

Integration, Contextualisation and Continuity: Three themes for the development of effective music teacher education programs

Abstract

This paper reports the findings of a study exploring early-career music teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service teacher education programs in Queensland, Australia. It also explores influences impacting upon early-career music teachers' perceptions of effectiveness and early-career music teachers' perceived needs in relation to their pre-service preparation. Findings suggest that pre-service teachers perceive a need for teacher education courses to be contextualised, integrated and allow for the continual development of knowledge and skills throughout their early years in schools. This research provides an empirical basis for reconceptualising music teacher education courses and raises important issues that music teacher educators need to address in order to ensure that graduates are adequately prepared for classroom music teaching.

Key words

early-career teachers, music education, praxis shock, pre-service preparation, teacher education

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Why do we need to look at music teacher education?

The quality of teacher education directly impacts on the quality of teaching occurring in schools (Carter, Carre, & Bennett, 1993; Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2000a; Temmerman, 1997), as well as early-career teachers' ability to cope effectively in the classroom (Gratch, 2000; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). If pre-service teacher education courses do not effectively assist early-career teachers (those teachers in their first four years of teaching) to have *realistic* expectations of teaching life, they may experience praxis shock. Praxis shock is the 'shock' experienced by teachers when there is a discrepancy between their expectations of school life and the realities of teaching (Ballantyne, 2006a). This 'shock' causes teachers to re-evaluate their preconceived notions about teaching (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) and seems to manifest itself in the high incidence of 'burnout' among music teachers documented in Australia by both Kelly (1999) and Leong (1996). One way to address praxis shock and 'burnout' among early-career music teachers is to explore ways to better prepare them for the workforce during their teacher education¹ (Stokking, Leenders, De Jong, & Van Tartwijk, 2003).

The literature suggests that early-career music teachers have a unique perspective on what constitutes effective teacher education – firstly, secondary teachers tend to view themselves as discipline specialists i.e. most music teachers view themselves as *musicians* or *music* teachers rather than merely teachers (Ballantyne, 2005; Ramsey,

¹ Throughout this paper, pre-service music teacher education programs (or courses) refer to the specific coursework pathway taken by students wanting to become secondary classroom music teachers.

2000). Secondly, music teachers in Australia are “not very positive about their pre-service education experience” (Leong, 1996, p. 110), and of all music teachers in Australia, “music teachers in Queensland were most likely to consider a career change or focus” (Leong, 1996, p. 114). Thirdly, in Queensland, where this research study is set, quantitative research suggests that early-career music teachers feel that their preparation left considerable room for improvement (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004).

Previous research that influenced this study included Youn’s (2000) study into how pre-service music teachers learn to be teachers, DeLorenzo (1992), Krueger (2000) and Richard and Killen’s (1993) research into perceived problems of beginning music teachers, DeLorenzo (1992) and Conway’s (2002) research exploring teachers’ perceptions of their induction experiences, Conway (2001; 2002) and Temmerman’s (1997) studies into the effectiveness of pre-service courses in preparing primary and instrumental teachers to teach music, and Leong’s (1996) PhD into the competencies required by beginning music teachers. More recently, an Australian review of school music education argued that the improvement of music teacher education was essential in order to improve music education in schools (Pascoe et al., 2005). However, despite arguments that music teachers are the key stakeholders in music education (Pascoe et al., 2005), and that the needs of early-career music teachers should be considered when reconceptualising teacher education courses (Youn, 2000), no research so far has specifically explored early-career classroom music teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service teacher education in light of their early teaching experiences. It therefore seems that this study exploring early-career music teachers’

perceptions of their course is important in improving the teaching of music education in universities.

This paper will summarise the findings from a doctoral thesis that aimed to fill the gap in the literature by exploring early-career music teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service preparation.

Context for the research

This study was undertaken in Queensland, Australia, with early-career music teachers who had graduated from pre-service education programs at the University of Queensland, the Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University. All accredited teacher education programs in Queensland have to comply with the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration's guidelines, which details course requirements in terms of philosophies, goals, structure and content of programs, the teaching and learning approaches of the program and assessment of student work. Accordingly, in order to meet accreditation requirements, the course designs at all Queensland universities are fairly similar throughout the State. There are, of course, pedagogical and curriculum differences across universities, but in this study, this did not impact significantly on perceptions of effectiveness (as investigated using chi-square analyses).

The music teachers in this study were required to attend university in a full-time capacity for at least four years (this is required in order to be registered as a teacher - some attended for five years). These four years usually comprised two years of content studies and two years of general education studies. Graduate students, who had completed a

previous degree in music or could demonstrate skills equivalent to significant tertiary musical studies, completed only the final two years of education studies (Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 1999).

Method

The research questions which guided this study were:

1. How do practicing early-career secondary music teachers regard the effectiveness of their pre-service course in preparing them for teaching in schools?
2. How do teacher education tradition preferences and early years of teaching experiences impact on early-career music teachers' perceptions of effectiveness?
3. What other influences impact upon early-career music teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service preparation?
4. How do early-career music teachers perceive their needs in relation to pre-service preparation?

This study was conducted in two stages using a range of methods:

1. *Questionnaire survey of early-career music teachers (focussing on research questions 1 and 2).*

In Stage 1, all teachers who had graduated from Queensland University of Technology (QUT), the University of Queensland (UQ) or Griffith University (GU) in the years 1998-mid 2002 were sent a mail questionnaire investigating their perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service music teacher education program. These universities are the major providers of music teacher education for secondary teachers,² and therefore

² Other universities do not always have a cohort of secondary music teachers.

their graduates represent more than 90% of the early-career music teachers currently teaching in Queensland (17% from GU, 44% from QUT, 39% from UQ, 75% female). Completed responses were returned by 76 people, which was a response rate of 56%.

Respondents to the questionnaire had similar demographics to those the questionnaire was sent to, and were therefore representative of early-career music teachers teaching in Queensland, *viz.*, approximately 17% from GU, 40% from QUT, 40% from UQ and 78% female. In addition, the spread of experience of respondents was fairly even with 22.4% having taught for one year, 34.2% having taught for two years, 21.1% having taught for three years, and 22.4% having taught for four years. The detailed demographics of questionnaire respondents are found in Appendix 1.

2. *Semi-structured interviews with selected early-career music teachers (focussing on research questions 3 and 4).*

In Stage 2, 15 early-career music teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured interviewing process in order to investigate in depth the issues arising from the analysis of the questionnaire data (research questions 1 and 2). Research questions 3 and 4 were also addressed in the interviews. Participants were purposefully selected to represent varied teaching experiences and perceptions on the effectiveness of the course and comprised 11 females and 4 males, the majority of whom were either somewhat satisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with their pre-service course and three who were very satisfied with their pre-service course. They came from a variety of schools including both

metropolitan and rural schools in State, Catholic, and non-Catholic Christian schools.

Detailed characteristics of interview participants can be found in Appendix 2.

Data analysis

The quantitative data from the questionnaires were analysed using simple descriptive statistical analysis. Mann-Whitney, Wilcoxon and chi-square tests were also used to investigate differences between teacher groups and between item responses. In addition, a technique known as Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) was applied to participants' ratings of the importance of various areas of knowledge and skills, and the performance of their teacher education program in addressing these areas of knowledge and skills. This method was used specifically to address research question 1, and has been reported in detail in Ballantyne and Packer (2004).

The qualitative data were subjected to content analysis. Content analysis is a method commonly used to identify themes, concepts and meaning emerging from participants' discussions in interviews (Burns, 2000). The analysis in this study followed the process described by Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001) and used coding for manifest content. Manifest content is that which is directly said in the interviews, whereas latent content is that which is implied (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001).

Summary of research findings

In this paper, the research findings of this study are summarised using the research questions as organisers. This is followed by a discussion of the themes emerging from

the findings, further research in the area is discussed and the significance of the study and limitations are outlined.

The quotations included in this paper are representative of comments given by interviewees.³ Findings are presented within the context of this study, but may be useful in drawing comparisons between the experiences of early-career music teachers who have undergone similar pre-service courses and early-career experiences elsewhere in the world. For example, comparisons may be drawn when examining the design of pre-service courses in other contexts, particularly where pre-service music teachers enrol firstly in music courses, followed by studies in education. Similarities may also exist between this study and contexts around the world where early-career music teachers find themselves in charge of music departments, and dealing with multiple roles and responsibilities beyond those for which they were trained.

How do practicing early-career secondary music teachers regard the effectiveness of their pre-service course in preparing them for teaching in schools?

The findings from this study indicate that early-career secondary music teachers perceive that their pre-service courses provided inadequate preparation for teaching - 55% of questionnaire respondents reported being 'somewhat satisfied' with their pre-service preparation and 29% reported being either 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'.

³ Full copies of transcripts are available on request.

In particular, it was found (and reported in Ballantyne & Packer, 2004) that:

- pre-service music teacher education programs should place greater emphasis on developing knowledge and skills specific to the teaching of music within the classroom (this was called *pedagogical content knowledge and skills*);
- greater emphasis in pre-service preparation should be placed on the development of specific *professional knowledge and skills* associated with the practical aspects of running a music program, including involvement in extra-curricular programs, legal issues, budgeting, and communication skills;
- *music knowledge and skills* are perceived as very important, but are not always adequately covered in pre-service programs; and
- *general pedagogical knowledge and skills* are considered as both important and adequately covered in pre-service courses.

Analysis of the interviews similarly found that when discussing their ideal teacher education preparation, early-career teachers in this study felt that *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* and *professional knowledge and skills* were most useful to them as teachers. However, their comments indicate that the present structure of music coursework programs appears to concentrate predominantly on general education knowledge and skills rather than the knowledge and skills specific to teaching music. This resulted in most teachers reporting that they felt unable to apply the knowledge and skills from general education subjects (where *general pedagogical knowledge and skills* were predominantly addressed) to the context of the music classroom.

Roy *If we were taught at university the things that we were taught, but they were put in a music context ... then that would solve a lot of those problems.*

Claire *I wish they'd ... just taken us and gone: "ok this is how you teach major scales" ... I guess in the education department we got taught vaguely how to teach stuff and in music department they taught us music skills but no one married the two ... and said: "This is how you can make it real for kids".*

They consequently valued music curriculum subjects and the practicum (where *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* were addressed) over general education subjects.⁴

The comments of the interviewees suggest that the *professional knowledge and skills* associated with being a music teacher were hardly addressed at all in the pre-service courses.

Janis *I guess [I went in] a bit naively and expect[ed] that all you got to do is classroom music, then you get to the other side when you get all the instrumental stuff, especially in the small schools. Running ensembles for the instrumental side of things, and organising newsletters or letters home to parents about the music ... I guess I just didn't expect [that there would be]... so much of it to do ...*

Carolyn: *Nobody tells you how much time it takes for you to do all these things ... They don't prepare you for that as a music teacher specifically.*

Consequently, this was the area that seemed to cause the most difficulties for early-career teachers as they began teaching and is an area where competence needs to be developed by pre-service music teachers, prior to entering the teaching workforce.

Analysis of both the questionnaires and interviews revealed that early-career teachers in this study perceived an effective teacher education course to be one that facilitates the integration of *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* and *professional knowledge and skills* throughout. Their ideal music education course would be contextualised and

⁴ Further details of this analysis, including data, can be found in Ballantyne (2006b)

embedded within the future school context of pre-service music teachers. In particular, interviewees reported that they would have liked to see guided reflection on their classroom practice incorporated into their course before, during and after their pre-service practicum experiences.

In both questionnaires and interviews, the practicum was viewed as a very important part of the course. It was viewed as the area of their course where knowledge and skills were most easily applied to the music teaching context.

Antoinette *Thank goodness for my practical experiences ... I think more emphasis needs to be placed on the practicum process because this is really where most of the learning happens for the pre-service teacher.*

Jessica *The only thing of value was the prac, which we didn't get to do until we were two years into our course.*

This contrasts with their perception that the theoretical part of the course was too far removed from its application in the music classroom and thus not 'useful' to future early-career music teachers. Accordingly, interviewees proposed that the theoretical subjects in their pre-service course be restructured - with clear links being made between general education 'theory' and the music classroom.

One way of bridging the theory-practice divide was suggested by Ken, when he noted that the practicum experience would be improved if the format was slightly changed so that guided reflection (at university) could take place alongside the school experience.

Ken *Ideally, I would think it [would] be nice if the pracs were maybe more mixed ... so that you would be teaching a couple of days a week perhaps or mornings or something. And then you'd come back and meet like in a tutor group and talk about what was going on and look at it from your theory point of view and other people who talk about their experiences and so on as well. So there was less separation between those areas. I think for me coming into teaching we have like huge amounts of theory or so, that's just fantastic but it was the bigger step to actually doing it for yourself, by yourself.*

Fiona also noted that guided reflection and communication among pre-service students might enhance the practicum experience.

Fiona *I would like to see more networking between students, so that we can discuss our pre-service experience. Some good things that were done was internet communication. We all had a website to log on to each week and we could chat on that a little bit, but I would like to see more follow up with meetings or times to get together to chat about it, because ... it's a very steep learning curve.*

On the whole, the early-career music teachers in this study felt that their courses needed to create more links between general education theory and music teaching practice.

How do teacher education tradition preferences and early years of teaching experiences impact on early-career music teachers' perceptions of effectiveness?

This research question explored two factors which the literature suggests impact on teachers' perceptions of course effectiveness. Analysis of the questionnaire data revealed that early-career music teachers in this study would like teacher education courses to reflect their preference for Zeichner and Liston's (1990) academic and social efficiency traditions.

Table 1

Number of respondents who gave first preference to each of the four teacher education traditions

Teacher education tradition	Questionnaire statement	Most important tradition <i>n</i> = 64 ⁵	
		Frequency	%
Academic tradition	Teacher education courses should focus on cultivating high levels of music skills and music knowledge in future teachers	26	40.6
Social efficiency tradition	Teacher education courses should focus on providing future teachers with the skills and competencies that they will require for their working lives in schools.	24	37.5
Developmentalist tradition	Teacher education courses should focus on teaching future teachers about the developmental needs of students, and how to use this knowledge to teach effectively in schools.	13	20.3
Reconstructionist tradition	Teacher education courses should focus on how future teachers can use education to move towards a more socially just society.	1	1.5

The results clearly indicated that early-career teachers viewed high levels of music skills and knowledge (academic tradition) and preparation for the realities of their working lives (social efficiency tradition) as similarly important. It was expected that preferences for teacher education traditions would determine how teachers viewed the importance of

⁵ Seven respondents who ranked two or more traditions as equal first and four who did not answer this question are not included in these figures. If respondents who gave two ratings of 1 are included in this sample, then there are two more ratings of 1 for the academic tradition, five more ratings of 1 for the developmentalist tradition, and five more ratings of 1 for the social efficiency tradition.

the various aspects of the course, and how well they felt this was accomplished. However, chi-square analyses revealed that there were no significant relationships between tradition preferences and perceived relevance of their course; satisfaction with their course, or perceived importance or performance of any aspects of the course.

Upon further exploration (in the interviews), it was found that interviewees' perceptions of the academic and social efficiency traditions were remarkably close - many perceived the academic tradition to be relevant only in the context of music teaching, and therefore strongly linked to the social efficiency tradition, where music teaching knowledge and skills were valued (Ballantyne, 2006c). Their expressed difficulty separating these two approaches to teacher education seems to confirm the argument that teachers view themselves as content specialists, and that pre-service teacher learning is 'situated' within discipline areas (Ramsey, 2000; Shulman & Sparks, 1992).

The approach or 'tradition' that early-career music teachers predominantly speak of reflects their desire for the integration and contextualisation of music and education components throughout the course. It is likely that teachers' preference for an integrated approach that is located specifically within the context of music education underlies the value they place on *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* and *professional knowledge and skills*.⁶

⁶ More detail on tradition preferences of early-career music teachers can be found in Ballantyne (2006c).

In exploring the impact of the early years of teaching, all teachers interviewed reported having experienced praxis shock in their first few years of teaching (Ballantyne, 2006a). Indeed interviewees reported that the areas where they felt most unprepared were perceived to be related specifically to their experience of teaching *music* in the secondary school. When describing these early experiences, interviewees continually repeated that these problems were a ‘shock’ to them following their pre-service preparation. Analysis of the interviews identified two factors underlying the experience of praxis shock:

- physical and professional isolation within the school; and
- high workload and multiple responsibilities associated with the extra-curricular music program.

In short, teachers did not feel that their pre-service education had prepared them adequately for these aspects of being a secondary classroom music teacher. It is interesting that most of their reported difficulties fell within the area of *professional knowledge and skills* – an area where the pre-service preparation was perceived to be particularly lacking. The common experience of praxis shock in the early years of music teachers was most keenly felt in relation to areas that are specific to the music discipline (Ballantyne, 2006a).

What other influences impact upon early-career music teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of their pre-service preparation?

Words such as ‘love’, ‘passion’ and ‘rewarding’ were repeatedly used by teachers when describing their feelings towards music teaching.

Antoinette I absolutely love being a music teacher. It is a very rewarding experience to help students strive to achieve their performance goals. I like the fact that I am able to get to know students on a number of levels.

It is clear from the interviews that early-career music teachers want to make music meaningful for students and to help them love music.

Claire I love the fact that you can have a kid that has had no experience in music come into your classroom and you can get them playing three chords on a guitar and see their face light up when they make music. ... I love that part of being a music teacher, it allows kids to create, and they get such an excited feeling, about you know, this is their work, its ... something they've done, you know, from nothing and I think that's one of the best parts about being a music teacher.

Early-career music teachers' 'passion' for music teaching seems to originate in their 'love' for the subject area and this 'passion' for teaching music seemed to sustain them through rough periods of praxis shock, and may therefore explain their continuation in the profession.

Although most interviewees reported that they 'love' their job, they perceived themselves professionally in a variety of ways – as a 'musician', a 'music teacher', or a 'teacher'. It emerged that their perceived ability in the subject area seemed to determine how they view themselves professionally – the 'better' they felt they were at music, the more likely they were to see themselves as musicians. Conversely, if they reported little confidence in music skills and knowledge, they were more likely to see themselves as 'teachers' (Ballantyne, 2005).

The professional identities of music teachers, which are arguably based on their self assessment of their musical ability (supporting previous research by Hargreaves, Welch,

Purves, & Marshall, 2003) may impact on their perceptions of the effectiveness of their course. Teacher education has the potential to either challenge or maintain pre-service teachers' preconceptions of their professional identity, and teacher education should arguably develop in future teachers a professional identity which enables them to be effective throughout their career. It seems that professional identities (and their underlying assumptions) should be examined critically during pre-service teacher education. Beliefs about musical efficacy, including efficacy doubts (Wheatley, 2002) should be explored in terms of how these might influence their success as teachers. By engaging in this style of reflection, pre-service music teachers will arguably develop the skills to reflect and consolidate their developing identities once in schools and therefore improve as effective classroom practitioners (Hawkey, 1996).

How do early-career music teachers perceive their needs in relation to pre-service preparation?

Participants in this study expressed the need for pre-service preparation that overtly encourages and helps students to apply educational knowledge and skills to the context of the music classroom (*pedagogical content knowledge and skills*) and to the professional responsibilities of a music teacher (*professional knowledge and skills*). They suggested that practicum be incorporated from the first year, and combined with guided critical reflection in order to help students make links between general educational theory and its application in the music classroom.

In addition, when discussing their early teaching experience, interviewees highlighted the importance of quality induction programs that were discipline specific. They spoke of the need for appropriate induction methods incorporating mentoring by experienced *music* teachers. This finding supports prior research showing that music teachers value mentors who are also music teachers (Conway, 2001; DeLorenzo, 1992; Krueger, 1999, 2000; Yourn, 2000).

Three themes emerging from the findings

Three significant themes emerged from this study into early-career music teachers' perceptions of pre-service teacher education programs – the need for contextualisation, integration and continuity of pre-service music teacher education programs. Contextualisation and integration mostly occur within the pre-service program, and will be discussed first, followed by continuity.

Contextualisation

Findings from the questionnaire and interviews suggest teachers felt that both music and education theory was presented in isolation from the context of *music teaching* during their pre-service course. This seems to be an important criterion by which early-career music teachers evaluate the 'effectiveness' of a pre-service course. As such, it is recommended that pre-service teacher education courses for music teachers should prepare future teachers for the *specific context* within which they will be operating (in this case as secondary classroom music teachers). This incorporates the skills and knowledge associated with teaching music in classroom, but also takes into account the

extra-curricular and professional expectations of classroom music teachers in Queensland (thereby addressing pedagogical content knowledge and skills as well as professional knowledge and skills). A contextualised course should, according to the participants in this study, provide pre-service teachers with the means to apply knowledge and skills learnt in all subjects to their future context as music teachers by presenting both music and education theory in terms of their application to *music teaching*. Clear links should be made between general education ‘theory’ and the music classroom, and regular school practicums should be combined with guided critical reflection in order to help students make ‘links’ between general educational ‘theory’ and its application in the music classroom.

Integration

This study revealed that early-career music teachers perceive integration to be central to effective music teacher education programs. An integrated course is defined here as one that helps students make links between theory and practice, between general education and music education as well as relating the knowledge presented in all their music discipline and education units to their future professional practice. This need for integration is reflected in participants’ teacher education tradition preferences - they did not identify wholly with any of the teacher education traditions but rather favoured a music teacher education course that integrated elements from each tradition. In practice, a course that truly integrates areas of social efficiency (or teacher professionalism), academia (or content knowledge and skills), developmental psychology and social justice doesn’t compartmentalise discipline areas or favour one tradition over another. This will

be achieved by assisting students to make explicit links between theory and practice (within courses), between general education and music education (across courses) as well as relating the knowledge presented in all their music discipline and education units to their future professional practice (between schools, the community, and universities).

Integration and contextualisation in practice

Integration and contextualisation can only occur when the structural design of the pre-service course is reconceptualised, particularly in terms of the practicum and the sequence of preparation. Practicum needs to be located throughout the course, coupled with reflective-style discussions that explicitly link current educational theory with the context into which music teachers will be operating in their early years (the music classroom). In particular, the areas of *pedagogical content knowledge and skills* and *professional knowledge and skills* should be used to contextualise courses. These areas may provide a bridge between *music knowledge and skills* and *general education pedagogical knowledge and skills*, and therefore provide the contextualised element so obviously desired in a pre-service course. In this way, the links between education and music, university and schools will be made clearer to future music teachers.

Continuity

The theme of continuity is one that predominantly emerged from teachers' discussion of their early experiences, where the nature of the praxis shock experienced by early-career music teachers in Queensland became evident. Although a pre-service course that is both integrated and contextualised should minimise the incidence of praxis shock, an

appropriate continuation of this style of support once teachers enter the schools seems essential. Continuing support would need to address the unique problems that early-career music teachers face, and their need for discipline-specific induction and mentoring programs. While this study did not specifically address the issue of in-service music teacher education, it is clearly an area for further research. Similarly, some attention to the working conditions of music teachers in Queensland may be warranted.

This study is generative, in that analysis of early-career music teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of their teacher education courses highlights the need for more in-depth research in the following areas:

- how contextualisation should best be addressed in a pre-service course;
- other stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of music teacher education courses;
- the nature and design of a contextualised and integrated in-service music teacher education program;
- comparisons of how early-career teachers from other secondary discipline specialisations perceive the effectiveness of their teacher preparation;
- the ways that early-career teachers' perceptions of their teacher education course may impact on their praxis shock;
- the link between discipline specialisation and perceptions of general teacher education course effectiveness; and
- how the development of professional identity throughout the pre-service course impacts on the incidence of praxis shock in the early years of teaching.

Limitations

This study considered only the needs and perceptions of early-career music teachers regarding the nature and design of an effective teacher education program. Although they are arguably the major stakeholders in the pre-service program, these teachers' opinions should be considered alongside other stakeholders such as university lecturers and experienced music teachers. While this could be considered a limitation, it is better thought of as a basis for replication and elaboration in similar or different contexts.

In addition, the reported perceptions are relevant specifically to the experiences of the early-career music teachers from three universities in Queensland who graduated between the years 1998 to mid-2002. It is nevertheless expected that the findings of this study may hold considerable relevance to many other pre-service programs in Australia and worldwide.

Although the demographics of respondents were very similar to the demographics of the total sample, it is impossible to know whether the people who responded to the questionnaire had particular experiences in the pre-service course or early experiences in schools that systematically influenced the likelihood of their responding to a questionnaire.

Conclusion

The provision of quality teacher education in Australia is a current and concerning issue (Pascoe et al., 2005) that impacts on the quality of teaching in schools (Darling-Hammond, 2000b). In the case of music teachers, it is apparent that teachers' affinity with their subject area may have much to do with the way they conceptualise an 'ideal' teacher education course and may also contribute to the ways that they are able to utilise the knowledge and skills developed in their teacher education preparation once in schools. By exploring how early-career music teachers perceive the effectiveness of their pre-service teacher education, this study provides a basis for the planning and development of pre-service music teacher education programs based on the needs and experiences of new graduates. Teacher education programs that address these needs are likely to have a greater potential to prevent praxis shock and 'burnout' among early-career music teachers.

In particular, this study is significant because it proposes that the effectiveness of teacher education could improve if courses were integrated, contextualised and provided continued support beyond graduation. This is relevant to the education of future music teachers and also arguably to teacher education courses in general (particularly those training specialists for the secondary school). Consequently the concepts of contextualisation, integration and continuity provide a platform for the development of effective teacher education programs that align with the needs of early-career teachers and may provide designers of teacher education programs with a way forward in the development of effective, meaningful teacher education.

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Appendix 1

Demographic characteristics of questionnaire respondents (Stage 1)

Category	%
University attended	
QUT	39.5
UQ	40.8
GU	17.1
Other	2.6
Course completed at university	
Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	9.2
Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	13.2
Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	26.3
Graduate Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	14.5
Bachelor of Education (Secondary) Graduate Course	5.3
Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary)	23.7
Master of Teaching (Secondary)	2.6
Other	5.3
Gender	
Female	77.6
Male	22.4
Age	
20-24	32.0

25-29	58.7
30-34	5.3
35-39	4.0

Number of schools taught at

One	39.5
Two	31.6
Three	9.2
Four	3.9
Five	2.6
six or more	13.2

Years teaching classroom music

One	22.4
Two	34.2
Three	21.1
Four	22.4

Current school

Independent non-Christian School	2.8
State School	62.5
Catholic School	9.7
Church/Christian School other than Catholic	23.6
Other	1.4
Metropolitan	74.3
Rural	24.3

Category	%
Current employment situation	
Casual	1.4
Contract	16.9
permanent part-time	4.2
permanent full-time	77.5
Attendance at in-service training or further study	
No attendance at in-service training or further study since beginning teaching	21.1
Has attended in-service training or further study since beginning teaching	75.0
Only classroom music teacher?	
There are other classroom music teachers at school	40.8
Only classroom music teacher at school	55.3
Employment as instrumental teacher	
Not employed as an instrumental teacher	67.1
Employed as an instrumental teacher	32.9

Appendix 2

Characteristics of interview participants

Participant	Teacher education tradition favoured	Satisfaction with course	Degree undertaken	University attended (numbers assigned to indicate different universities)	School type	Yrs teaching
Carolyn	Academic	Somewhat dissatisfied	Graduate Diploma of Education	1	Metropolitan State School	4
Fiona	Academic	Somewhat satisfied	Graduate Bachelor of Education	2	Metropolitan State School	1
Colleen	Academic	Very satisfied	Bachelor of Music/ Bachelor of Education	1	Metropolitan State School	1
Lotte	Developmentalist	Very satisfied	Bachelor of Education	3	Rural State School	2
Rory	Developmentalist	Somewhat dissatisfied	Graduate Diploma of Education	2	Metropolitan Church/ Christian school other than Catholic	2
Grant	Developmentalist	Somewhat satisfied	Bachelor of Music/ Bachelor of Education	3	Rural State School	2
Susan	Developmentalist	Somewhat satisfied	Bachelor of Music/ Bachelor of Education	1	Rural State School	2
Ken	Social Efficiency	Very satisfied	Graduate Bachelor of Education (Secondary)	1	Metropolitan Church/ Christian school other than Catholic	2
Roy	Social Efficiency	Somewhat dissatisfied	Bachelor of Arts/	2	Metropolitan Catholic	4

			Bachelor of Education (Secondary)		School	
Joy	Social Efficiency	Somewhat dissatisfied	Graduate Bachelor of Education	2	Metropolitan Catholic School	2
Claire	Social Efficiency	Somewhat dissatisfied	Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Education	2	Metropolitan Church/ Christian school other than Catholic	3
Antoinette	Social Efficiency	Somewhat dissatisfied	Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Education	3	Rural State School	3
Jackie	Could not decide	Somewhat dissatisfied	Graduate Diploma of Education	1	Rural State School	3
Janis	Could not decide	Somewhat dissatisfied	Bachelor of Music Education	3	Rural State School	2
Jessica	Could not decide	Somewhat satisfied	Bachelor of Music/ Bachelor of Education	1	Metropolitan State School	2

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