premise was that in order to understand the potential of the emerging new teacher education system, we need to research the ways in which distinct universities are changing, shaped by institutional micro-politics in complex forms of interaction with government frameworks and actions.

The first set of case studies we conducted in 2006 was extremely ambitious and wide-ranging in its focus on the macro-, meso- and micro-levels simultaneously. In effect, the analysis provided the basis for the construction of an institutional history of teacher education over the last 10 years (Kruss 2008). The case studies covered internal and external trajectories of institutional restructuring in diverse university contexts and began to elaborate the impact on IPET programmes in terms of organisational shifts, staff and student shifts, and programme and curriculum shifts. The longitudinal multiple comparative case-study design of the research meant that specific trends and dynamics in 11 of the 22 universities that offer teacher education could be aggregated with confidence to illuminate conditions of possibility and constraint across the national teacher education system.

The initial intention was that on this basis we would investigate emerging new institutional cultures and the ways in which they impact on future teachers. While the challenge of merging unequal partners had been reported on in the international literature to a limited extent (Harman 2002), in the South African research literature there had not yet been a study of the challenges of institutional cultures that emerge out of externally mandated mergers, particularly where the merged institutions are very diverse in their missions (such as the merger of a university and technikon, as at the University of South Africa (UNISA)), or culturally uncomplementary (as in the merger of Potchefstroom and North-West at North West University (NWU)) or unequal in status (as in the merger of a university and college, as at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)). However, a study of institutional culture as intended proved implausible when the time came to begin research in 2007, for a combination of pragmatic, conceptual and methodological reasons.

The study of institutional cultures in South African higher education is not yet advanced and is conceptually relatively limited. The focus has tended to be on the 'fit' between an institution's historical identity, tradition and culture, and those of a shifting student population, with the emphasis on student access and success (Barnes 2005; Cross 2004; Erasmus 2006; McKinney 2004; Steyn & Van Zyl 2000; Thaver 2006; Van Zyl, Steyn & Orr 2003; Walker 2005). The purpose of our study was different. Ideally, we wanted to focus on how academic teacher educators were shifting their identities as they became located in new institutions that were created by external mandate of government policy, how these dynamics were informing their curricula and approaches towards their roles as teacher educators, and how the conditions for teacher education were shifting as a result.<sup>2</sup> What are the conditions for initial teacher education in an institutional context characterised by potentially conflicting values and identities, and shaped by former old and emerging new institutional cultures, that have to be managed to create a synergy of purpose?

In 2007, we found that South African universities were too close to the point of grappling with the demands of merger implementation for substantial change in identifiable institutional cultures to be discernible and 'researchable'. We felt that it was premature to study emerging new institutional cultures, given the typical definition of institutional culture as *deep-rooted or historically transmitted* sets of values and assumptions (Harman 2002; Van Zyl, Steyn & Orr 2003). We thus sought

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<sup>2</sup> Trowler (1998) has conducted research along these lines on academic responses to a new national policy framework in higher education in the United Kingdom.

an alternative empirical 'hook' that could illuminate the shifts that were taking place and their implications for the teacher education system.

The ideal 'hook', we realised, was the processes of curriculum restructuring unfolding in universities with diverse trajectories of institutional change over the past decade. We knew that both the old configurations and the newly created universities have engaged with successive shifts in government curriculum policy frameworks since 1994, as have academics with distinct institutional legacies. We could explore how conditions for initial teacher education are changing by investigating how faculties and schools of education are reconfiguring, and the ways in which individual academics are changing their curricula and models of teacher education, in a range of institutional contexts.

Such a study requires teacher educators to reflect on their current assumptions and practice, how these are changing with national and institutional restructuring processes, how teacher educators would ideally like to see curriculum changing, and in what ways their position in a restructured university shapes their curriculum assumptions. These academic and curricula positions are difficult to investigate and to analyse, as they are often implicit or tacit for individuals. They tend to be very 'messy' and assumed, and are linked with historically transmitted sets of values. Extremely sensitive interpretation on the part of researchers is required, as well as a carefully thought-out research design.

Typically, investigating such dynamics requires extensive periods of in-depth ethnographic work on a micro-level. Such research can yield substantial, rich and qualitative insights. Although education research in South Africa does tend to employ ethnographic methodologies and generally focuses on only one or maybe two cases in detail and depth (Parker & Deacon 2006), Jansen (2006) has been critical of the fact that South African curriculum research often lacks sufficient ethnographic depth that is made possible only by a combination of a range of data sets: observational evidence, interview evidence, institutional and policy documentation, placement data and self-reports. Ethnographic in-depth curriculum research such as Jansen recommends is extremely expensive. When multiple cases are selected and heterogeneous national coverage is required for variation, the scale of resources required to conduct research becomes unfeasible. A team of competent skilled researchers would need to spend months at each institution, and the financial costs become exorbitant.

While such studies are clearly important and need to be done, we wanted to remain consistent with the objective of the study – to analyse systemic impact – and do something that was financially feasible and unusual methodologically. Multiple comparative qualitative studies are unusual in South African teacher education research. Hence, the decision was to continue to adopt a multiple comparative case-study methodology to study curriculum change processes (Schofield 1993). In such a design, to enhance the degree of 'fit' between the cases and the general situation, heterogeneity and variation is critical.

We made a trade-off between what would be ideal as a research focus and methodology and what was possible in the present conditions and with the resources available. The principle of a wide scale of varied institutional coverage shaped the design, rather than in-depth analysis of a single institution. Five of the 11 cases that

were exemplars of the main institutional restructuring trends across the system were selected for comparative follow-up study in 2007.<sup>3</sup>

We propose that what is sacrificed in terms of depth of analysis and detail of individual cases is compensated for by the breadth of insight the study can provide across the system of the conditions of possibility for teacher education. In this way, the research project can lay the basis for future in-depth micro-level institutional studies of the transitions out of the teacher education system – of enacted curriculum, and of the new teachers actually produced by the system.

So, those readers looking for a definitive analysis of teacher education curriculum change in South Africa will be disappointed. What the reader will find is an analysis of the dynamics and processes of re-education in five universities with different trajectories of institutional restructuring, selected as exemplars, in order to inform policy and practice. The study aimed to identify broad patterns, contours and trajectories across the system, for the purpose of illuminating the potential and the constraints for teacher educators and to open up debate around strengthening the base for initial teacher education in South African universities.

### **The comparative multi-site case-study design**

This section describes the longitudinal comparative case-study design followed in each case, in order to avoid a repetitive elaboration at the beginning of each of the chapters of institutional analysis that follow. The case studies were guided by six research questions:

1. What are the main features and emphases of the content and form of current initial teacher education curricula?
2. What are the main changes in the content and form of curricula since 2000?
3. What processes of re-education of initial teacher education have taken place since 2000?
4. How are individuals and groups of academics positioned in relation to participating in and driving re-education processes?
5. What are the main issues of contestation or synergy around curriculum restructuring?
6. What are the main drivers of re-education at macro-, meso- and micro-levels?

### **Focus of case studies**

The focus of the 2007 case studies was on the processes of curriculum restructuring that had taken place in the BEd and/or the PGCE programmes in their various permutations.

A key proviso when reading the case studies is to note that because of the research focus and design decisions, they do not analyse curriculum *practice* in any way. Morrow, Samuels and Jiya (2004: 25) have popularised a South African version of the typical distinction between intended, implemented and attained curricula (see, for example, Leyendecker 2005):

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<sup>3</sup> There are patterns of similarity between some of the 11 cases, and it was extremely unwieldy to work comparatively with the amount of qualitative data generated. It was decided that a smaller number of cases could serve the purpose of highlighting trends across the system just as well.

- official stated formal curriculum (the university syllabus and curriculum descriptions);
- espoused curriculum (what teacher educators claim they teach);
- the experienced curriculum (what future teachers in the programme experience).

The case studies explored only two of these understandings of curriculum – the formal and the espoused. It was not possible to explore the enacted or experienced curriculum within the bounds of the study, as explained above. The aim of the design for this project was thus to analyse how restructuring has impacted on *official stated curriculum* as reflected in faculty and course documentation, and how it has shaped *the espoused curriculum* – what teacher educators claim they teach.

In order to access the official stated curriculum, the case studies relied primarily on institutional documentary sources, complemented by interviews with senior university and faculty or school managers. In order to access the espoused curriculum, the case studies relied on in-depth interviews with academics, complemented by documentary analysis of selected course material.

### Selection of cases

Three broad patterns were observed in relation to the impact of individual institutional trajectories: whether institutional restructuring had, and is likely to have, a very minimal impact, a ‘medium’ indirect impact or a strong *direct* impact on IPET programmes and curricula. To ensure heterogeneity, one case each was selected from those in which institutional restructuring is likely to have minimal or some indirect impact, and three that are likely to experience strong direct impact on curriculum restructuring processes, as follows:

- University of Zululand (UZ) is a historically disadvantaged university that has experienced little internal restructuring, a college incorporation that made little impact, and no mergers, but it has been reconstituted as a comprehensive university to serve a large rural community.
- University of South Africa (UNISA) is characterised by the subordinate incorporation of a small number of education academics, in the context of major internal institutional restructuring to deal with an unequal merger of a university, a historically disadvantaged institution and a technikon, after incorporating colleges in a way that made little impact. UNISA is significant as the largest provider of teacher education nationally, through distance mode.
- University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) has not undergone merger at the institutional level, but it faces considerable transformation challenges. The Wits School of Education (WSoE) faces challenges shaped by the initial ‘protected enclosure’ form of incorporation of a strong college. Significantly, it is one of the few schools to have explicitly initiated a process of internal restructuring to facilitate integration in a strategic manner.
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) is dealing with the complex integration of multiple partners, as the result of complex, (formally) equal-partnership forms of college incorporation and merger; merging academics and institutions with distinctly different ethos, ideologies and histories; and grappling with its new identity as a ‘university of technology’.
- North West University (NWU) is dealing with the complex integration of multiple partners. Two main campuses – each of which experienced protected enclosure of colleges – with distinctly contrasting and unequal cultures, identities and ideologies are attempting to find ways to work together.

*The cases in comparative context: enrolment*

The cases were selected as exemplars of the teacher education system as a whole. Here, we provide further data that allow the reader to assess the typicality of each case relative to each other and to the system as a whole, in terms of the centrality of IPET to its operations and in terms of an evaluation of the quality of its IPET programmes.

Relative to one another, the largest provider of IPET is UNISA and the smallest is Wits (Table 1.1), although Wits is not the smallest in the system as a whole (Table 1.2). The large IPET enrolment at UZ relative to the other selected institutions and to the total system is marked, and underpins the faculty's significance within the university.

*Table 1.1 A comparison of IPET enrolments at the five cases: 2007*

Case	BEd <sup>†</sup>	PGCE <sup>†</sup>	Total IPET <sup>†</sup>	Total education*	Total university*
UNISA	6 365	2 853	9 218	25 805	239 581
UZ	3 385	114	3 499	3 143	9 318
NWU: Mafikeng	123	75	198	–	–
NWU: Potchefstroom	2 049	100	2 149	–	–
NWU: Total	2 172	175	2 347	21 269	44 726
CPUT: Mowbray	683	83	766	–	–
CPUT: Bellville	619	–	619	–	–
CPUT: Wellington	935	–	935	–	–
CPUT: Total	2 237	83	2 320	2 809	28 953
Wits	1 133	67	1 200	1 923	25 151

*Source:* † Data supplied by institution to researchers in 2007; \* Validated data supplied by HEMIS 2008

*Note:* Data for the BEd and PGCE at each site was provided by the Faculty or school and does not always tally with the validated HEMIS data. Nevertheless, we have retained the data for its value as an indication of relative size in each programme and site, which it is not possible to determine from HEMIS data.

A general trend is that across the five institutions, the BEd enrolments are far larger than the PGCE. Except for UNISA, the PGCE numbers tend to be low, less than 100 in some cases, indicating that the BEd has become the preferred route for pre-service teacher education.

At NWU, the Mafikeng campus has a tiny BEd enrolment relative to the large Potchefstroom campus (and in proportion to its own PGCE enrolment). There has been a steady decline in BEd enrolments since 2005, when enrolment stood at 231. The role of Mafikeng staff in re-orientation processes needs to be read in this context.

The IPET enrolment data for CPUT illustrate the complementary focus of each of the three campuses, in that only Bellville offers the BEd FET (Further Education and Training), while the PGCE is offered only at Mowbray. The largest BEd enrolment is at the Wellington campus – again, an important contextual fact with which to interpret the role of staff in re-orientation processes.

Table 1.2. Total enrolment in IPET across the remainder of the system: 2007

University	BEd	PGCE	Total IPET
Walter Sisulu University	2 141	71	2 316
University of Pretoria	2 068	58	2 126
University of KwaZulu-Natal	1 739	198	1 937
Tshwane University of Technology	1 465	65	1 540
University of the Free State	823	131	954
Durban University of Technology	761	0	761
University of Johannesburg	616	143	759
University of Limpopo	600	103	703
University of Stellenbosch	587	90	677
University of Fort Hare	548	81	629
Central University of Technology	546	61	616
University of Venda	523	76	599
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	456	41	497
University of the Western Cape	418	51	471
Central University of Technology (Welkom)	155	65	220
University of Cape Town	–	80	80
Rhodes University	–	75	75
Vaal University of Technology	–	2	2

Source: Data supplied by universities to Professor W. Morrow, MCTE.

### *The cases in comparative context: HEQC accreditation*

Our case studies did not purport to evaluate the quality of programmes, but rather the conditions within which they operate and the organisational and academic dynamics that shape them.

The accreditation decisions of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) National Review of the ACE (Advanced Certificate in Education), BEd and PGCE programmes undertaken in 2006–07 were released publicly in early 2008, after the period of our fieldwork and after the case-study reports had been drafted, and help to situate the cases in relation to one another and in terms of their ‘fit’ with the system overall (see Table 1.3).

The only university in our study that received an unqualified affirmation of the quality of its teacher education programmes is Wits. Nationally, ‘full accreditation’ was granted to 12 ACE, 6 BEd and 7 PGCE programmes.



Table 1.3. HEQC accreditation of ACE, BEd and PGCE programmes

University	ACE	BEd	PGCE
CPUT	ACE (Mathematical Literacy), Mowbray. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions	BEd (Foundation Phase), Wellington campus. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions	PGCE (FET), Mowbray. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions: programme on notice for withdrawal of accreditation
NWU	ACE (Education Management), Potchefstroom and Windhoek, Namibia. <i>Decision:</i> No accreditation.  ACE (Science Education, FET), Potchefstroom. <i>Decision:</i> Full accreditation  ACE (Mathematics/Science Education), Mafikeng. <i>Decision:</i> Full accreditation	Not yet evaluated.	PGCE (Senior and FET), Potchefstroom. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions
UNISA	ACE (Mathematics Education), Pretoria. <i>Decision:</i> Full accreditation	BEd (ECD: Foundation), Pretoria. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions	PGCE (Senior and FET), Pretoria. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions
Wits	ACE (Learners with Special Educational Needs), Parktown. <i>Decision:</i> Full accreditation	Not yet evaluated.	PGCE (Senior and FET Phase), Parktown. <i>Decision:</i> Full accreditation
UZ	ACE (Mathematics and Science Education, GET and Senior), KwaDlangezwa. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions	BEd (Foundation/ Intermediate). <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions: programme on notice for withdrawal of accreditation	PGCE (FET Full-time/ Part-time/Learnership), KwaDlangezwa. <i>Decision:</i> Accreditation with conditions: programme on notice for withdrawal of accreditation

UZ received the most negative evaluation of its teacher education programmes, with significant weaknesses cited in meeting critical minimum standards in relation to BEd and PGCE programme design, teaching and learning, and assessment. Its future operations as an IPET provider are directly threatened if there is not judged to be sufficient improvement. CPUT received this same evaluation for some of its programmes – most pertinently, for the PGCE FET phase, which was the traditional area of expertise of the technikon component of the new university. Nationally, 2 ACE, 4 BEd and 5 PGCE programmes received the evaluation of ‘programme on notice for withdrawal of accreditation’.



UNISA's BEd and PGCE programmes received the potentially easier-to-address evaluation of 'accreditation with conditions', where it is expected that weaknesses in relation to some criteria can be addressed within a six-month period. CPUT's core BEd Foundation Phase programme on the Wellington campus likewise has conditions attached to its accreditation that can most probably be addressed satisfactorily in the near future. Nationally, 8 ACE, 5 BEd and 8 PGCE programmes received this evaluation.

### **The research process**

This section describes the process of conducting the case studies at each of the five universities, identifying factors that may have influenced the validity or reliability of the qualitative data, in order to inform analysis and interpretation. We document the limitations of the research process, highlighting the general difficulties of conducting such research in universities under present conditions.

The five case studies were conducted between June and December 2007, with varying periods of time spent at each university. Researchers who were part of the team conducting the institutional restructuring case studies in 2006 returned to the same institution, facilitating access and ensuring a measure of familiarity for all.

### **A snapshot in time of a complex process**

The longitudinal design meant that it was possible to gain a sense of change over time at each institution. In relation to the specific focus on curriculum restructuring, it was only possible to obtain a single snapshot of developments up to a specific point in time. This is an important feature of the study that needs to be borne in mind when reading each of the chapters that follow. Our research coincided with the period in which universities were preparing for the HEQC National Review of teacher education. This meant that the case studies were conducted in a period of heightened stress and insecurity that accompanied the prospect of public scrutiny by the review teams and HEQC committees.

Moreover, the snapshots were taken during site visits at a point when rearticulation processes were newly initiated at institutional level. For instance, at some universities a BEd curriculum was redeveloped in 2006 and was in its first year of implementation in 2007. At others, rearticulation processes were initiated for the first time only in 2007. Thus the research captures processes of curriculum construction at an early point in an institutional and qualification history. In our process of verifying draft reports with the institutions some months later, we gained a strong sense of extensive movement, ongoing development and increasing confidence in the intervening period.

This presents a limitation to the conclusions drawn from the case studies, in that the processes were as yet incomplete and some of the processes were still opaque to those interviewed.

### **Interviews as a source of data on espoused curriculum**

The case studies relied largely on perceptual data gathered through in-depth interviews with academics and managers at each institution that required them to reflect on their courses and teaching.

The researchers were aware of just how difficult it is to give a definitive portrayal of a teacher education curriculum based on what the lecturing staff claim about their modules and on the course outlines. In trying to reflect the voices of teacher educators, we may have inadvertently created the impression that what is reported is anecdotal, rather than pithy expressions of strong trends.

Each report triangulated the trends emerging from a wide spread of interviews with analysis of core curriculum documentation and such secondary sources as were available for that institution.

#### *Selection of interviewees*

The process of interviewee selection aimed to ensure that the most representative possible set of reflections and views would be elicited. The focus was on those academics based in initial teacher education departments, schools or divisions. A list of staff was obtained, and a sample of interviewees was constructed to represent a spread of academic staff as follows:

- a demographic spread of gender and race;
- a spread of senior and junior, long-serving and new staff;
- a spread of staff drawn from each of the previous institutional entities, in the case of incorporations and mergers;
- a spread of staff across subjects, disciplinary fields and phases.

The eventual number of interviews conducted at each university depended on willingness and availability of academic staff. It varied widely, ranging from 9 to 34, averaging around 20. A full list of the interviews conducted at each university is included in Appendix A. In the analysis the names of interviewees are kept confidential, but there is a clear indication of their position in terms of seniority and disciplinary field, reflecting the representivity of the spread.

#### *Specific institutional processes*

The only institution where the researchers experienced reluctance to participate in the study was UNISA. Here, we were the casualty of 'research weariness' – and wariness – following the HEQC review process. There was little institutional support for the interview process, and it proved difficult to gain access to a wide range of staff. Of the nine interviews conducted at UNISA in 2007, four were with current programme managers or those who had been programme managers in the recent past. Programme managers were tasked with coordinating a programme by, *inter alia*, facilitating coherence of modules within a programme and facilitating programme changes. Secondary analysis of five interviews conducted for the first phase of the research in 2006 was also included in the analysis process for corroboration and clarification of data.

The interviews at Wits were conducted during July and August 2007. These, together with information gained from interviews conducted in 2006, formed the core material for analysis. At Wits, the sample comprised a cross-section of staff from the legacy College and legacy School, as well as lecturers appointed after the incorporation of the Johannesburg College of Education into Wits. Both PGCE and BEd staff as well as representatives of all the divisions that comprise the WSoE were interviewed. Two Wits IPET lecturers based in other schools in the Faculty of Humanities at the university were also interviewed.

At CPUT, interviews were conducted during September and October 2007. Representatives of the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences teaching staff on each of the three CPUT campuses (Mowbray, Wellington and Bellville) were interviewed. These included some lecturers that had been members of staff of the colleges before incorporation into Cape Technikon, as well as lecturers appointed after the creation of CPUT.

For NWU, the analysis relied primarily on interviews conducted at the Mafikeng and Potchefstroom campuses in July and August 2007. The Vaal Triangle campus was not included, because it had been a satellite campus of Potchefstroom since 1966 and these campuses shared all courses and curricula. In order to contain the boundaries of the case study, only the dynamics between Potchefstroom and Mafikeng in the merger and curriculum restructuring were considered. Given that academics on these two campuses were most central in the processes of restructuring and curriculum construction, the analysis relied heavily on their accounts.

Two visits were made to the UZ in July 2007.<sup>4</sup> The timing was made difficult in part by the teachers' strike that ended in June and the resultant disruption of teacher education programmes. This coincided with the preparations for a new programme of teaching practice, which took place during the month of August. Because of the difficulty in access, further interviews after the two site visits were conducted telephonically. Perhaps in part because of these disruptions, it was easier to access senior management than academics at lecturer level. Senior managers in the university were willing to give of their time and to speak freely, at times off the record, on the events and issues at stake. In comparison, staff below the level of head of department were more likely to avoid engagement, either by refusing to be interviewed or by not keeping appointments. A possible limitation is that the case study may be too strongly influenced by the perception of senior managers.

The method of recording interviews varied across each research site. For instance, at NWU, CPUT and Wits, detailed notes were taken during the course of the interviews. Some of the interviews at NWU and CPUT were tape-recorded, and parts of the tape recordings were transcribed where necessary for direct quotations and the clarification of field notes. At UZ, all interviews were transcribed electronically at the time of the interview, obviating the need for audio recording and later transcription. The researcher is confident that the transcripts are an accurate reflection of the interviews that took place. At UNISA, interviews were conducted jointly by the two researchers and analysis of the data was developed jointly through debate and discussion. Each interview was recorded with a digital recorder, transcribed and analysed by means of Atlas.ti.

#### *Document analysis*

Each faculty or school was requested to grant access to its submission in preparation for the HEQC review, whether in whole or in part. The submission provided an up-to-date and accurate account of current programmes, student enrolments and staff – all critical contextual information. Given sensitivities around the HEQC review, this was misinterpreted in some cases in a negative light.

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<sup>4</sup> On the first visit, the researcher was accompanied by Thabo Msibi, a young honours graduate who, it was intended, would carry out interviews with members of staff. This was not possible in the end, for practical reasons. However, he carried out two telephonic interviews before leaving for the United States as a Fulbright scholar. He was also involved in discussions on the interviews and provided a useful additional perspective

It was relatively easy to obtain official calendars and programme requirements to analyse the official stated curriculum at each institution. Institutions differed in the extent to which they were willing to provide course outlines and study material that could be triangulated with the interviews in relation to the espoused curriculum. Each case-study researcher conducted documentary analysis of course material, but analysis differed in the exact manner, focus and depth.

At UNISA, given its nature as a distance-education provider, selected study material was tracked and briefly compared from 2000 to the present for the purposes of triangulation. The focus was tutorial letters, study guides and workbooks, as well as a teaching-practice module, and the emphasis was to determine the nature and degree of change in relation to that reported by lecturers. Material for the following courses was reviewed:

- Religious Education (Senior Phase);
- Education Law and Professional Ethics (FET Phase);
- Teaching Practice (Primary Phase);
- Special Education/Inclusive Education (Foundation Phase);
- Knowing the Adolescent (Secondary School).

At NWU, documents relating to the faculties of education were collected from the Internet, and primary documentary material was collected from the institutions, particularly documents relating to the IPET curricula. The main documentary data sources available for the study were the university calendars (or yearbooks) from both Mafikeng and Potchefstroom campuses for 2005, 2006 and 2007. These calendars detailed the structure of the BED programme, including a comprehensive listing of modules and learning outcomes. The institutional plan (2007–09) was also considered, as well as a number of other institution-level policy documents, such as study guides, the vice-chancellor's letters, examination papers and course outlines.

At UZ, documentation was made available in the form of the faculty handbook, the university calendar, the faculty website (updated with information supplied by the faculty secretary) and course outlines for certain modules taught in the faculty. The head of management information was extremely helpful in providing statistical information on the faculty. Course outlines for the following core modules were reviewed:

- Language and Literacy (EALA 03B);
- Equality of Educational Opportunities (EFEO 00A);
- Philosophy of Educational Research (EDPE 01A);
- Planning Your Research Projects (EFDEG 1);
- Multiculturalism and Education in South Africa (EFMU 00A);
- Assessment in Outcomes-Based Education (EDAO 03A).

The researcher obtained extensive documentation from Wits, liaising with education personnel to obtain documents and data on student enrolment and the composition of academic staff at the WSoE. Information on the curriculum of all WSoE programmes and courses was obtained from the institution's website and from course outlines provided by many of the interviewees. In addition, some interviewees provided documents related to their teaching, such as a submission made for a vice-chancellor's team teacher's award at the university, academic papers, and emails that provided background information on certain developments regarding curriculum transformation of IPET programmes and notes of discussions from staff curriculum

planning meetings. Other data used in the analysis were obtained from academic publications. Documents relating to the development of a new format for teacher experience for the BEd were extensively used, as was the institutional submission for the HEQC review of the PGCE.

CPUT provided a range of documents relating to teacher education programmes as well as the university's teaching and learning policy. Course descriptions were obtained from the university's website. In addition to information given during interviews, many staff members generously provided course outlines. A senior manager provided the minutes of the curriculum committee meetings attended by staff from the Mowbray and Wellington campuses.

A wide range of documents was thus consulted, but, as is apparent, this was uneven and largely dependent on the goodwill and openness of the interviewees at each university.

### **Consultation and interpretation**

Draft case-study chapters were sent to the dean or head of each faculty or school, with a request that they identify any significant errors, omissions or misinterpretations prior to publication. For the most part, this provided an opportunity for consultation within the university and with the researchers involved.

Typically, there were questions raised about the validity of the empirical data, with concerns expressed that the university had progressed beyond the situation described, or that there was not sufficient depth, or there were not sufficient interviews conducted across the university. There were queries around factual errors, some of which proved unfounded, highlighting a lack of consistency in various documentary sources within the university. Others took trouble to point to the minutiae of programmes and processes. There were also positive responses in terms of the reflection that had been stimulated by the research process and the report itself.

The responses highlighted the difficulties of conducting research at universities in South Africa at a time of heightened scrutiny. There was evidence of defensiveness and, particularly, that racial fault lines remain close to the surface in participants' evaluations of the research conducted.

The ethical responsibility to be sensitive to those who have collaborated and supported research, opening up their own practice and perspectives, can be in tension with the academic analysis of a faculty or school in relation to the teacher education system of which it is a part. What the reader needs to bear strongly in mind is that the point was not to evaluate the performance of individual faculties or schools, whether positively or negatively. Rather, the intent was to use each case study as an exemplar to illustrate trends and dynamics of curriculum restructuring across the teacher education system in order to inform future policy and practice.

### **The monograph**

A team of researchers conducted the case studies, and each has had the opportunity to contribute to this monograph, bringing his or her own conceptual lens to bear.

Chapter 2 aims to situate the mediation of curriculum restructuring contextually. It provides a periodisation of the drivers and processes of developing a new national curriculum policy framework for teacher education at the macro-level, and the new roles expected of teacher educators by the Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE) (DoE 2000a).

Chapters 3 to 7 present an analysis of the ways in which academics at each of the five universities have mediated curriculum change, in the context of global knowledge shifts, increased state regulation, a qualifications policy vacuum and complex forms of institutional restructuring.

Chapter 3 focuses on the complexities of recurriculation processes at the new North West University. Ursula Hoadley argues that processes at the meso-level impacted on the way in which the new BEd curriculum was constructed. The two campuses persist in operating along parallel tracks and are likely to do so well into the future. Drawing on the conceptual framework of Bernstein, Hoadley demonstrates how a centralised unit set up to assist with curriculum alignment across the newly merged institution led a highly bureaucratic process in mediating macro-level policy.

In Chapter 4, Chaya Herman and Venitha Pillay consider curriculum change at the University of South Africa, using the concept of 'ambivalences' as a conceptual lens. Herman and Pillay suggest that the highly controlled and regulated academic environment, change saturation and diffused leadership have resulted in a curriculum change process that is owned by no one, so that the regulatory role of the state gains ascendancy over the intellectual authority of academia.

In Chapter 5, Crispin Hemson points to a sharp contradiction at the University of Zululand: while shifts in national policy were directly reflected in the structure of the IPET curriculum, the curriculum failed the key test of accountability to the national level, the HEQC review. Hemson demonstrates how issues of internal and external accountability are interlinked, and that the lack of curricular debate points to a lack of an internal vision and coherence for IPET. Decisions were taken in terms of a prevailing 'stakeholder culture' in which diverse needs of staff and students are catered for, rather than an approach based on academic rationales.

Chapter 6 considers the specific challenges faced by the former technikons that have merged to form the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Adele Gordon argues that two key factors have altered the working lives of CPUT teacher educators. The first, the upgrading of IPET qualifications from a diploma to a degree, has meant that former technikon and college lecturers have had to develop course qualifications to meet new policy requirements, without necessarily having the support or academic depth to meet these demands. A second factor relates to the alignment of complementary IPET programmes across three campuses, underpinned by different values that were rooted in the political views prevailing in the constituent institutions in apartheid South Africa. A great deal has been achieved in forging equivalence across complementary programmes, but the vision underpinning the different programmes is less amenable to change, as it appears that the ethos of previous institutions still prevails.

Chapter 7 analyses the case of the University of Witwatersrand, where a strong college and school merged and operated for some years along parallel tracks before



integration into a new school. Adele Gordon argues that under strong leadership, there is greater stability, borne out of the recognition embraced by a majority that members of each institution can and do learn from each other. Growing respect for each other as educators, committed to a common vision, rather than suspicion and derogation, is forging a more coherent 'gaze' on a vision of teaching through ongoing reflection on current courses and programmes. Despite the progress accruing from the work of curriculum development committees, on delving into the inner processes of curriculum restructuring in both IPET programmes, it became apparent that divisions remain.

Chapter 8 compares the dynamics of the five teacher education providers to inform the analysis of curriculum design on a shifting institutional base in an evolving policy landscape. I argue that South African teacher educators are in a position where they have potentially great opportunities but also face severe challenges. The five case studies demonstrate how multiple drivers intersect in complex ways to determine and shape curriculum change at specific universities. Universities have grappled primarily with putting in place new formal programme and qualification structures. The focus has tended to be technical and bureaucratic, as opposed to engaging in substantial curriculum development in line with the vision of the NSE and drawing on research and academic disciplines. Curriculum decisions tend to be taken based on personal interests, authority and reputation, on academic 'territorialism' and on ensuring institutional accreditation. Hence, it is difficult to supersede curriculum legacies with the new kind of framework proposed by the NSE. The well-established espoused curriculum, disciplinary commitments and academic identities of individuals continue to determine design and development decisions.

In general, the case studies demonstrate a dominant trend towards bureaucratic compliance, but also show that this is not the only possible way to mediate curriculum change. There is potential for creating new knowledge in the system driven by an academic logic and coherence, in an attempt to integrate the contrasting legacy approaches of college and school academics and build on the strong academic and research legacy of the university. There is scope to build stronger interchange around curriculum development specifically, between the expertise and experience of university-based teacher educators, the HEQC with its oversight of quality issues, and the national and provincial departments with their understandings of 'policy images'.



