Unpacking the new ITE Requirements

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Alex Gunn: Kia ora koutou, ko Alex Gun toku ingoa. E mahi ana au I te whare wānanga o Otago. My name is Alex Gunn and I work at the University of Otago. I'm here with Pauline Barnes from the Teaching Council to talk about new provider requirements for teacher education programme review and approval. One of the reasons I think Pauline has invited me here is I have the privilege of acting in the role as chair of the Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand at the moment. As chair of TFANZ I have the capacity to talk to a lot of providers around the country and to puzzle over the new requirements with colleagues as we work together to try to re-orient our system to the new standards in professional practice. So, I'll just hand over to Pauline to introduce herself.

Pauline Barnes: Thanks, Alex. Kia ora koutou, ko Pauline Barnes toku ingoa. I'm the general manager here at the Teaching Council and have been involved in this ITE work pretty much from the day I started back in the beginning of 2016 and I have to say that it's one of the most interesting and challenging areas of our education system, partly because it's so critical to the success of our learners and for the profession but also because so many different organisations and different parts of the system have a part to play in initial teacher education. It's been challenging but pretty exciting to get to this point.

Alex: Excellent. I think through the podcast we're going to delve into some of the detail of the requirements and talk about some of the aspects here and there but also by way of introduction and context if you could start us off with how this whole enterprise began, what it is we are working towards in terms of system change and then we can move into some of the more specifics.

Pauline: Okay, thanks. So, the Teaching Council has a legal responsibility for the setting of standards for initial teacher education. That's very much in line with our role as a prof body where effect we're saying we set the standards for what teach need to do as practitioners and therefore also what preparation they need. We also have a role as the professional body to make sure teachers in an ongoing way have the access they need to professional learning and development and support over their careers and so the initial teacher education part is really important part of what is it we expect teachers need to be able to begin that prof journey. We don't do that alone. Our approval of programmes and qualifications we do in conjunction with the two quality assurance bodies so that's CUAP for tertiary and New Zealand Qualifications Authority for those wananga, PTEs and polytechnics that play a role in ITE. We don't fund initial teacher education, that's the role of the Tertiary Education Commission and so to some extent it's really important that we all join hands when it comes to

saying we really want to influence not just the quality of ITE but we've got the right provision across the country and how do we manage that. On our own the Teaching Council can't manage that but with others we have the opportunity to be a bit more joined up. The Ministry of Education has particular responsibility for parts of the system as well and so, for employment based ITE they're the funder of part of that, they also fund scholarships for student teachers. So, again, the joining up idea is really important so when we began this work three years ago our role was very much to say this is an area we want to make sure is right for the future, that if we're really looking at growing the quality of the teaching profession we need to collectively as a profession and as the system players we come together and actually say what it is we want. So the starting point was that and with three years of consultation and various phases in that we've brought together initial teacher education providers, many practitioners from ECE, primary and secondary, from Māori medium and English medium and the conversations have started quite visionary and as we got closer to putting together actual standards that are the requirements getting down into what are the details that are really going to make a difference for the future. And so, there are really just a few things I would share around the shift in expectations that have come out of all that work. One is around strengthening the qualifications, so they have a really clear focus on the Standards for the Teaching Profession we want to provide greater assurance to practitioners that graduates ae ready to teach, particularly at the beginning – recognising they have been in a supported environment. We want greater practitioner Māori and iwi input into the design but also the operation of ITE as authentic partners. We want a future focused, flexible pathway into the workforce that increases diversity and we also really want to take this opportunity to create the structures and relationships and feedback loops required to establish a learning system that's something that all partners in this work have agreed – look we're a small enough country we should be able to do this in an effective way so that we're not just saying at point in time here's what we think is right but we're creating a system that enables that work to evolve and develop based on what we learn through this process.

Alex: I think since the requirements have been published we've had a number of opportunities to come together as providers and to meet with the Council and meet with other members of the profession about what the changes might mean and the Council has been quite proactive in terms of publishing resources, facilitating discussions and making those bigger goals around the educative nature of this process really explicit so that we can, as you say, hold hands into this new era together as the professional standards are embedded in. I did want to ask you about some of the finer details although big ticket items in a sense. I'm certainly still puzzling over and I know some of my colleagues in teacher education are still puzzling over as well. I wondered if we might start to talk about a few of those items. I wanted to start with the partnership element, this is a major component of the new requirements and I think we all appreciate working in a profession-wide capacity is a benefit to us all and as you know many teacher educators are still registered and certificated ourselves and so we still class ourselves as members of the profession in that teaching sense as well as being in ITE. One of the new requirements is about the partnership development work. You're interested in when we put applications up to the Council for providers to take account of the kind of mutual benefits that are brought about by authentic partnerships in teacher education and I wondered if you had any comments of where you've seen it going well, what kind of mutual benefits you would recognize as being quite key in that process of authentic partnering.

Pauline: I think the authentic partnerships is definitely one of the most significant changes we are looking for. I would just say we are not suggesting there aren't already authentic partnerships, we've seen a lot of amazing partnerships, but we do know that's not the case in every situation

and the thread of authentic partnerships really came from the literature review we commissioned NZCER to do quite early in this process. They had a look at what does it really take to have meaningful practical experience as a part of initial teacher education programme are elements of an authentic partnership and I guess it's very difficult to put in writing what you are looking for in a partnership because actually the nature of a partnership is that it is about relationship but it's about having some common expectations and a lot of the elements out of the literature review were areas where actually the provider and the student and the setting - whether that's an early childhood service, a school or kura - actually have some common work to do and being on the same page becomes really important. It could be simple things, like for each placement each of the parties understands what the focus of the placement and what the learning is going to be. For that to happen actually all parties need to understand why that's important and how they might support that learning to happen. It's like layers of activity that actually at the highest level are about being on the same page and having a common language in the standards, a common expectation about what the standards look like in practice is probably at the heart of it. Except that in reality there are different contexts in each setting, there will be programmes designed with a slightly different flavour and so all those things need to come together. The Council has tried really hard not to be too prescriptive but to point to the evidence, to recognize it takes time to build a partnership, to try and find some things we think would be helpful, so we've suggested things like you might bring some kind of memorandum of understanding of how you've built the expectations. I think the hard thing is for providers is though were trying to build professional partnerships that have mutual benefits for the whole profession the reality is in this situation the ITE provider has to kickstart that if they don't already have a base to work from and they have real expectations to get their programme approved. So, it's not really a balanced arrangement and we understand that.

Alex: Thanks for talking about those mutual benefits of partnerships and there's another element to those that I think would be relevant to touch base on and it's the way in which members of the profession and the teacher education provider can share responsibility for the success of those graduating students. Can you tell us a little more about how you imagine that will play out for programmes?

Pauline: I think one of the things I've been aware of in the time we've been doing this work is that most practitioners and those working in ITE are pretty passionate about the kind of graduates they want to see but quite often, not always, it turns into what's not working well and what were really looking to shift here is the thinking well whose responsibility is this. If you are part of a profession and you really believe the teaching workforce is a profession, then each of us actually has a responsibility to nurture and grow and support new people coming along. If you take that understanding then what we're trying to create is the opportunity for everybody to play their role in there and at the moment we recognize that there resourcing issues that sometimes, not necessarily get in the way but don't help in incentivising that relationship to work in the way people would like it to. In reality you've got to start somewhere and so the place that we are starting is to say everyone has a role in this and the partnership that we are trying to incentivize is a long term partnership that says if I am a leader of an early childhood service that actually I am really committed to working in partnership with this provider and that means that I'm interested in the design of their programme and I'm interested in sharing my knowledge about what I really think the Standards look like in practice or what I'm noticing about the graduates that I have and I'm actively providing feedback because actually their outcome is my outcome and if I'm the provider then I'm really looking for the opportunity to know what's it looking like when my students are there, the graduates that have come from my programme, what are the areas they're really strong in and what are the areas they might

need some more information or what's changing in the curriculum that maybe I now need to pick up. It's a really complicated space and it's only going to work well if people are looking for that joint outcome.

Alex: Yeah I think you used the word incentivize there and I guess thinking back on the notion of the mutual benefit to the profession there are quite a lot of incentives for practitioners to feel like they are making a contribution and to make a contribution to the development of their local workforce as well. And for people on the provider side of the equation having confidence that the programme has legs in the profession and that you're making sense of how the standards look in these services in a particular region, in these kura or schools, that it makes sense to you as a collective is also a very useful idea to take forward into this whole enterprise.

Pauline: I think the area of confidence has been one of the things that have stood out for me. A lot of what I hear is reasonably anecdotal but what it adds up to is there not being a confidence that any graduate of any ITE prog in New Zealand is actually the quality we expect and so part of our role is to build that confidence and some of that is about sharing information, some of it is about having processes that enable there to be a common understanding. So, creating a learning process is an important part of that. One of the other things that we have put in the kind of programme of work is to have a national moderation of the culminating assessment of students and that isn't to say we think some programmes aren't going to make it, it's much more to say actually how do we build consistency and confidence of the kind of judgements we are making as we learn what the standards look like in practice and as we take these new models into the future so that we are actively participating in confidence building across the profession and then if we find some things we don't have confidence in, changing things.

Alex: I'd take that notion of confidence through into the panel processes that I know are still under development, very imminently emergent, because I had some questions around standards that might be applied or the way that criteria might interpreted and applied when panels come together at the desk stage and at the interface panel stage as well when people are coming together to judge the evidence that providers have put up. There's a couple of criteria or notes around the criteria 2.3 that address the integration of theory and practice and that raise the notion of sufficiency of the ITE curriculum for particular things, so I'm interested to know about how the standards for what might be sufficiently integrated or the standards for sufficient in terms of theory and professional experiences might be. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Pauline: I can. I guess I would start with the word judgement – so, sufficiency is not something that is black and white, you can't read a document and say oh yes, clearly, they've understood what we're looking for and this is sufficient. The Council has a panel process specifically so that we can get a diverse range of experience and expertise to consider the whole of the programme that's being designed and who its being designed for and make, what does become a collective judgement, but to have a conversation around is this what we expected to see, is it sufficient, and we've worked hard to get the panel members to be representative of quite a few different areas of expertise. We've gone out looking for people that obviously have some expertise around different parts of the system – so, early childhood, primary, secondary, Maori Medium, etc but we've also looked for specific expertise in things like curriculum, understanding and curriculum design, inclusive practices and learning support, digital technology, having real expertise and understanding of te ao Māori world view and we want them to bring that perspective into the judgement that they're making. The sufficiency has two layers – the Council team, the staff we employ, will be looking at the papers as they come in and looking to see could they reasonably see whether the requirement has been met form what's there and if they are a

bit unclear we would ask for more information. The judgement that's made is actually made by that panel and what we're looking for the panel to do is really interrogate that. We expect that for these key areas of change its very much a conversation that unpacks the thinking of the design and how that design leads to meeting the standards and what were the choices that you made. Because actually the design is all about choices – you can't possibly do all the things that you want to do so, you have to make some compromises so being able to talk to that will enable the panel to make that call and I'm expecting that the panel decisions will be things like yes we think that is sufficient but here are the things you might want to think about adding in the future: areas they think could be improvements.

Alex: So, describing that panel process is a bit more conversational and developmental in that sense, must signal perhaps that panel chairs might be looking run processes a little differently to what we might have expected or experienced in the past?

Pauline: Potentially, so we've appointed at this stage three panel chairs and they're all experienced panel chairs who have done initial teacher education programmes but also other programmes before, and they have shared their experience with each other about things they have found useful in terms of a chairing process and how to engage all of the panel members from the beginning and understanding what each of their expertise is in so they can make sure they capture that as they go through making their decisions. Their expectation is that it will be a lot more conversational and that it will be most of the discussion around the things that are most significant with the more compliance things not really featuring as a part of the panel conversation. I think the big shift that we have made as well is we've trained panel members, so one of the things that came out of the discussion with chairs is that many times they are on panels with people who have never been on a panel, they don't quite understand what the role is but they have been nominated as a person to show up on the day. All of our panel members have been selected from an interview process from understanding what they're expertise is and then trained to understand what the new requirements are and what we are trying to achieve. So, we've tried to do everything we can to make this the best possible process and then we just have to see how it goes and try to share the learnings we have from that with subsequent panels.

Alex: Yes, and the first panels are due fairly quickly and you will be sharing information from that soon I expect.

Pauline: So, we would be wanting to share the information as quickly as possible. The first panels happen in October (2019) so we would expect in November we would have something we could start to share with other providers this is what we found. That would be an ongoing development of the story as we broaden the experience with different kinds of applications coming forward.

Alex: It's going to be quite an intense period of work over the next 18 months to two years and so I think there are some good opportunities for the Council to have some good interface with the providers over that coming up.

Pauline: Aboslutely, we certainly want to use the TEFANZ to help us do that and any other opportunities like podcasts and newsletters and things.

Alex: Can I bring you back to a few more of the criteria I am still puzzling over? Jo sent us some

packages of material recently, that were used in the learning workshops in June and they are very helpful. There was a set around the scenario work that happened there and a set around helping providers establish levels around te reo Māori competence for the new entry requirement and Jo managed to ask the providers whether there were any other types of information that might be particularly useful and I know that one of the ones that came forward was any more information about the pre literacy and numeracy testing and particularly managing that from a distance.

Pauline: So, for clarity, it is our expectation every provider would have a separate literacy and numeracy assessment prior to confirming entry and that isn't going to be acceptable just relying on UE as the evidence. In particular the reason for that is because one of the Council's areas of decision around this strategy is it really needed to lift the literacy and numeracy capabilities of our teachers and we had hoped to do some kind of research around what are the current levels of literacy and numeracy that we have so we can think about how do we build that and if we were going to set any kind of benchmark into the profession what would that look like? Remember the basis for all of this is the evidence that suggests that if we're going to lift the literacy and numeracy of our students then we have to specifically make sure our teachers have the level that is adequate for them to teach. I guess teaching is such a language rich subject and increasingly it also requires a level of numeracy to be able to cope with the requirements of being a teacher – not to teach mathematics but to be a teacher, that we want teachers to actually be successful so setting that upfront is helpful to be able to attract the right kind of students. It's a bit of a fraught space in the sense that actually deciding what that level looks like, how do you make the assessment, there are a few tools around but each of those tools have their pros and cons and at one point the Council considered developing its own tool. We came to the conclusion that was a very expensive way of approaching this if in fact there wasn't really much of an issue. So, where we've landed in all of that is to say let's leave it to providers to decide how they want to assess. There's always been a requirement for there to be some kind of assessment and let's see what we can learn from that over the next couple of years. So, we haven't gone into looking at the logistics of what that looks like but at the approval stage we are looking to see that some attention has been paid to that, that there is an assessment and some way of thinking about what to do with students who don't meet that assessment. So, the requirements say we expect someone to pass, which means that they would have the equivalent of the current UE requirements which is NCEA Level 2 literacy and numeracy credits. However, that doesn't mean that providers necessarily have to not allow those students in, they might have some other bridging programme that helps them achieve that.

So, can I ask you a question? In your TEFANZ role, it's taken about three years for us to agree as a profession on the areas we think we need to change to make a difference for the future but I'm really interested in getting a sense from providers point of view as they have begun actually putting these requirements in practice and designing programmes what sense do you have of the comfort providers have that this is the right strategic direction, are there areas you think maybe they are less comfortable with or that might take a bit more time to achieve.

Alex: I mentioned before that there are a lot teacher educators who are also registered and certificated teachers and so, we all pretty much bought into the Standards and the development of the Standards so int hat sense we all appreciate this is a positive step forward to profession building in that way around the Standards and that that would have consequences for what we were doing in teacher education. So, given that we are dually teachers and teacher educators I think you can have some confidence there are people sitting at providers around the country who generally think this is an excellent move because we are bound professionally by those Standards ourselves. It's fair I think from the TEFANZ forum that we had earlier in the year at University of Canterbury that people found the discussions around the assessment framework that Graham brought to that forum and around the key teaching tasks that we talked about on that day that people were seeing the benefits

move towards. The outcomes-focus of the teacher education requirements are making us think quite differently and of course many of us work within the systems that have administrative structures that are still very input-focused so as teacher educators trying to move some of our colleagues to produce some of the documentation to support applications, there's quite a bit of work going on there but I think the process of discussion at the panel process and that kind of presentation and defense and then presentation of the decisions made, that kind of account providers will give of their teacher education design will help ameliorate some of that residual input-focus that might exist with some applications as they come forth. I think it's a hugely labour-intensive exercise for us and change is always painful but we're managing and because we have this two- to three-year lead in period talking to our line mangers and budget boffins to try and get everything in line to help us succeed and run as smoothly as possible. I think there are costs that will add quite a lot of burden and I know even though we have an additional pool of funding from tech to support the introduction of the requirements. Even some of my back of the envelope type calculations around the extra costs associated with visiting and longer practica, those things are definitely still worrying us and you know, many of us have been involved in those partnership activities around practicum and we know that that's quite a burden financially and labour-wise to be able to work in the tertiary institution and in the professional institutions to be able to make that work well. There are still some questions about how we're going to pull it off, but my sense is that people are really working on it and will only do it, by doing it.

Pauline: I think that's where we see the system at as well. We have done a lot of talking and planning and now we just have to do it and take care to make sure that we are mindful and learn from what we are doing. So, this isn't a one-off thing – there's still the programmes to be designed and we'll work to do but there's other parts of the system we are beginning to pay attention to now. One of the key areas we are working on is a framework that is appropriate for Māori medium approval which takes the concepts but actually works alongside a Māori world view. Some providers may choose to have their Māori medium programmes approved under the current approval framework, but many will choose to wait, and they are working collaboratively at the moment with us to create a framework. Another area we are working on is what does induction and mentoring look like, particularly for new graduates, but also right across the system as one of our functions around leadership. How do we grow capability of teachers to mentor others, how much are we leaving to chance that first two years between graduation and achieving a full practicing certificate and what should that look like, how is that all supported by resources and things? So often in these kind of policy changes it's quite different to change the status quo that may eb driven by funding arrangements and things like that but actually getting back to what is the evidence say good looks like and how do we support that to happen and what's the real problem that we're trying to address here that takes quite a bit longer and so, that's the area we have started to move into and expect to make some changes as we go along.

Alex: That takes me right back to the beginning where I was asking about this notion of mutual benefit in the profession around the new requirements and moving forward and I think just by virtue of having members of the profession and teacher education experts working closely over the Standards and what they look like in that supported environment and then thinking about that shift into practice, it's much more likely to be able to build that induction capacity amongst the teacher workforce through the teacher education work that will just have to happen. We're sharing responsibility for assessment of the Standards with support and moving those graduates into the profession. I think they will work towards each other.

Pauline: I agree. I think it is very much a goal for the Teaching Council to create those spaces where we can have professional conversations that grow our professional understanding and ITE has been one of those opportunities to be able to do that.

Alex: Dare I ask, at what point will the requirements be looked at in terms of how they are working? Is there a sense of review around any particular requirements or the process?

Pauline: We're thinking review on a couple different things. We want to in the most immediate future reflect on how easy it has been for providers to understand the requirements and actually translate that into a programme design and are there some things we could do better in the future that we need to take into account for future iterations – that's the most short-term one. Actually what we we're looking to see and build in in an ongoing way is what difference does it make for actually graduates of teaching and doing a formal evaluation of what that looks like across the country and the experience of those new teachers as they start to teach and the experience of their employers is another aspect. ERO did an initial look at that a number of years ago, we would expect that after the new programmes have been in place for a couple of years that the general experience should be much different to that, so we'll be testing that. I think there's also a programme we are just starting to develop now that looks at the particular aspects that we were trying to get into. So, take authentic partnerships – probably we need something that's going to give us a deep dive and maybe even some research opportunities for a PhD or Masters students to have a look at – here's our theory of change, this is what has happened in different places and what can we learn about that that would strengthen practice. It's that kind of discourse we would really want to be promoting at things like TEFANZ conferences and other learning opportunities where collectively we have a little bit of a plan around what are we really trying to see here and how do we learn from that as a system.