WHY DO EDUCATIONAL REFORMS FAIL? The case of Further Education Teacher Training: an analysis using a Punctuated Equilibrium framework.

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Paper presented to

School of Education and Continuing Studies, University of Portsmouth
Annual Conference 11th July 2016
Education and Childhood Studies: Research, Practice and Impact
The Research Problem

Have attempts at reforming FETT failed?

During a similar period of time reforms to teacher training in the school’s sector and in HE appear to have been more successful
Rationale

• Long term personal and professional interest. My original appointment was to work on the Cert Ed/PGCE programme for FE.
• The status and standing of FETT has been and remains problematic.
• I have previously researched and published in this field.
• A long term academic interest in the interface(s) between policy formation and implementation and professional practice.
A Methodological Note

Long term commitment to a teacher as researcher / practitioner researcher philosophy

1. Influenced by the approach developed in CARE at the UEA, especially the work of Lawrence Stenhouse

2. Distinction drawn between the curriculum as an intention, plan or prescription – what one would like to happen. And the curriculum as what does happen - the reality.

3. Policy analysts often draw a similar distinction: the gap between policy prescription and intentions and policy outcomes
REFORMING FETT

Two major attempts at reform


2. *Equipping Our Teachers For The Future* 2004
Haycocks Reports 1975, 1978

CONTEXT:

• Colleges were broadening their student intake eg 16-19
• The expanding college sector was attracting new FE teachers and teachers trained for schools
• Vocational teachers had strong identities as trainers, not teachers. Many adopted traditional teaching styles.

Haycocks 1 recommended that all new FE teachers should be trained. All established staff should attend INSET day-release.

Haycocks 2 focussed on the training of part-time FE staff, very few of whom had a recognised teaching qualification.
Outcomes of the Haycocks Reports

• Although neither report was implemented in full the number of trained teachers in the sector expanded gradually during the 1980s

• Provision of inservice Cert Eds and pre-service PGCEs expanded overseen by Regional Advisory Councils.

• No clear policy concerning the quality of FE staff. Staff development left to individual colleges – an uneven *ad hoc* response. Some colleges provided little or no training.
Equipping our teachers For The Future 2004

CONTEXT

• Expansion of FE provision during the 1980s and 90s including academic courses, provisions for young people who previously had not attended college and, more recently, young people aged 14-16.

• Incorporation of the college sector 1992 – marketised competition

• Concerns about “skills” – from the late 1970s to Leitch 2006, indisputably a continuing concern. (note the publication on Friday 8/7/2016 of the Sainsbury Review of post-16 education).

• Concerns post-1997 about “standards” – see “Success For All” 2002

• Continuing concern about the quality of FE Teacher Training
Why Reform FETT in the 21st Century?

- a “history of benign neglect”. (Lucas 2004 p77)

- “a coherent body of ‘professional knowledge’ for these groups of teachers has yet to be articulated”. (Robson 2006 p23)

- Vocational or subject expertise *per se* has been perceived as a sufficient qualification to teach in the sector and this has produced a culture in the FE sector where the FE teachers’ identity is tied to their expertise. (Lucas 2004)

- As a consequence the professional practice of the FE teacher has been relatively uninfluenced by new ideas or the broader debates concerning teaching and learning (Lucas 2004 p77).
Equipping Our Teachers (2004)

Proposals

• The introduction of Qualified Teacher status – QTLS would be a licence to practice. New teachers would have up to 5 years to gain the qualification
• At the start of their careers all teachers should take the “Passport to Teaching” that would equip them with introductory skills and knowledge to teach their subject
• New professional standards would be introduced across the sector. The sector skills council, LLUK, was given responsibility for their development and was asked to work with the TTA to devise standards which would be, as far as possible, common across 14-19 teaching and build on the standards being developed by the Higher Education Academy for the university sector.
• New arrangements for Quality Assurance including endorsement and verification by LLUK and a four year cycle of inspection by OFSTED
• Introducing planning and monitoring arrangements through LLUK
• Developing the skills of teacher trainers within a framework developed by LLUK
• Developing and extending approaches to mentoring
• A commitment to lifelong professional development
• Creation of a network of Centres of Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs)
• Introducing new funding arrangements
Outcomes of “Equipping our Teachers”

- A qualifications framework for teacher education programmes:
  CTLLS
  DTLLS – offered in HE. Levels 5-7. (Old Cert Ed/PGCE)
  PTLLS

- College principals require a professional qualification

- The introduction of CETTS – to develop and disseminate best practice in FETT across the sector
OUTCOMES continued

• The identification of two teaching roles: the FULL teaching role and the ASSOCIATE role.

• The development of QTLS standards (and ATLS for the associate role).

• All teachers in the sector register with the IfL, the new professional body.

• All teachers in the sector undertake at least 30 hours CPD in order to maintain their registration with the IfL.
Why Did The FETT Reforms Fail?

Need to examine the literature:

• Conceptual - innovation and change
• Theoretical - strategic change
  - corporate focus
  - process and implementation
• Public Policy – Punctuated Equilibrium
Punctuated Equilibrium

Baumgartner, F. and Jones, B. 1993, 2009

Equilibrium = Stability (maintenance of the status quo, the creation of policy communities to support a policy monopoly)
Punctuate = Policy change associated with alternative policies that mobilise previously uninvolved actors

PE occurs when the policy monopoly is destroyed and new policies implemented thereby creating new monopolies (change but possibly masked by an overall perception of stability)
Learning and Skills Sector Teacher Education Reform
Members of Policy Communities and the Policy Network

- Ministers and civil servants from the DfES
- LLUK and SVUK
- Higher Education Institutions (represented by UCET)
- Colleges of Further Education (represented by the Association of Colleges)
- Adult and Community Education (represented by NIACE ?)
- Work-Based Learning providers (represented by the Association of Learning Providers)
- Regulatory Agencies (QCA, OFSTED)
- Others including consultants who have undertaken projects for LLUK, representatives from individual HEIs and CoFEs.

The key characteristic of the policy communities is that the participants have resources that are important for effective decision-making in the policy area. As a result there is “high quality” interaction between members and a “significant degree” of consensus on ideology, values and broad policy perspectives.
Punctuated Equilibrium

• In any policy sector there are long periods of stability followed by periods of (public/professional) interest, scrutiny and action.

“The forces that create stability during some periods are the same that combine during critical periods to force dramatic and lasting changes during other periods”

(Baumgartner and Jones 1993)
Punctuated Equilibrium

- What PE attempts to explain is the shifts in the rate of policy change and why they occur at particular points in time.
- Underpinned by insights from Rational Choice Theory – equilibrium is rare in politics, disequilibrium and change are the norm.
- Stability is much more common in the policy communities where actors share understandings and recognise the mutual benefits or attempt to insulate their decisions from the wider political process.
- Agenda change often associated with new interest groups and coalitions.
Punctuated Equilibrium

• Baumgartner and Jones suggest that the “processing capacity” of organisations means that they can only concentrate on issue at a time - consequently decision-makers focus on one to the exclusion of others.

• A “virtuous circle” or “bandwagon” effect as the new ideas take hold and the existing monopolies are challenged - the equilibrium is punctuated
Application of PE to FETT Reforms

- Existence of well established policy communities and networks
  - Late 1970s/1980s - Regional Advisory Councils, CoFEs controlled by LEAs
    - Stable policy monopoly
  - 21st C - larger number of policy communities
    - Including new organisations eg LLUK, Work – Based Learning providers and Regulatory agencies including OFSTED. Presented a challenge to the stability that existed

Incorporation and marketisation had introduced new agendas
New Labour Govt set up sector skills councils including LLUK and gave them political authority to frame the agenda(s)
• “Processing capacity” and focus

LLUK responded to Labour Govt education, skills and inclusion agendas. Arguably this over-expanded the agendas for change. LLUK did not focus solely on the FETT reforms but became involved in a wide range of policy initiatives that involved the Learning and Skills sector.

LLUK was able to mobilise new policy communities but unable to establish consensus on policy detail and implementation.
Conclusion

• Haycocks is perceived as successful even though neither of the two reports were fully implemented (Cantor and Roberts 1986).
  Stability with slow incremental changes in FETT throughout the 1980s

• Rapid change following the introduction of the *Equipping our Teachers* agenda but some of the reforms have not survived implementation
  Lack of consensus in the policy community
• Efficacy of the analytical framework
  It does enable an examination of periods of policy stability and periods of rapid/intense change. Policy change is explained by challenges to policy monopolies. In the case of FETT it is possible to see how the lack of success of the reforms set in motion 12 years ago can, in part, be attributed to the failure to establish a new policy monopoly.
• Need to examine other teacher training sectors, especially secondary education using the same approach
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