University
of Glasgow

Teacher Educators: professional identity and ambition in uncertain times

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Changing contexts for teacher education

- **Who are we as teacher educators?**

- **What challenges are we facing?**

- **What is our ambition for teacher education, and for us as teacher educators, in uncertain times?**

Teacher educator professional identity?

Questions about teacher educator identities are not new.

'Teachers of teachers – what they do, what they think – are systematically overlooked in studies of teacher education. ... While it is known that a teacher educator is one who teaches teachers, the composite of those who teach teachers is loosely defined and constantly changing.'

(Lanier & Little, 1986, p.528)

Manifesto for change
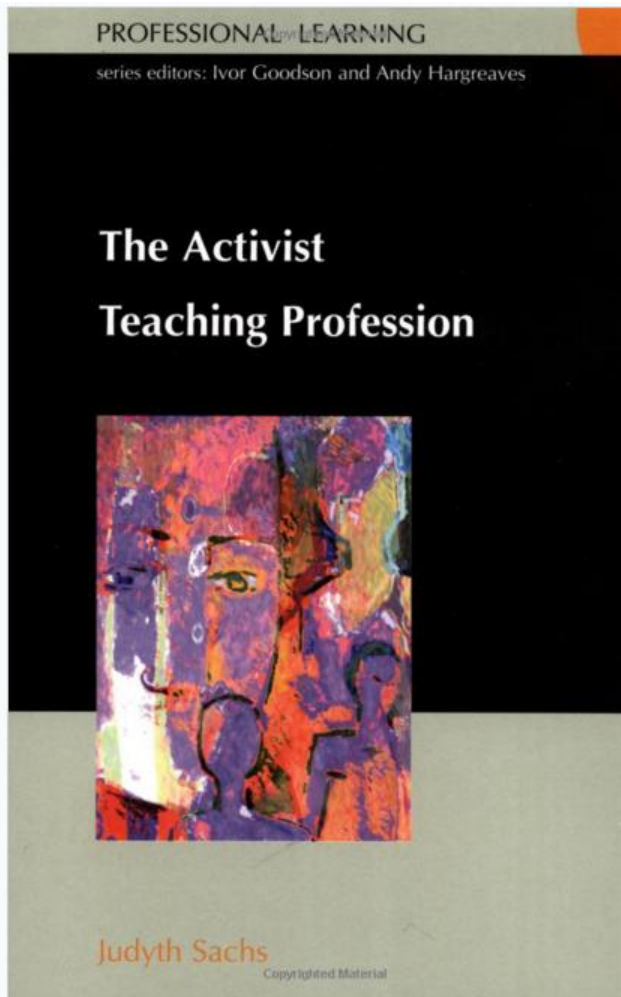
The Activist Teaching Profession
Judith Sachs (2003)

'... a manifesto for revitalising the teaching profession and as a strategy for public recognition and legitimacy.'

Teacher educator Identities?

- Who is recognised and valued as a teacher educator?

- Who recognises and values themselves as a teacher educator?

- What are their different roles and responsibilities?

- Are teacher educators recognised as a professional group?

Teacher Education?

Teacher Educators?

Conceptual complexity
Contested concepts

Changing contexts of teacher education

- The diversity of provision of teacher education increases the complexity of the roles and responsibilities that different teacher educators hold

- Creates feelings of uncertainty

- In danger of losing our identity and prompting feelings of inertia towards new possibilities

Complex Landscape

Teacher Educators?

University ITE	School ITE & Induction	Career Long Professional Learning
Lecturers Course tutors Professors Teaching Fellows Associate Tutors Teachers Mentors Graduate Teaching Assistants Researchers	Teachers School Leaders Mentors Local Authority Officers University CPD Providers National Agencies	Teachers School Leaders Mentors Subject groups Local Authority Officers University academics National Agencies External CPD providers

Livingston, 2014

Complexity of identity

• Sense of being

• Positions we occupy

• Our nature

• Experiences

• Affinity groups giving rise to collective identities

(Gee, 2001)

Complexity of identity, roles and responsibilities

- Interaction between identity and roles (e.g. Acker, 1999; Castells, 2011; Day et al., 2006 & 2007; Goodson, 2002)
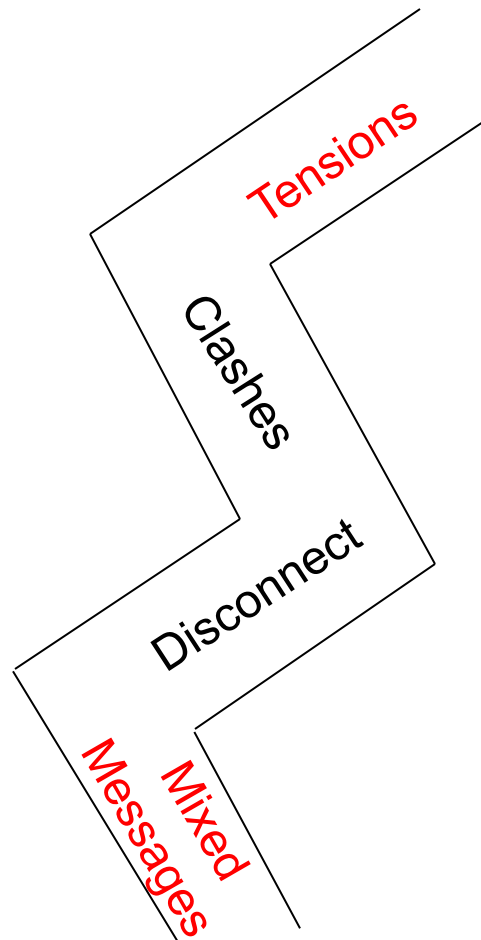
  These studies suggest it is difficult to completely separate roles from identity and to understand identity without understanding its interaction with roles and responsibilities.

Complexity of identity

- Identity is formed, re-formed and revised through processes of personal and social construction.

- Continually *becoming* a teacher educator as contexts change

- What are the implications of the changes in our contexts, on our understanding of who we are as teacher educators, and on our beliefs about what teacher education involves?
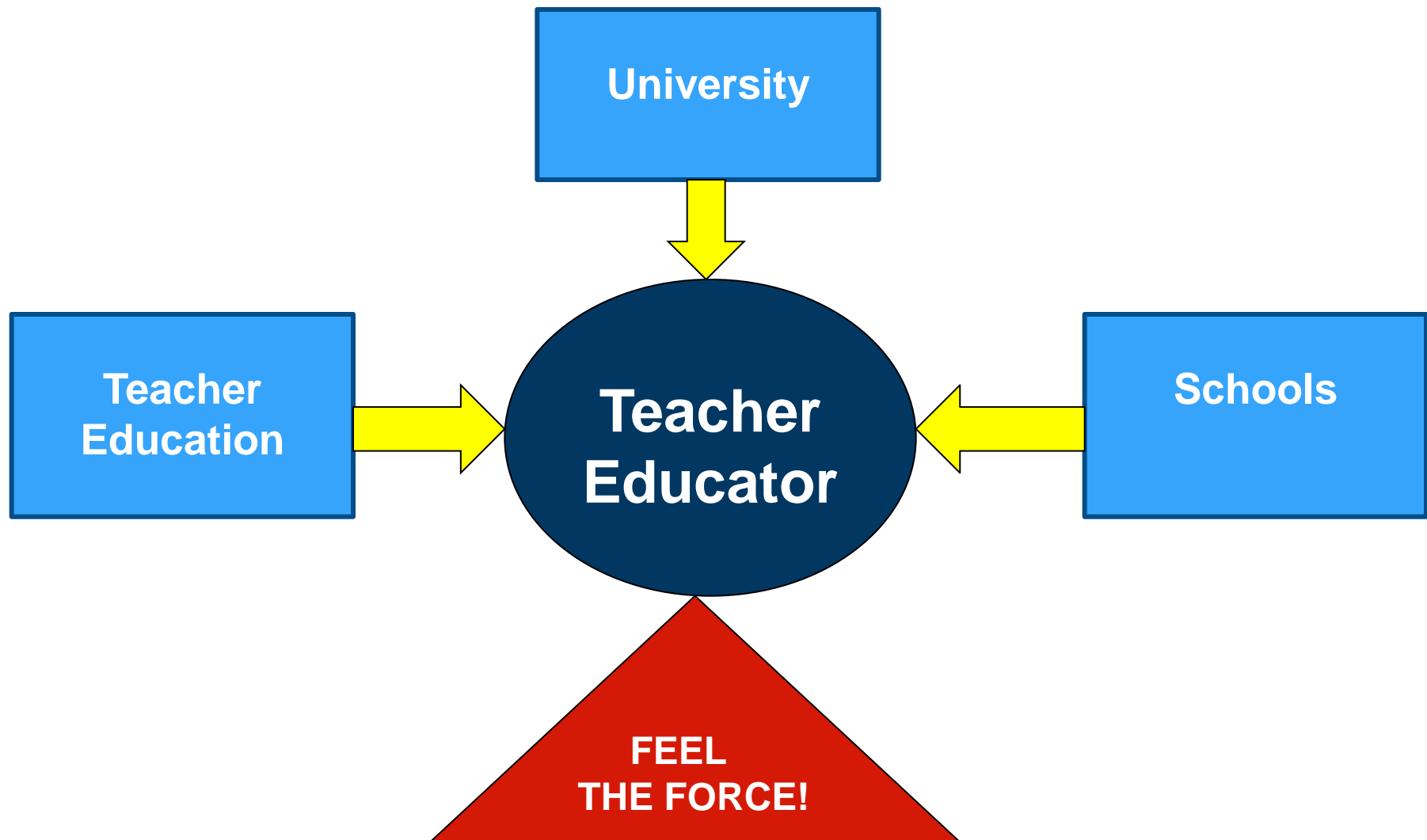
Implications of changing contexts for our roles and responsibilities

University

Teacher Education

Teacher Educator

Schools

FEEL
THE FORCE!

Who am I today?

Expectation & performance measurement sends a message of what is valued

- Publications

- Grant capture for research

- Supervision of PhD students
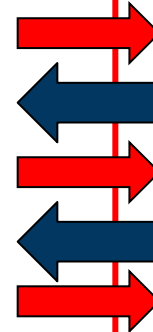
Role as a teacher educator

- Relationship maintenance with school

- Supporting ITE student- teachers

- ITE Teaching & marking

Can we be teacher educators in school?

Changing nature of Higher Education

'A *complex* world is one in which we are assailed by more facts, data, evidence, tasks and arguments than we can easily handle *within* the frameworks in which we have our being.'

(Barnett, 2015, p.238).

Understanding the University

INSTITUTION, IDEA, POSSIBILITIES

RONALD BARNETT

Changing nature of Higher Education

- Fundamental frames of reference are under challenge, blurring and shifting which lead to a state of uncertainty, fragility, unknowns, tensions, contradictions and imaginings.

- A supercomplex world is one in which the very frameworks by which we orient ourselves to the world are themselves contested.

  (Barnett, 2015)

Teacher Education Partnerships

- Co-creation of teacher education programme

- Working as a team member with different responsibilities and shared responsibilities

- Working across stages – early years to upper secondary

- Supervising outside of own subject

Survey of 25 European countries

18 | countries also offer **alternative pathways to traditional routes**

16 | countries have **polices regarding the selection of candidates to ITE**

10 | countries where **selection is part of the induction phase**

9 | countries where **CPD is regulated as a duty or compulsory**
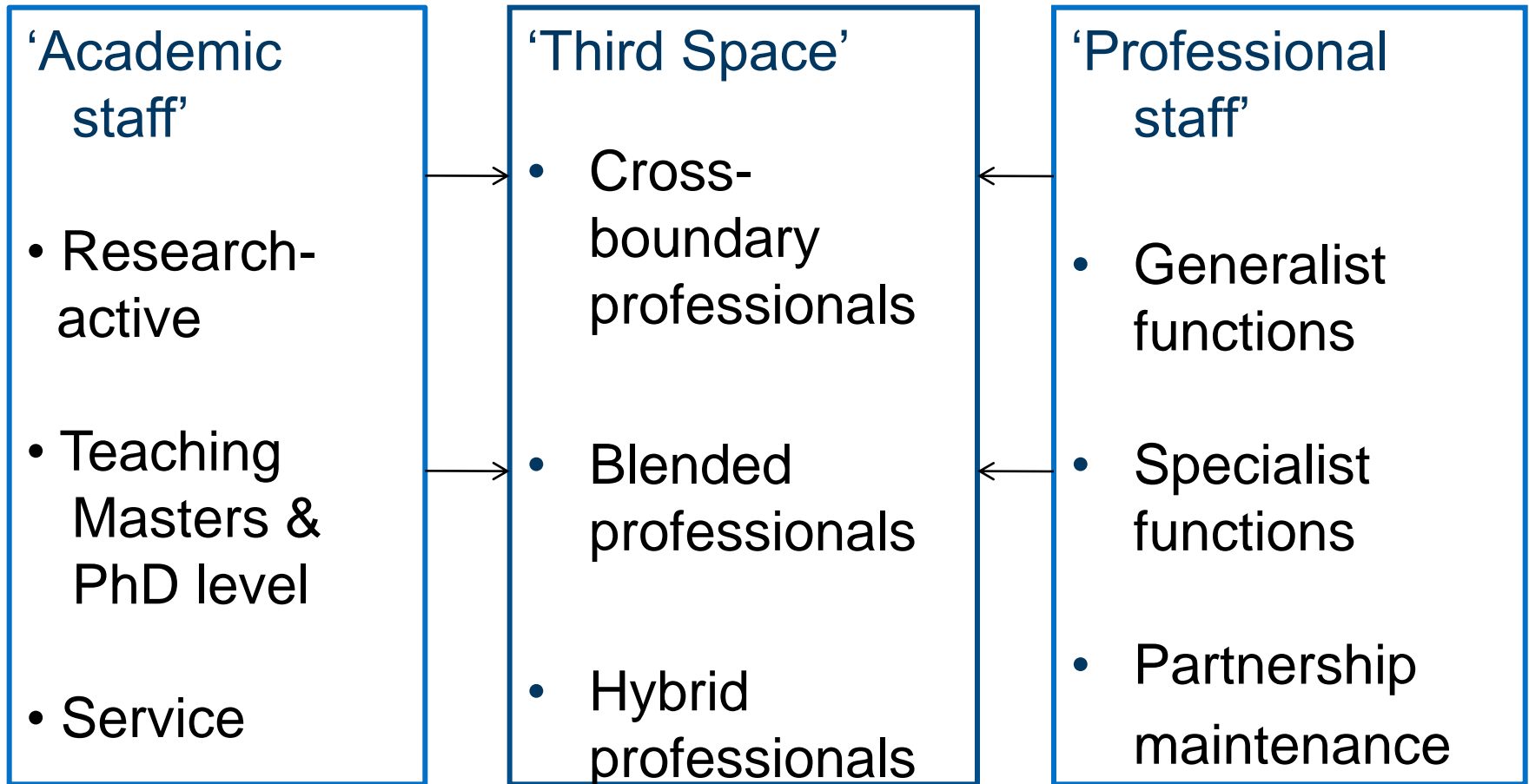
4 | countries where **CPD is a condition for career advancement**

European Commission, (2015, p19)
A Guide on Policies to Improve ITE

A more complex arrangement than a binary divide between university and schools

'Academic staff'	'Third Space'	'Professional staff'
• Research-active	• Cross-boundary professionals	• Generalist functions
• Teaching Masters & PhD level	• Blended professionals	• Specialist functions
• Service	• Hybrid professionals	• Partnership maintenance

(Adapted from Whitchurch, 2008)

- What is it that teachers need to know, be able to do and care about in the 21st century?

- How can the new model of teacher education be developed, implemented and researched in a collaborative way where all involved have a sense of agency and shared responsibility?

- a *new learning environment* involving broader study across the university and a new enquiry model of school experience to change the way teachers think about their role and learning and teaching

- a *new support framework* both within the 4 year teacher education course and in the 2 years beyond it, changing the role of the supporting class teacher to mentor and co-investigator with the student teacher

- a *new professional culture* of decision-making, by embedding a framework of evidence gathering, enabling teachers to better reflect on the impact of their teaching on pupil learning.

Figure 1. Nested Multiple Micro-Worlds

Government

Teaching Unions

Other National Agencies

Livingston & Shiach, 2018
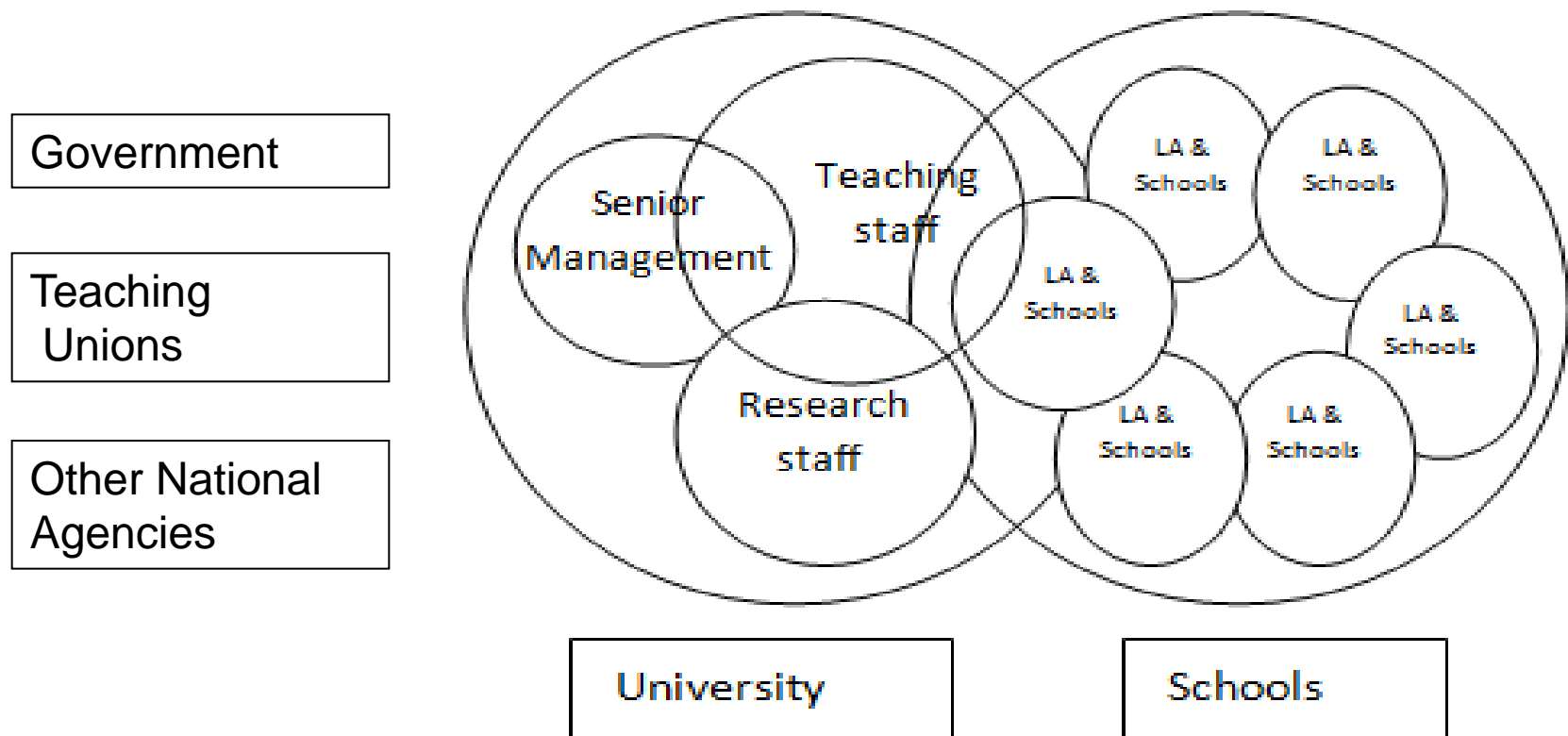
Challenges and Opportunities

- Better understanding the implications of multiple-identities and different identities of teacher educators

- Uncovering different visions of who teacher educators are and what roles they are expected to play

- Clarity about role definitions that people hold themselves

- Embracing differences in teacher educators' identity rather narrowing role

- Better recognition, coherence and coordination of the different types of knowledge and expertise held and required in teacher education

- Better understanding of what we want teacher education to be about and do.

Ambition for Teacher Education

- Education is inescapably value-laden – whether explicitly or implicitly - it pre-supposes commitment to the worthwhileness of particular types of individual and social development.

- Opening up that territory is an essential part of teacher education.

- Importance of counter-balancing the current emphasis on competences with a re-instatement of values and dispositions as an essential element of teacher education.   (Humes, 1996)

Ambition for teacher education

- How is a teacher education programme which concentrates narrowly on skills and focuses almost exclusively on current practice in schools going to provide the kind of imaginative, creative and enterprising workforce we need?

- We need to be clear about what the curriculum for teacher education in the 21st century is about.

  Humes (1996)

A Mature Profession

- A mature profession has the confidence to represent itself to others in ways that are trusted, valued and respected.

- Members share a common set of values and have a knowledge base that is robust and can be defended.

(Sachs, 2012)

Ambition for Teacher Education

We need a manifesto for revitalising the teacher education and as a strategy for recognition and legitimacy for teacher educators.

The Activist Profession of Teacher Educators
- to be developed and published

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