

# **Traversing the journey from student teacher to full teacher certification**

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Dr Tracey Hooker

Simon Archard

Dr Lynley Westerbeke



# Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec)

- Located in Hamilton, Waikato Region.
- One of the largest Polytechnics in New Zealand.
- We educate around 15,000 students each year in New Zealand and a growing number of countries across the globe.
- Research is applied with a community focus.

## Our Mission

*To build stronger communities through education, research and career development.*



# What started us on this journey?

- The notion of a journey through initial teacher education into the profession of teaching intrigued us.
- Changing role of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Lack of empirical evidence about the certification journey.
  - Drop-off in the first two years – why?
- Developing a new ITE degree programme at Wintec.

# Our presentation today

- Phase one
  - Graduate survey
  - Eight initial semi-structured interviews (graduating students)
    - Prior to beginning certification
- Initial findings and analysis



# Methodology

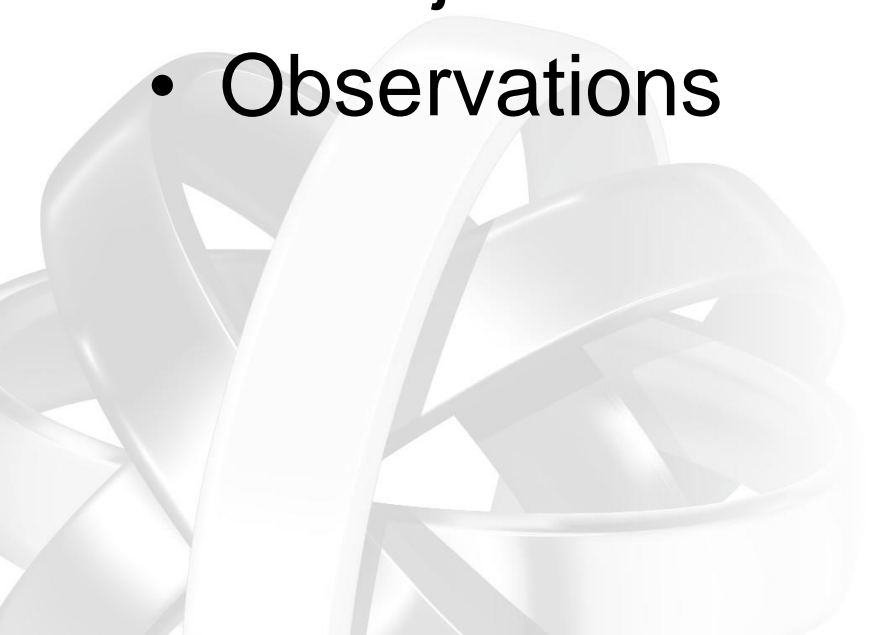
- Ethical approval received through Wintec's Human Ethics Committee
- Longitudinal study – over two to three years
  - Three phases
- Mixed Methodology:
  - Quantitative
  - Qualitative case studies
- Thematic analysis using narrative frames

# Phases

- Phase 1 2018 – preparedness to teach.
- Phase 2 2019-2020 – Induction and mentoring of newly qualified teachers.
- Phase 3 2020-2021 – Moving into full teacher registration (we intend to apply for Teaching and Learning Research Initiative funding for this final phase).

# Methods

- Survey
- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus groups
- Field-journals
- Observations





# Participants

- 29 respondents for the survey (96% of the graduating class)
- 8 case study participants
- Diverse participants:
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Learning ability

# Initial Findings



# Survey

- Designed to understand the relationship between the Graduating Teaching Standards (which was the measure used at the time to assess preparedness to teach) and students' self-assessment against the framework.
- 21 questions
- Likert scale

# Survey Findings

- Vast majority identified that they felt prepared to teach (n=26)
- High confidence aspects included:
  - Professional knowledge and skills (n= 15)
  - Curriculum application (n=14)
  - Support children's physical and emotional safety (n=14)
  - Understanding of identity of learners (n=16)
  - Critical reflection skills on teaching practice (n=18)

- **Confident aspects included:**
  - Understanding of theoretical elements of learning and development (n=18)
  - Planning, teaching and assessing knowledge (n=17)
  - Provide learning experiences (n=15)
  - Understand professional responsibilities (n=12)
- **Less confident aspects:**
  - Knowledge of Tikanga me ngā te reo Māori to effectively support bicultural practice (n=8)
  - Ability to meet the needs of Māori learners (n=7)

# Interviews

- Eight semi-structured interviews
  - Degree programme – strengths, weaknesses and gaps
  - Preparedness to teach
  - Future of ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand
- Conducted either at Wintec or graduates place of employment
- Researchers were interviewers

# Interview Findings

- Impact of Field-based Practice
  - Mentor was influential – quality and relationship
  - Quality of setting
  - Praxis – putting theory into practice
  - Triadic relationship

“...linking things. So we learn theories in class, and because we have a field-based practice, we see the children for the whole year, so we can see the change in them. So if we learn something new and you want to plan something, you can do it any time of the year with any children because you have the relationship with them.”

(KM, initial interview, November 2018)

- Advocates for Social Justice
  - Inclusion of all learners
  - Fighting for quality
  - Challenging discrimination and oppression
  - Empowering children and families

“So just learning more about equity, and equality, and inclusiveness. ... Just to be able to include those children but not just them but being able to see their families and where they come [from], understanding their community.” (JE, initial interview, November 2018)



- Intentional Teaching

- Reflective and reflexive
- Consciousness of identity and context
- Awareness of their impact on children’s learning

“...use of reflection is that it makes me think to either stop, think, and change so that next time, I'm actually a little bit more conscious of why I'm doing something, or this way differently this time or something [sic]” (PH, initial interview, November 2018)

- Tikanga me ngā te reo Māori
  - Mix of confidence levels
  - Could be strengthened in the programme
  - Expectations versus reality

“Te reo is a big one among quite a lot of students. We do do it, but there's not enough support, I guess.” (KM, initial interview, November 2018)

- My future in ECE

- Positive
- Realistic view
- Tensions

“I suppose knowing in myself that I've learnt what I need to learn over the last three years, which put me in a position to not only teach but to continue to learn. So I feel positive in myself that this is the start of another journey. That's not necessarily because I've stopped studying that that's it.” (AS, initial Interview, November 2018)

“There's definitely always room for improvement. And in terms of hearing what my peers have been through or seen and then just around the community and social side of it hearing that sort of stuff that it could be better. That's that upper level that we have no control of. (LN, initial interview, November 2018)

# Other insights

- Varying journeys so far
- Changing context in ECE – strategic plan
- Challenging relationships
- Induction and mentoring journey
- Further study
- Employment challenges

# Next steps

- Focus group – start of semester two (half way through first year of teaching)
- Co-researchers and creating the research design
- Observations
- Second round of interviews (November 2019)