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Editorial: Reflections on teacher education: developments and challenges.

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This editorial is different in style from my previous editorials for the *European Journal of Teacher Education* (EJTE). It is more personal as it is my last editorial, after 15 years of involvement with the journal - first as Deputy Editor (2002 – 2006) and then as Editor (2007-2019). Professor James McCall was the Editor when I became Deputy Editor and I would like to thank him for his continuing support throughout my entire editorship. It has been a pleasure to work with so many authors and reviewers over the years and to have the support and encouragement of the Editorial Board. I would also like to thank both Co-Editors that I worked with (Geri Smith, 2008 - 2015 and Maria Assunção Flores, 2016 - present). Finally, I would like to thank Routledge Taylor and Francis. Over the years I have worked with different Managing Editors and Production Teams and everyone has been supportive of the editorial tasks and the production of each issue.

Looking back much has changed over my time as Editor in the processing and reviewing of the papers submitted. When I first started as Deputy Editor the authors submitted their papers by posting them via traditional post to the Editor. At that time there were three issues of the EJTE each year with just 22 papers received in 2002. Not long after I became Editor the number of papers quickly increased with the move to the submission and review process online. In 2008, an application for the EJTE to be included in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) was successful. This also led to a significant increase in the number of papers submitted each year, particularly as authors in some countries are expected to submit their papers only to peer-reviewed journals included in SSCI. Since inclusion in SSCI the Impact Factor of the journal has steadily improved and is currently 2.286, with the journal ranking 50th in the list of 243 journals included in the 'Education and Educational Research' category. Added to this, the pressure on university staff in the field of teacher education across Europe and beyond to undertake research and to publish papers arising from their work has meant submissions from a much wider range of countries. To accommodate the ever-rising submissions of papers the number of issues per year increased to four a year in 2006 and to five issues a year in 2016. The number of submissions is now over 400 per year from 57 countries which on the one hand is a mark of the success of the EJTE and on the other hand means the review process takes a long time as we work with so many papers.

While much has changed in the processing and reviewing task and in the number of papers and issues of the journal there have also been many changes in teacher education yet some things have remained the same. When James McCall wrote his last Editorial in EJTE he reflected on the period he had been Editor saying,

Teacher Educators have been subject to many of the pressures on staff in higher education more generally: increasing workloads; demands for greater accountability; use of guidelines or legal frameworks governing, inter alia, entry qualifications,

length and content of courses, arrangements for school placements, and assessment requirements ... (McCall, 2006, p. 429)

These challenges all remain relevant today. To mark the 40th Volume of EJTE I looked back over the 40 years of papers submitted to the journal along with Maria Assunção Flores. I will not repeat here all the changes, challenges and developments we reflected on in that Editorial (see Livingston and Flores, 2017). Rather I have made a selection of themes that have particularly stood out for me: quality teachers and teacher education; university/school partnerships in teacher education; social justice and inclusive education.

Over the period of my editorship there has been a growing and changing emphasis in policy, practice and research on teacher quality, quality assurance and the link between teacher quality and raising student attainment. This has significantly increased attention on teacher educators' and teacher education's role in developing high quality teachers. Since the early 2000s there has been a steady flow of papers published in EJTE that have discussed research studies that shared the aim of identifying contributing factors to development of quality teachers, quality teaching and quality teacher education. Many of the papers discussing the development of quality teachers included related and recurring themes of teachers as professionals, reflective teachers and teachers as practitioner enquirers. These papers implicitly or explicitly were often underpinned by socio-cultural theories with the emphasis on learning as a collaborative, social process in which new knowledge is socially constructed. The submission of papers from researchers across Europe and beyond has demonstrated that teacher education institutions are still grappling with finding ways to shift from a transmission model of teaching to the application of more active involvement of teachers and their students in understanding and developing their own learning. Authors of empirical studies have presented and discussed tensions arising regarding accountability and responsibility. More freedom for teachers to make decisions at classroom level about how to reach learning outcomes has been accompanied by increasing accountability to measure and report on what they do. This has also been the case for teacher educators. Many papers have explored increased accreditation requirements for teacher education and teaching standards that have led to required changes in teacher education curricula and assessment processes. In an increasing number of countries university/school partnerships in teacher education are either strongly encouraged or mandated, involving changes in the role of universities in teacher education. In some countries greater emphasis on direct experience of practice for student teachers has resulted in a move to school-led teacher education, significantly reducing university involvement.

Despite an increase in research exploring university/school partnerships, the concept of partnership and what a partnership model of teacher education means in practice often remains unclear. What is understood by partnership in some cases involves a formal Memorandum of Understanding, with carefully identified and agreed roles and levels of accountability and responsibility for teacher education between different stakeholders. However, often models of partnership are established more informally and appear to be more flexible in structure and implementation. Studies presented in papers submitted to EJTE have involved researching models of partnership at the initial phase of teacher education and at the career-long professional learning phase. These partnerships models have been presented as distinct from one another or proposed as a continuum whereby university/school partnerships begin at the initial teacher education phase, continue through an induction phase and into in-service teacher education. This highlights that there are different types of partnership models and there is more for us to learn from research and practice about the purpose, benefits and

challenges of university/school partnerships in teacher education. In particular, more research is needed to uncover the components of different partnership models and their changing relational dynamics.

The complexity of learning and teaching in general and the complexity of *becoming* a teacher has been another theme in many of the papers during my Editorship. Political, economic, social and technological change has been explored in many of the papers as the context for the increasing complexity of teachers' work. The challenge is understanding the implications of these changes for teacher education alongside the impact of globalisation, migration and the diversity of the learning needs of students. For many working in the field of teacher education these changes and challenges lead to feelings of uncertainty and instability. This Special Issue begins with a paper authored by Ian Mentor, which is based on his keynote address to the Association for Teacher Education in Europe Annual Conference in 2019. In his paper, Ian Mentor calls for a focused international research agenda for teacher education, in a context where he suggests that 'global politics are unpredictable and where the meaning of 'truth' is frequently called into question'. He emphasises that the struggle for social justice in and through education and teacher education must above all be based on a deep commitment to the human spirit, to the power of human agency and to a profound commitment to a professionalism in teaching and research which is based on those values. I firmly agree with this and it is my hope that policy-makers and researchers will respond to the proposal for an international research agenda in teacher education. It could not be more necessary at this time of political and social turbulence. In my view, this research agenda must also give greater attention to understanding the role and responsibility of teacher education in developing inclusive education to enable every teacher to meet the needs of all our young people. It is fitting that this last issue of EJTE which I have editorial responsibility for is a Special Issue that is entitled, *Enhancing Teacher Education for Inclusion*. In my view everyone working in teacher education has responsibility to take forward the embedded values of inclusion. I am delighted to have shared this editorial responsibility with Lani Florian and Donatella Camedda who provide a guest editorial below.

Finally, EJTE is an important journal for sharing international research on teacher education. I wish the new editorial team well as they take up the task of continuing to move the journal forward.

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Livingston, K. and Flores, M.A. (2017). Trends in teacher education: a review of papers published in the European Journal of Teacher Education over 40 years, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 40. No. 5, 551 – 560.

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