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Morris, Roger K
University of Technology, Sydney, Australia
Roger.Morris@uts.edu.au

The Formal Education of Adult Education Practitioners in Australia: The Case of UTS and Its Precursors

Abstract: This paper examines the history of that part of the Faculty of Education at the University of Technology, Sydney, which became Australia's premier institution for the education of adult educators. Beginning its life some 60 years ago, this institution has had a number of names and statuses. At first only concerned with the non-credit in-service professional development of newly appointed technical college teachers, its scope of operations eventually expanded to encompass the professional education of all types of practitioners from across the broad field of adult education and at all levels of formal qualification from the certificate to the doctorate. But success is not always an unmixed blessing, at the same time, the significance of adult education as a separate and special area of study has declined. The paper explores the development of this provider of professional education for adult educators – its rise and current state. In so doing, the paper presents a straightforward narrative account of the institution's development, its relations with important stakeholders, its programs, its faculty, its students, its successes and its failures in the context of the changing definitions and perceptions of post-compulsory education in Australia.

Introduction

Most adult educators today come to the field from a variety of occupational backgrounds, with a range of professional and academic qualifications and often, at least initially, in a part time capacity. Formal award programs for the professional education of such practitioners have only emerged in comparatively recent times. This paper examines the history of the Faculty of Education at the University of Technology, Sydney [UTS]; an institution that many would argue is Australia's leading provider of formal education for adult education practitioners. Beginning its life some 60 odd years ago as the Sydney Technical College Annexe of the Teachers' College, Sydney, this institution has had a number of names and statuses. At first only concerned with the non-credit in-service professional development of newly appointed technical teachers for

the New South Wales [NSW] state technical college system, its scope of operations eventually expanded to encompass the professional education of all types of practitioners from across the broad field of adult education and at all levels of formal qualification from the certificate to the doctorate. In this process enrolments went from a hundred or so part time students in the 1940s to some 1500 effective fulltime students [EFTS] in the 1990s and staff numbers from 3 or 4 to more than 70.

The Beginnings

The origins of that component of the Faculty of Education at UTS, which today has the responsibility for the professional education of adult educators, can be traced back to the late 1930s and the early 1940s, when lecturers from the Teachers' College, Sydney [hereafter referred to as the "Teachers' College"] began to be invited to give the occasional lecture on matters of educational import to technical college teachers. At that time, technical teachers were not required to undertake formal courses in teacher education. In the late 1940s, the state Labor government, at the strong urging of the local trade union movement, established a separate Department of Technical Education. Relations between school education and technical education within a single Department of Education had always been difficult. Recognising the value of more systematic teacher education, the new Department of Technical Education invited the Teachers' College to provide two or three lecturers to work fulltime with technical teachers. Thus the Sydney Technical College Annexe of the Teachers' College was born. These pioneer lecturers set to work: discovering the teacher education needs of technical teachers; running general workshops in teaching improvement; helping individual teachers with specific teaching problems; and convincing the Department of Technical education that compulsory formal teacher education for technical teachers was essential.

The Early Years

In 1952, the position of the Annexe was more firmly established when teacher education was made compulsory for all newly appointed technical teachers. This first formal course was six hours per week over one year and the new teachers were given a reduced teaching load in order to undertake it. The operation of the course in its first year was regarded as so successful, by the Department, that, in 1953, all those technical teachers who had not previously completed

the earlier voluntary programs of teacher development were now required to spend half a day a week over a year engaging in teacher education. This directive caused considerable resentment. Many of the teachers required to so attend had had long and most successful teaching careers. It says much for the good sense, professionalism, and interpersonal skills of the pioneers of technical teacher education that they were able to adjust to and meet the educational needs of technical teachers and eventually moderate the strong resentment expressed by many of the teachers in those early days.

Throughout the remainder of the 1950s and the 1960s, technical teacher education [as it was now generally termed] made steady if unspectacular progress. In the 1960s, the Department agreed to an expansion in the course from 6 to 12 hours [i.e. from one to two days] per week over the first year of the teacher's service. This pattern continued until 1972, when the period of training was further extended and a second year of one day per week was added to the basic course of initial teacher education. At that time, both tradesperson entrants [i.e. teachers of plumbing, hairdressing, bricklaying etc] and graduate entrants [engineers, chemists, and surveyors etc] to the technical education teaching service undertook basically the same program of teacher education for which no formal qualification was awarded. It was just noted on the teacher's personnel file that he or she had completed an appropriate course of teacher preparation.

In the broader higher education arena, at the same time, a new institution was emerging., the college of advanced education, to replace a whole range of single purpose institutions, like teachers' and agricultural colleges or to consolidate in one institute of technology the higher level courses from the technical education sector. Once the colleges of advanced education began to flourish in the 1970s, the Australian higher education system could be described as a binary one: the more academic research oriented universities and the more vocationally oriented colleges. This was the official fiction, though, of course, much University education remained highly vocational. The real difference was to be found in the prestige and standing of the professions or occupations involved. Universities prepared students for careers in law, medicine and the pure sciences while the colleges prepared students for careers in teaching, business and the applied sciences.

Accreditation

By the 1970s there was a growing belief that technical teachers should undertake basically the same order of teacher preparation and hold the same professional qualifications as other public schoolteachers. This belief was part of the broader movement to reform Australian education that culminated in the election of the progressive Whitlam Labor federal government in 1972. This government established a Committee to comprehensively review technical education across the nation. Its report, released in 1974 and named for its Chairman, the Kangan Report, greatly boosted technical and further education [TAFE] a term, which it introduced and which was soon in wide use across the Australian education arena. The boost was psychological as well as financial. The key underlying themes of the Kangan Report combined to produce a broad humanistic picture of TAFE as serving and empowering the individual. Kangan placed TAFE squarely in the educational sector (it was more than technical training) and advocated: lifelong learning; TAFE as a mechanism for achieving greater social justice and mobility; and increased public investment in TAFE to create greater public good.

Following the release of the Report, huge [at least in regard to past experience] outlays of Commonwealth monies flowed into the hundreds of TAFE Colleges across Australia. There was much criticism of this expenditure among the educational establishment drawn as it was, largely, from the schools and the higher education sectors. However, across Australia thousands of new students - largely women - poured into TAFE to take up the opportunities for second chance learning - literacy, basic education, bridging, and pre tertiary study boomed (Gribble, 1992). More and more it was realized that much of the work of TAFE was with adults and not just adolescents. Outreach activities, designed to meet the needs of particular clienteles, became important. Additionally, in many states, hobby and recreational courses became a significant component of the TAFE provision; especially in rural areas. The Kangan Committee had considered both the labour market and the social and educational emphases of TAFE. The Committee's Report came down strongly on the side of the social and educational emphasis. They saw the function of TAFE as being to enable people to develop their potential as individuals within the realities of the available job opportunities. Within the wider Whitlam reforms, which included the abolition of all post secondary tuition fees, the effect of Kangan was

to broaden participation in TAFE and to open opportunities for previously marginalised and under-represented groups [especially the adult members of those groups] to access such educational opportunities. Adult participation in education was becoming much more mainstream.

New technical teacher education courses were prepared by the Teachers' College for accreditation by the NSW Higher Education Board [HEB] and from 1975 all new teachers entered programs that led to the award of a formal qualification in technical teaching. Conversion programs were also provided to enable those who had completed earlier non-accredited programs of teacher preparation to gain the new formal qualification. Non-graduate [i.e. trade] teachers were able to complete a three-year equivalent course of study leading to a Diploma of Teaching [Technical] and graduate teachers a one-year equivalent course of study leading to Graduate Diploma of Education [Technical]. In 1981, a Bachelor of Education [Technical] a four-year equivalent qualification, by way of advanced standing, was introduced. Now all technical teachers had the opportunity to build on their earlier studies and to achieve graduate status.

Up until the late 1970s the overwhelming concern of the Teachers' College remained with technical teacher education, though the needs of other educators of adults [especially vocational educators] were to some degree addressed. Throughout this period, however, much more attention was beginning to be given to the professional development needs of other educators of adults. Detailed needs analyses were conducted and extended discussions with practitioners, their employers and their organizations were held. Finally in 1980, the college introduced its first formal award-bearing course for general adult educators - the Graduate Diploma in Adult Education. So by the late 1970s/early 1980s - just as the future of "certain metropolitan Colleges" came under the attention of, at first, the NSW government and, later, both the State and Federal governments in terms of amalgamation and rationalisation - the Teachers' College was poised on the brink of expansion and diversification.

Establishing ITATE

A new entity, Sydney College of Advanced Education was incorporated on 24 July 1981, following the amalgamation of "certain metropolitan colleges", and commenced operations on 1 January

1982. The H E B's aim had been the development of a single strong multi-campus college, which would comprise a federation of semi-autonomous teaching entities each concentrating a particular area of practice to administer the educational programs formerly offered by the amalgamating colleges. Thus the College was to be seen, when fully developed, as an aggregation of semi-autonomous specialist teaching entities under the overall control of a single governing Council and chief executive officer [the Principal]. The term "institute" was chosen as conveying some indication of the notion of the academic independence of each of the specialist teaching area. Each Institute would have its own head [the Director] and a Board composed of members drawn from the specialist sphere of operation of each particular institute.

The Sydney College of Advanced Education Regulation, which was made under the Higher Education Act and Gazetted on 18 December 1981, provided the basis for the academic governance of the College and established the original five semi-autonomous Institutes. These were: City Art Institute [CAI]; Institute of Early Childhood Education [IECS]; Institute of Nursing Studies [INS]; Institute of Technical and Adult Teacher Education [ITATE]; St George Institute of Education [SGIE]; and Sydney Institute of Education [SIE]. The last two of these Institutes were concerned with the education of teachers to serve K-12 schools. ITATE [no longer merely a minor part of a much larger general teachers' college] was looking forward to exercising its newfound measure of "semi-autonomy".

In 1982, the first year of its "semi-autonomous" existence, ITATE provided courses for the initial preparation and continuing development of technical teachers and educators of adults. The full range of those courses were: Graduate Diploma in TESOL [Adults]; Graduate Diploma in Adult Education; Graduate Diploma in Education [Technical]; Bachelor of Education [Technical]; and the Diploma of Teaching [Technical]: only five courses in all and all at the undergraduate or graduate diploma level. ITATE continued to be located in leased accommodation but planning was well under way in conjunction with the NSW Institute of Technology to develop a new, shared campus on the old City Markets site. In that year ITATE's 50 full-time academic staff taught 1335 students [667.5 EFTS] as every one of those students was classified as part-time. This was fewer students than had been expected, because there had been a shortfall in the number of new teachers recruited into the Technical Education

service that year. This shortfall allowed an expansion in the numbers of students recruited into the Institute's adult education programs. The downturn in technical teacher recruitment had two important long-term results. A greater effort was made to diversify the Institute's offerings and hence its client base. Greater efforts were made to develop even closer and more cooperative relations with the Department of Technical and Further Education [TAFE].

Now began ITATE's golden years. The Institute was re-organised into two Schools, the School of Technical Teacher Education and the School of Adult Education, and grew steadily. Each year, there were more students more courses and more academic staff. Student numbers increased by some 70 per cent, in the period 1982 to 1989, from 667.5 to 1050 but more important than enrolment growth, in terms of the long term development of ITATE and the fields of adult and vocational education practice, was the continuing diversification of the programs offered. Perhaps most significantly, academic staff members, both old and new, began to develop national and international reputations as scholars and researchers.

ITATE Academic Program in 1989

1 School of Technical Teacher Education

Undergraduate:

Diploma of Teaching [Technical] introduced in 1975

Bachelor of Education [Technical] introduced in 1981

Graduate:

Graduate Diploma of Education [Technical] introduced in 1975

Graduate diploma in Educational Studies [Computer education] introduced in 1984.

2 School of Adult Education

Undergraduate

Associate Diploma in Adult Education introduced in 1983

Aboriginal Education Strand

Community Adult Education Strand

Training and HRD Strand

Bachelor of Education [Adult] introduced in 1986

Graduate:

Graduate Diploma in Adult education introduced in 1980

Graduate Diploma in Adult Education [Basic Education] introduced in 1983

Graduate Diploma in TESOL introduced in 1982

Adults Strand

Schools Strand

3 Across Institute

Master of Education [By thesis] introduced in 1987

As has been suggested, those who would form the initial academic staff of ITATE were looking forward to the establishment of the new institute. In general, by 1989, their high hopes had been realised. The establishment of a specialist institute to deal specifically with the formal education of teachers of adults [rather than children] acted as catalyst to vitalise and greatly expand formerly neglected areas of higher education. And as these areas developed so did the staff of the Institute. In 1984, seven [7] of the Institute's 51 academic staff members held doctoral level qualifications – just over 14 percent. In 1989 sixteen [16] of the Institute's 62 academic staff members held doctoral level qualifications – more than 25 per cent. Additionally, in 1984, there were twenty [20] refereed publications reported by 15 members of academic staff. Whereas in 1989, there were 60 publications written by 36 members of the academic staff. This is a threefold increase in the number of publications and a doubling in the number of authors. There were similar increases in applied research, continuing education and consultancies. The institute developed a very successful commercial arm– Training and Development Services – which provided a range of development and consultancy services in the area of training and staff development across industrial, commercial, and governmental sectors. Part of the surplus generated by these for-profit activities was used to subsidise the cost of the continuing education activities ITATE provided to the not-for-profit community-based sector.

Perhaps the best way to sum up the story of this stage in the life of the institution, which is to day the Faculty of Education at UTS is to quote from ITATE's 1988 Annual Report.

The Institute of Technical and Adult Education [ITATE] remains the major Australian provider of specialist teacher education for technical and vocational teachers and the full range of other educators of adults. ITATE provides degree and diploma level programs as well as short courses and consultancy services. Occupying modern purpose built premises in central Sydney, the Institute's sixty plus staff teach more than 1000 students who are employed as: technical and vocational teachers; industrial, commercial and governmental trainers; adult basic educators; teachers of English to adult speakers of other languages; Aboriginal

and other community-based educators; and other adult educators. In addition, the Institute provides programs of professional development for instructors in the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force and for police educators at the NSW Police Academy.

Australian Higher Education is Re-organised Once Again

From about the mid 1980s on, a critical mass of issues regarding life long learning, retraining, re-skilling, second chance learning and other aspects of access to educational opportunity began to come together to create a more positive climate for adult and vocational education. Adult and vocational education had gained growing value in the eyes of government, as it was able to link its activities with government priorities. Adult and vocational education was beginning to move from its marginal position to one of formal recognition. There were numerous policy statements, reports on and enquiries into post compulsory education in Australia. These included [most notably]: **Australia Reconstructed** (1987), **Higher Education - A Policy Statement** (1989), **Training Cost of Award Restructuring** (1990), **The Finn Report** (1991), **Come in Cinderella** (1991), the **Carmichael Report** (1992), the two **Mayer** papers (1992 and 1993) and the **National Policy – Adult Community Education** (1993). All of these, in one way or another addressed the question of the fundamental reform of Australia's education and training system. This concern was linked to the broader economic and social agenda of government. A central idea was that education, training and work should fit together more effectively so that the acquisition of knowledge and skills no matter where they occurred should be encouraged and recognised.

After the Federal election in 1987, there was a major re-organisation of the federal government's administrative structure. As part of the process, a new "super" Ministry of Employment, Education and Training was created and there was a major revision of the advisory structures and program delivery arrangements that had previously prevailed in the higher education sector. There was now a single advisory body, named the National Board of Employment Education and Training [NBEET]. This new Board advised the Minister directly. Many other roles and responsibilities formerly the province of the CTEC [the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission], which had been a Statutory Authority and as such had a degree of independence from the Government, were now to be exercised from within the federal bureaucracy. Later that year, wide-

ranging reforms were foreshadowed in a Ministerial Green Paper [Dawkins, 1987]. These reforms included: fewer and larger higher education institutions; competitive tendering between higher education institutions for new student places; better targeting of research funds; and an end to the differential funding of colleges as opposed to universities [an end to the so-called binary system].

It soon became apparent that the Sydney College of Advanced Education, of which ITATE formed almost exactly one fifth, was unlikely to be able to maintain its status an independent freestanding institution in this new environment. The College needed to do one of three things: to “federate” with other similar institutions to establish a state University or college system on the US model; to join, as a semi-autonomous entity, an already established metropolitan University; or to allow the various components of the college to be hived off in a series of separate amalgamations with a series of universities. The first option never really got off the ground and, in terms of the second, no University was prepared to have its teaching profile distorted by acquiring some additional 5000 teacher education enrolments. So in the end, the College was dismembered and its component institutes were distributed across four existing universities. On January 1st 1990, ITATE became the Faculty of Adult Education within the new University of Technology, Sydney, which until 1988 had been a college itself, though it had been called the New South Wales Institute of Technology [NSWIT] and with which ITATE had shared a campus since 1984. As a faculty of “adult” education, the former ITATE was possibly unique in the world. However, this status only lasted for one year. In the amalgamation process UTS had acquired another College, which had a more usual school of teacher education, which prepared schoolteachers. So on January 1st 1991, the two Schools of the Faculty of Adult Education joined the School of Teacher Education to form a new comprehensive [K to 12 plus post school “teacher” education] Faculty of Education.

Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney

At the beginning of the 1990s and for a number of years thereafter, things looked good for the future development of the education of adult and vocational educators. Most members of staff thought that this second new start, like the first new start, of almost a decade previously, might herald another even more golden age. Enrolments continued to grow steadily, within the University, the Faculty of

Education shared equal second place in terms of total student numbers, with the Faculty of Engineering, behind the Faculty of Business, which was and remains the largest faculty. Many new courses were added, especially at the postgraduate level. New academic staff members were employed and the reputations of individual staff members and of the Faculty, as a whole, continued to grow.

In terms of new courses, the priority area for growth was post graduate study at both the coursework and research levels: a coursework masters degree was introduced in 1992; the first Ph D candidates were admitted in 1993, and the Doctor of Education program commenced operation in 1995. There were also a range of developments at the master's level in the areas of the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and Applied Linguistics. Additionally, because of the level of expertise in general language teaching, a graduate professional qualification in the teaching of languages other than English [LOTE] was introduced in 1991 to meet a severe shortage of foreign [particularly Asian] language teachers in the state's high schools. In 2000, a new master's level qualification was introduced to augment the Faculty's existing series of qualifications in Aboriginal Studies, the Master of Arts in Indigenous Social Policy, which was designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal Australians who are involved in the indigenous social policy process. A new integrated initial bachelor's level qualification was introduced, in 1996, to replace the Bachelor of Education [Adult], the Bachelor of Teaching [Technical] and the suite of Associate Diplomas. The new Bachelor's degree was built around a common core but featured five distinct field of practice specialisations: Aboriginal Studies; Community Adult Education; Language, Literacy and Numeracy; Human Resource Development; and Vocational Education. Finally, in 2001, the Faculty introduced its first qualification specifically targeted to the recent school leaver student “market”, the Bachelor of Arts in Organisational Learning [BAOL], which was designed to develop that knowledge and those skills and attributes needed to support the learning and change management activities within organizations.

The move to the University sector had meant that academic staff members now needed to work in a different ways and to emphasize different aspects of their knowledge and skills-set, if their potential ability to succeed within that sector was to be maximised. In general, academic staff members were able to make this transition. This process of transition was assisted by the retirement of a substantial

number of older staff members who had been recruited at mid career in 1970 to staff the first major expansion of technical teacher education, when the accredited qualification was first introduced, and who were now approaching 60 years of age when their state civil service pension would begin to be payable. Those staff members who remained were younger, generally held or were completing doctoral level qualifications, and were more research active. Soon the Faculty was even better known, both within Australia and internationally, for the quality of its research and its teaching. Many graduates of the Faculty's programs had moved on to important academic, government, business, industry and community appointments. The future seemed assured.

The More Recent Past

However, from about the turn of the century, the forward progress of the Faculty's adult and vocational education programs began to stall. At first there was just a slowdown in the rate of growth, then there was a pause, and finally there has been an actual decline. Though, of course, in absolute terms the UTS adult education program, both in comparison to other Australian programs and most international programs, remains strong and substantial. A number of partial answers can be proposed that help to explain this situation. These are set out below.

First and foremost of these partial explanations must be the quite major changes in the Federal Government's arrangements for the funding of higher education. As mentioned previously, the Whitlam Labor government of the 1970s abolished all tuition fees for higher education. Later Labor governments modified this position, by introducing the Higher Education Contribution Scheme [HECS] whereby students were liable for about one fifth of the cost of their higher education. This debt was deferred until the student entered the workforce and then repaid via an income tax levy. Following the election of the Howard Liberal government, in 1996, the student contribution to the funding equation grew at the same time as the general governmental funding of higher education per student declined dramatically. Universities that wished to survive and grow had to adopt more and more the characteristics of private corporations. To the economic rationalists of the federal educational bureaucracy, the status of a higher education had moved from that of being "a social good" to that of being "a personal possession". This development impacted adversely on the more lowly paid and mature-

aged adult education practitioners, who thought twice before enrolling and thus exposing themselves and their families to a substantial HECS debt.

Secondly, there were a number of interrelated changes to the NSW TAFE system, which substantially reduced the number of technical teachers, who were enrolled in the Faculty's programs each year. While such students had not been the most important component of the Faculty's enrolments since the 1980s, they did provide an ongoing, significant, and dependable source of core funding and participants for a number of program offerings particularly at the undergraduate level. The TAFE system, itself, had become more entrepreneurial and decentralised. Now individual Institutes had to meet the costs of teacher education for their newly recruited teachers, it was no longer a "head office" cost shared across the state. Institutes recruited, where possible, new teachers who had already completed teacher training or, for those who needed it, chose local and/or more inexpensive [eg distance] modes of teacher education. Moreover, fewer and fewer permanent, full-time teachers were being recruited. Instead, more and more part-time sessional teachers were being employed. Such teachers had three important "advantages" for the employing authority: they possessed recent relevant industry experience: they were cheaper to employ than full-time permanent teachers; and it was not mandatory for them to possess formal teacher education qualifications.

Thirdly, when ITATE, as the Faculty was then known, expanded its program offerings, in the early 1980s, so as to better serve the professional education needs of adult education practitioners from across the broad field of practice, there was a huge unmet backlog of demand from persons who "wanted/needed" to participate in such programs. As a field of practice, adult education was then, in terms of formal qualifications, severely "undereducated". Now, some 25 years later, this situation, could no longer, be said to prevail. Much of the backlog in terms of demand for formal professional education had now been cleared and the demand for new places, particularly at the undergraduate level continued to dwindle. So while the quality of the candidates for post-graduate qualifications continued to improve and the number of doctorates awarded annually steadily grew, the solid ongoing enrolments, in the formerly quite large bachelors level programs, had largely evaporated.

Fourthly, as work-based and other forms of vocational education and training [VET] grew over the past 20 years, there were demands

that there should be established by government fiat, as largely a quality control device, a minimum mandatory level of qualification in order for a person to be permitted to deliver accredited VET. This was done and the Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment was established as that minimum standard of qualification. This persuaded many educators of adult that once they had gained the mandatory level of qualification as an educator of adults [i.e. the Cert. IV] then perhaps it would be more profitable to pursue any further academic study in the more content oriented areas, i.e. IT, Management etc, of their practice rather than in the more process oriented areas, i.e. Adult Education.

All of these factors have come together to reduce the viability of the Faculty's adult education program. As enrolments have declined it has become impossible to maintain the various modes of participation formerly available. These included: normal weekly class attendance; weekend block attendance; and a distance option. Additionally, it has become impossible to appropriately replace academic staff as they retire or move on. Quickly, these difficulties have begun feed on each other and for the situation to grow even worse. Contracting options for modes of participation and declining staff availability, appropriateness, and/or quality have contributed to a reduced demand, which has led to further contractions in participation options, which has led to even further reduced demand and a reduced capacity to recruit new academic staff and so the cycle continued to spiral down.

Some Broader Issues

However, underlying all of these partial explanations there seems to be a more bedrock explanation for this decline: an explanation, which has more to do with the field of practice and the field of study known as adult education than the specific circumstances of particular institution. While this paper has largely focussed on such a single case – that of the programs of formal education for adult educators offered within the Faculty of Education at UTS and its precursors, many of the issues and trends discussed are by no means limited to that institution. While it is the more unique and local issues that are the most immediate and pressing for providers of professional education for adult educators, this fact should not prevent us from at least looking once again at some of the broader issues that have long bedevilled adult education: both as a field of practice and as a field of study. Foremost among these issues are:

- There is a lack of clarity in the terminology used to describe the field of practice and its practitioners. In addition, adult education as a field of study also lacks terminological clarity. Finally, there is the continuing confusion in many people's minds between adult education as a field of practice and as a field of study.
- There is, across the broad field, a widespread and deep lack of agreement over the desirability of professionalization of the field. While there has been a growing demand for the professionalization of a field of practice, which was previously dominated by missionary zeal and an adherence to a clear ideological position, others urge caution in what they see as the headlong rush to credentialism.
- There is, moreover, a tension between academic respectability as defined by University traditions and professional relevance as measured in the field of practice. Many adult educators cannot see any real need for formal qualifications in adult education, arguing that such professional education makes little difference in performance.
- The above dispute, however, may soon disappear, as questions of competence, credentialism, and the new vocationalism come to dominate the field of practice and will inevitably come to influence the field of study. The validation of one's "competence" in a largely technical manner has begun to replace the study of the field in any sort of systematic intellectual way as the organising principle upon which academic programs leading to a formal qualifications are built.
- There are unresolved questions to do with just whom professional education is for and what should be the content and nature of that education. Many of the arguments set out above only make real sense in terms of full-time practitioners but many [most?] adult educators are part-time. Many full-time adult educators are often already qualified in another field and even without the benefit of professional education many have developed quite considerable skill as a teacher of adults.
- And finally is development of adult education practitioners essentially different to or merely one part of the more general field of teacher education. To many adult education activists these generic programs are an anathema. However, as the processes of teacher development are increasingly informed by the practices of adult teaching and learning, this position becomes less tenable. Teachers are also adults!

It is in the resolution of these more fundamental questions that the future of adult education as both a field of practice and a field will ultimately depend.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to tell the story of the development of the formal education programs offered by the University of Technology, Sydney. Admittedly, this account has been a very personal and probably a very partial one. However, many of the themes that have been discussed in this single case study, it could be argued, are relevant to a consideration of the broader issues confronting the formal education of adult education practitioners both within Australia and internationally.

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