

## 5 Teaching, integrity and the development of professional responsibility

### Why we need pedagogical phronesis

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#### 6 Introduction

The possession of a doctorate has long been seen as a sufficient qualification to teach at university coupled with the received wisdom that teachers are born, not made. These assumptions have tended to retard efforts to raise the status of teaching in higher education. Over the last 20 years, there has been an exponential growth in professional development for academic faculty in response to the massification of higher education and increasing competition between institutions for students, both nationally and internationally (Knapper 2010). This period has also seen the introduction of a wide range of reward and recognition schemes to promote interest in, and respect for, the teaching role. Considerable efforts have been made to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning in the wake of Boyer's influential work (Boyer 1990). Yet, international survey data indicate that the proportion of university faculty whose primary interest is in teaching has actually fallen since 1992, while those indicating their primary interest is in research has risen by 9 per cent (Locke 2008). This is indicative of a shifting set of priorities that have important implications for the notion of professional responsibility.

Halsey and Trow's study of British academics during the 1960s found that only 10 per cent were interested in research and a mere 4 per cent regarded research as their first duty (Halsey & Trow 1971). Writing in the late 1970s, Wilson asserts that the majority of American academics considered 'teaching to be more important than research' (Wilson 1979: 234). Hence, the prioritisation of research over teaching is a relatively recent trend and might appear strange, or even perverse, given the need to raise professional teaching standards in a modern mass system. This attitude, though, is consistent with the increasing fragmentation of the academic profession into the para-academic functions associated with teaching, research and service (Macfarlane 2011a). It is partly a result of the expansion of the higher education system worldwide and the increasing division of labour among academic faculty that has accompanied it. The proportion of faculty employed in 'teaching-only' positions has increased and the unbundling of the role means that academic life is now more differentiated into the 'haves' and 'have nots'. Crudely, the 'haves' work in elite institutions, do

1 research and spend comparatively little time teaching. The ‘have nots’ work in  
2 access-based institutions, do little or no research, and spend most of their time  
3 teaching and assessing students (Sikes 2006).

4 The growth of higher education has split the academic profession more starkly  
5 than ever before. In this context, professional responsibility is under severe  
6 pressure, particularly in relation to teaching as a relatively disesteemed activity  
7 despite institutional efforts to reward good practice at the margin. Here it is  
8 important to note that such efforts rarely displace the pre-eminence of research  
9 and may even lower the status as a result of tokenism and the strengthening of  
10 bifurcation (Macfarlane 2011b). Faculty at elite institutions, in particular,  
11 are being encouraged to become enterprising income-generators committed  
12 to increasing their citation rating rather than professional and responsible  
13 teachers.

14 In this context, this chapter will focus on the role and function of initial  
15 professional development courses for academics with a teaching role and the  
16 importance of incorporating a focus on ethical issues in academic practice. It will  
17 explore the centrality of ethical issues to professional teaching practice and how  
18 integrity may be developed through a focus on practice dilemmas linked to virtue  
19 theory. This approach to professional ethics contrasts with compliance-oriented  
20 codes of practice. Drawing on an Aristotelian approach, I will argue that the  
21 most important quality of a ‘good’ teacher is pedagogical *phronesis* (McLaughlin  
22 1999), one of several key intellectual and moral virtues – including fairness,  
23 authenticity, collegiality and humility – which are central to acting in a profes-  
24 sionally responsible manner.

## 25 **The growth of professional development**

26 There has been a significant growth in initial professional development courses  
27 for teachers in higher education since the late 1990s across a number of national  
28 contexts. In the UK alone, over 100 such programmes have been accredited by  
29 the Higher Education Academy. Demands for higher professional teaching  
30 standards among academic faculty are growing. National professional teaching  
31 standards for higher education have already been developed in the UK and a  
32 recent government-backed report on university funding has recommended that  
33 all new academics with teaching responsibilities should take a teaching training  
34 qualification (Browne 2010).

35 In constructing the curriculum, teaching and learning certificate programmes  
36 face an uneasy tension between pressures to induct participants into institution-  
37 specific procedures and policies as opposed to more theoretically driven critical  
38 analysis of pedagogic practice, informed by the wider research literature. The  
39 academic interests and professional instincts of educational developers who  
40 organize and teach such programmes tend to lean toward the latter objective  
41 but significant institutional pressures can exist for greater attention to be paid to  
42 the advocacy and inculcation of policies and mission statements. Programmes are  
43 also predominantly based on a ‘psychologised’ understanding of teaching in

1 higher education and draw on concepts such as deep and surface learning, reflective practice and learning styles. The philosophy, sociology and history of  
2 (higher) education (Peters 1964) is largely excluded from this curriculum while  
3 there is a significant ‘pedagogic gap’ (Malcolm & Zukas 2001) between profes-  
4 sional preparation programmes and the complex, uncertain and ‘messy’ reality of  
5 *being* a higher education teacher. Developing a theoretical and practical under-  
6 standing of the ethical issues of academic practice is a part of developing a strong  
7 sense of professional responsibility. If practitioners can be encouraged to do so,  
8 this is one way of closing the pedagogic gap between teaching and learning  
9 theory and actual practice.

10  
11 Postgraduate Certificates in learning and teaching in higher education<sup>1</sup> are  
12 now offered by nearly all UK and Australian universities as a mechanism for  
13 ensuring that new academic faculty are prepared for the teaching role. Universities  
14 in other parts of the world, such as Hong Kong, also provide a range of  
15 ‘introductory’ or induction-type courses of between a day and a week in  
16 duration. While shorter in duration, these programmes face similar challenges in  
17 balancing content between academic and institutional-specific purposes. Many  
18 postgraduate certificates were derived from former induction programmes  
19 where the main focus was on inculcating policies and procedures rather than a  
20 broader form of professional development. They also derive from the largely  
21 practical focus of early educational development units in the 1960s (Land 2004).  
22 The work of the UK Staff and Educational Development Association and the  
23 Higher Education Research and Staff Development Association of Australasia  
24 has helped to support the gradual spread of such programmes from the early  
25 1990s.

26 In the UK, a fresh impetus was given to the professional development  
27 of faculty in the late 1990s with the publication of the Dearing report on higher  
28 education which recommended, *inter alia*, the need to raise the status of  
29 teaching (NCIHE 1997). The report also led to the creation of the Institute  
30 for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, which became an accrediting  
31 body for postgraduate certificates in learning and teaching at UK universities.  
32 By 2007, the newly re-branded Higher Education Academy had accredited  
33 168 such programmes (Kandlbinder & Peseta 2009). A series of similar reforms  
34 have been introduced in Australia, including the establishment of the Australian  
35 Learning and Teaching Council (formerly the Carrick Institute for Learning  
36 and Teaching in Higher Education) in 2004 and a Learning and Teaching  
37 Fund designed to incentivize institutions to improve the quality of the student  
38 ‘experience’.

39 Hence, initial professional development for academic faculty has moved firmly  
40 into the mainstream in the space of little over ten years. In the UK, a range  
41 of system-wide forces contributed to this rapid growth including further massi-  
42 fication, the introduction of professional teaching standards for higher education  
43 in 2006 and the increasing benchmarking of university standards through  
44 quality assurance measures and the publication of market-sensitive data on  
45 student satisfaction levels. In Australia, similar pressures exist with new academic

1 standards for universities currently under development led by the Australian  
2 Learning and Teaching Council. The rapid emergence of professional develop-  
3 ment programmes for academic faculty in these contexts has taken place against  
4 the backdrop of a number of suppositions.

## 5 **Underpinning assumptions**

### 6 *Training as teachers, not academics*

7 Professional development programmes for academics are almost entirely  
8 concerned with their preparation as ‘teachers’ in higher education rather than  
9 academic practitioners who also research and perform service tasks (Blackmore  
10 & Blackwell 2006). While sometimes these courses are referred to as about  
11 ‘academic practice’, this phrase tends to be interpreted quite narrowly and in  
12 reality focuses almost exclusively on teaching and student learning. Where  
13 ‘research’ is included in the aims and objectives of such courses, this tends to be  
14 about encouraging participants to undertake research into their own teaching  
15 practice otherwise known as ‘pedagogic research’. Curiously, the nature of this  
16 commitment can potentially conflict, or lead to a change of focus away from,  
17 subject-based research more likely to benefit the career development of academic  
18 faculty (Stierer 2007).

19 Hence, programmes of ‘professional development’ for university teachers that  
20 focus on the teaching role look increasingly out of kilter with the emergence of  
21 research expectations in ‘new’ as well as ‘old’ universities (Sikes 2006). Increased  
22 competition among institutions for research funding in the wake of research  
23 audit exercises in the UK, Australia and New Zealand are having a significant  
24 effect on the re-shaping of academic practice but this is yet to be substantially  
25 reflected in the way postgraduate certificates are constructed. While the success-  
26 ful completion of a Postgraduate Certificate is often an espoused condition of  
27 probation at UK universities for inexperienced faculty, there is little evidence that  
28 this requirement is enforced in practice. In other words, while institutions are  
29 formally committed to new faculty becoming ‘competent’ teachers, their career  
30 chances are really shaped by a broader set of considerations increasingly focused  
31 on their research, publication and income generation activities.

32 Moreover, professional development courses in teaching are more firmly  
33 established in institutions that are predominantly teaching rather than research  
34 led. While this might appear consistent with institutional mission, faculty  
35 working in such institutions are more likely to possess a strong teaching  
36 background, possibly as a result of having previously worked in the schools  
37 or post-compulsory education sector rather than coming from a research  
38 background. Hence, the professional development needs of faculty in teaching-  
39 led institutions tend to coalesce around research rather than teaching. It follows  
40 that faculty working in research-intensive institutions may require relatively  
41 more teaching development provision, although their personal and professional  
42 objectives are unlikely to identify such needs.

## 1 *The domesticating curriculum*

2 Many postgraduate certificates originated as induction courses and  
3 expanded over a number of years until some form of formally accredited  
4 programme emerged (Land 2004). This background means that there is still  
5 an often unspoken tension between, on the one hand, induction into  
6 institutional procedures, cultures and modes of working, and, on the other,  
7 a more critical engagement with an academic body of literature concerned  
8 with learning and teaching in higher education. While most programmes seek  
9 to traverse these two aims, there is almost always an uneasy tension  
10 between them.

11 The role of Postgraduate Certificates in enculturation is reflected in the  
12 way that universities tend to regard educational development units as agents of  
13 institutional change and consequently link or align them closely with human  
14 resource and central management functions as a result (Bath & Smith 2004;  
15 D'Andrea and Gosling 2001). Most are located as part of central support  
16 services rather than in academic faculties. This location creates a tension between  
17 different types of course aims.

18 Postgraduate certificates are, by definition, a masters' level qualification  
19 prompted in large part by the need to demonstrate that such an award for teach-  
20 ing has academic status. This status necessitates, or perhaps justifies, the  
21 construction of aims and objectives that are academic in nature and connected  
22 with examining a body of theoretical knowledge and associated ideas critically.  
23 Yet, in practice, another set of institution-specific aims tend to exist alongside  
24 these academic objectives. These are associated with inducting 'students' (who  
25 are often, in effect, colleagues) into institutional practices and ensuring that they  
26 conform to a variety of connected values. This can include their preparation to  
27 teach according to localized (and sometimes amateurish) definitions of 'good  
28 practice' assessed through observation by often untrained but 'experienced'  
29 senior faculty, and a preparedness to internalize and express implicit or explicit  
30 support for prevailing university policies and strategies. Indicative of this latter  
31 orientation is where programmes focus strongly on the inculcation of policies  
32 concerning, say, student diversity and inclusivity, and course approval and quality  
33 assurance processes with 'expert' teaching contributions from organizational  
34 postholders in these various areas. Hence, the institutional status and location  
35 of postgraduate certificates tends to result in a competing, and often conflicting,  
36 set of aims. This type of programme may be labelled as postgraduate but much  
37 of the learning can, in the worse cases, be essentially about the internalization of  
38 organizational practices.

39 Such practices are connected to what Trowler and Cooper (2002) would char-  
40 acterise as teaching and learning 'regimes' exacting in the process a substantial  
41 influence over the formation of academic identity in the context of teaching and  
42 learning programmes. Their analysis also draws on the distinction made by  
43 Agyris & Schön (1974) between espoused versions of these regimes and how  
44 they really operate in practice to argue that the extent to which the curriculum

1 is open to negotiation on the basis of practitioner needs is questionable (Trowler  
2 & Cooper 2002).

3 A strong institutional focus calls into question the extent to which such  
4 programmes are genuinely critical and academic in nature rather than a narrower  
5 form of context-specific training. The credibility of programmes can be adversely  
6 affected where they focus too heavily on seeking to disseminate institutional  
7 policies and priorities, particularly among faculty who see themselves as  
8 'cosmopolitans' rather than 'locals' (Gouldner 1957). These 'cosmopolitans'  
9 identify more strongly with their discipline than the organization, tend to be  
10 more research-active and engaged with communities of colleagues beyond rather  
11 than within the institution. In this context, participation in and completion of  
12 a postgraduate certificate is about 'toeing the line' and possibly fulfilling a  
13 probationary requirement (Macfarlane & Gourlay 2009). Such programmes  
14 are predominantly aimed at young and inexperienced faculty who are rarely in  
15 the position to challenge the intellectual focus or the need to comply if they  
16 wish to fulfil their probationary requirements. In terms of professional responsi-  
17 bility, this means that such courses take as their main point of reference  
18 the institution rather than the profession. As a result, professionalism is presented  
19 through a narrow prism. While the espoused emphasis of such courses is  
20 often on the importance of critical engagement and contestation, the hidden  
21 curriculum is about domestication and the inculcation of institutional norms  
22 and values.

### 23 *The 'psychologised' curriculum*

24 Another underpinning assumption of postgraduate certificates is their theoretical  
25 basis. Most are heavily focused on a limited number of key concepts drawn  
26 principally from the psychology of education. According to a recent survey  
27 undertaken by Kandlbinder & Peseta (2009), the five most dominant concepts  
28 in such programmes are:

- 29 • reflective practice derived mainly from the work of Schön (1983);
- 30 • 'constructive alignment' derived from the work of Biggs (1996);
- 31 • deep and surface learning derived from the work of Marton & Säljö  
32 (1976);
- 33 • the scholarship of teaching and learning derived from Boyer (1990) and  
34 others;
- 35 • assessment-driven learning derived from the work of Gibbs & Simpson  
36 (2002).

37 These concepts are listed in order of their influence with reflective practice the  
38 most dominant. This finding corresponds with the similarly dominant role of  
39 reflective practice as the 'underlying philosophy' of teacher education for  
40 the school sector over the last 20 years (Whitty et al. 1992: 297). Arguably  
41 only the first three of the ideas identified by Kandlbinder and Peseta represent

1 theoretically grounded concepts with the final two (the scholarship of teaching  
2 and learning and assessment-driven learning) embodying a broader grouping of  
3 socio-political stances, notably the ‘scholarship of teaching and learning’, which  
4 has been criticized for its anti-intellectualism and conceptual confusion (Boshier  
5 2009). What the survey reveals is the dominance of what Malcolm & Zukas  
6 (2001) have identified as the psychologised curriculum for higher education  
7 teachers. Here, psychological approaches to teaching and learning tend to  
8 predominate, resulting in a reductive and more limited conceptualisation of  
9 pedagogy as an educational ‘transaction’ between individual learners and teach-  
10 ers, and an asocial construction of the learner. While the psychology of education  
11 has always represented an important strand of educational scholarship, it  
12 comprises only a small proportion of educational research as a whole (Crozier  
13 2007). Thus, novice higher education faculty are only being inducted into a  
14 small segment of the relevant literature, which might more broadly include the  
15 sociology of the discipline (e.g. Becher & Trowler 2001), the history of higher  
16 education in the relevant context, and the aims of higher education (Barnett  
17 1990). Nor do such courses introduce faculty to their potential wider social role  
18 as public intellectual acting as critics, commentators and advocates of particular  
19 causes (Said 1994). Here there is a tradition, particularly in some national  
20 contexts such as France, for academics to work in trying to influence attitudes in  
21 society drawing them into contestation beyond their own immediate academic  
22 specialism. To echo Trowler & Cooper (2002), there is a need for postgraduate  
23 certificate courses to ‘move beyond’ the psychological approach to one which  
24 more strongly encompasses sociological perspectives.

AQ: Said 1994 is  
not listed in the  
References.  
Change to 1993?  
YES

## 25 *The evidencing of practice*

26 A fourth underpinning assumption of postgraduate certificates is their mode of  
27 assessment. Most adopt some form of ‘reflective portfolio’ consisting of a  
28 mixture of evidence gathering and more academically oriented engagement with  
29 the literature. Portfolios are becoming increasingly popular as a means of  
30 evidencing the professional learning of a wide range of professions (Baume &  
31 Yorke 2002). In the UK, portfolios are often organised to demonstrate explicitly  
32 compliance with national professional standards. This makes it relatively straight-  
33 forward for such courses to meet accreditation requirements since their learning  
34 outcomes are identical, in effect, to the professional standards.

35 However, assessment by portfolio raises a number of concerns around authen-  
36 ticity. Portfolios often purport to provide a mechanism for professionals to  
37 connect their working practice with theory but can encourage a compliance-  
38 based approach to values requiring participants to ‘evidence’ the way in which  
39 they meet these expectations. This tends to result in a defensive, anodyne and  
40 sometimes inauthentic description of critical incidents, where new professionals  
41 feel they must demonstrate their commitment to particular values such as  
42 ‘diversity’ or institutional managerial objectives, such as the use of a prescribed  
43 university virtual learning environment. Requiring participants to scratch around

1 for evidence of their ‘competence’ or ‘goodness’ in this way is both embarrassing  
2 and fundamentally flawed as a means of professional preparation. Even if encour-  
3 aged to do so, participants will rarely reveal a great deal in such documents  
4 about their failures (or doubts) as a teacher preferring instead to focus on  
5 successes that demonstrate that they have ‘met’ various required standards. Such  
6 behaviour is about conforming with performative expectations rather than  
7 engaging meaningfully with the concept of professional responsibility. This raises  
8 a fundamental question about the extent to which assessing teaching develop-  
9 ment in this way can be considered authentic. The fear is that participants, who  
10 are often already skilled academic writers in their own right, may simply play the  
11 ‘assessment game’ (Stocks & Trevitt 2008).

## 12 **The neglect of values**

13 In the UK, the representation of evidence in reflective portfolios will often  
14 mirror the accreditation requirements of the Higher Education Academy,  
15 which identifies a series of areas of professional knowledge, areas of activity and  
16 professional values, the latter of which are expressed in the following terms  
17 (The Higher Education Academy 2010):

- 18 1 respect for individual learners;
- 19 2 commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research,  
20 scholarship and/or professional practice;
- 21 3 commitment to development of learning communities;
- 22 4 commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledg-  
23 ing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity;
- 24 5 commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of  
25 practice.

26 In the context of the preparation of a higher education faculty, professional  
27 values are seen, in practice, as subsidiary to the areas of ‘knowledge’ and  
28 ‘activities’ which serve to define the professional capacities of a higher education  
29 teacher in the UK. Yet the portfolio method of assessment means that novice  
30 teachers are often required to evidence that they have ‘met’ or in some sense  
31 conform with this set of values. This can lead to statements, for example, that the  
32 novice teacher has taken particular measures to accommodate the needs of  
33 students with disabilities or sought to encourage greater integration of inter-  
34 national students within class activities. While such initiatives are important, the  
35 requirement to report such activities in such self-justificatory terms is of dubious  
36 value. Also, the teaching-only nature of postgraduate certificate programmes  
37 makes it difficult for practitioners to develop an understanding of ethics and  
38 values connected to academic practice and identity more broadly.

39 Ethics and values in relation to professional practice more generally are often  
40 seen to be ‘covered’ by reference to a written code or set of principles or values.  
41 When such codes are used as the sole basis of professional development, this



1 tends to encourage compliance rather than an engagement with values.  
2 Moreover, the UK has adopted a set of professional values, which, while gener-  
3 ally non-contentious, have limited specific relevance to teaching in a *higher*  
4 education environment as opposed to any other. Elsewhere I have suggested  
5 that commitments such as protecting student academic freedom or under-  
6 standing the needs of adult learners would have had more resonance for many  
7 **faculty** working in higher education than this set of general teaching values  
8 (Macfarlane & Ottewill 2005).

9 Another difficulty in depending on a written code of practice is that, while  
10 such documents invariably contain a praiseworthy set of sentiments, they  
11 are often too generalized and de-contextualized to be of much value to the  
12 practitioner. Faced with a real, often complex situation, a professional academic  
13 would rarely find much comfort or use in relying on a code of practice. In  
14 teaching professionals about ethical issues, such codes tend to be arid, prescrip-  
15 tive documents that take little account of the ‘messy’ reality of practice.  
16 An alternative approach is to think of the ethics of academic practice as connected  
17 with everyday moral ‘virtues’. These refer to excellences of character that  
18 are required by professionals to carry out their role as teachers. The idea of  
19 virtue goes beyond the idea of ‘skills’ or techniques associated with being an  
20 effective teacher such as how to give a lecture or classroom control (Carr 2009).  
21 For Aristotle, virtues were things like courage, generosity and truthfulness  
22 (Aristotle 1906).

23 Virtues do not provide a step-by-step guide to action in the manner of an  
24 ethical algorithm, as they are essentially concerned with personal identity rather  
25 than action, although the assumption is that ‘good’ people are more likely to do  
26 ‘good’ things. Learning about virtue takes place on a continuous basis and is  
27 refined through experience and influenced by others, notably professional role  
28 models. This means that someone never really ‘acquires’ a set of virtues  
29 but spends their life striving to become a better person, a notion which fits  
30 comfortably with the modern mantra about professional self-improvement.  
31 Virtue theory also recognizes that emotion and human desires play an important  
32 role in the way people behave rather than trying to describe a rational and  
33 theoretical ethical position in the manner of utilitarianism or Kantianism (van  
34 Hooft 2006).

### 35 **Pedagogical phronesis**

36 Understanding the centrality of virtues in the everyday decision-making of  
37 academic **faculty** is critical to engaging teaching professionals. This is not the  
38 same as simply ‘going through the code of practice’. Such an approach fails to  
39 engage with the values which professionals hold as individuals, depending  
40 on their background and experience, and offers little context for meaningful  
41 discussion, which is generally accepted as essential for the teaching of  
42 ethics. Furthermore, postgraduate certificates tend to pay limited regard to the  
43 departmental or discipline context. This is the real arena in which professional

1 values are formed and the role of senior academics as role models is critical in  
2 shaping them.

3 A number of writers have identified lists of moral virtues connected with life  
4 in general and teaching more specifically. Virtues represent the mean position  
5 between extremes of behaviour. Courage, for example, lies between the extremes  
6 of cowardice and recklessness. Aristotle understood excellence of character in  
7 terms of sincerity, right ambition, modesty and liberality among other virtues. In  
8 relation to the teaching role, Hare (1993) identifies courage, humility, impartial-  
9 ity, open-mindedness, empathy, enthusiasm, judgement and imagination.  
10 Elsewhere, I have argued that a relatively similar set of virtues can be detected  
11 from the application of practical reason (Macfarlane 2004). These include  
12 respectfulness towards students; (proper) pride in relation to preparation  
13 for teaching; courage to innovate; fairness especially in connection with the  
14 assessment role; restraint in taking theoretical and ideological stances; collegiality  
15 in working with colleagues and students; and openness in evaluation of our  
16 teaching.

17 Clearly, however, there is a risk in simply presenting learners with a 'list' of  
18 virtues. A more effective approach is to promote discussion of real life or real-  
19 to-life scenarios where fundamental virtues can be identified and applied. Yet, it  
20 is important to stress that appropriately complex professional scenarios rarely  
21 lend themselves to 'right' answers. The ultimate 'answer' is in developing  
22 teachers with the disposition to act with care and thoughtfulness in any particu-  
23 lar situation (Pring 2001). Such scenarios should reflect ordinary, everyday  
24 situations, such as a student requesting an extension for an assignment rather  
25 than 'extreme' situations. The latter approach to case study design in the  
26 teaching of business ethics runs the risk of reinforcing attitudes that unethical  
27 practice is rife and also often fails to connect to more ordinary, everyday  
28 dilemmas.

29 It might not be immediately obvious though how a list of virtues, with which  
30 few would probably disagree, might translate into something real or concrete by  
31 way of professional actions and responsibilities. A way forward in understanding  
32 the link to practice is provided by Nixon (2008). He connects the virtuous  
33 dispositions of truthfulness, respect, authenticity and magnanimity in academic  
34 life with what he terms 'virtuous orientations' (Nixon 2008: 110). These rela-  
35 tionships of virtue, as Nixon terms them, mean that the virtue of magnanimity,  
36 for example, implies the virtuous orientations of autonomy and care. He argues  
37 that the possession of a strong sense of professional identity or autonomy is a  
38 precondition for someone to be able to 'reach out' to others, 'accommodating,  
39 what is unknown, strange and radically different (Nixon 2008: 99). Similarly, he  
40 explains the virtue of authenticity as about exercising courage in relation to one's  
41 own agency and compassion in the role of 'other-as-agent'. At the heart of  
42 Nixon's analysis is the concept of capability. Here he is strongly influenced by the  
43 'capabilities' approach advocated by Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000) who  
44 shows how the capabilities approach has a particular resonance for women. As  
45 Sen argues, if someone is poorly educated, or perhaps illiterate, they will never

1 really be able to exercise fully their political freedoms since they will not enjoy  
2 the capability to participate fully. Practical wisdom or *phronesis* is an essential  
3 capability and a teacher in higher education who does not possess this quality will  
4 be less effective as a result. Without such a capability, anyone would struggle to  
5 function as a professionally responsible teacher.

6 Understanding what it means to teach ‘with integrity’ requires an integration  
7 of various virtues in professional practice, however these might be defined or  
8 identified. Most lists of virtues though are long and demanding. This creates a  
9 challenging proposition as personality differences between individuals means that  
10 teachers tend to be naturally disposed toward some virtues but not necessarily  
11 others. Some virtues are instrumental in nature and concerned with ‘getting  
12 things done’, such as courage or resoluteness, while others, such as respectfulness  
13 or sensitivity, are essentially non-instrumental (Pincoffs 1986). In other words,  
14 these virtues are about forming relationships with others and the exercise of  
15 softer interpersonal skills. Practitioners with strong non-instrumental virtues, for  
16 example, might be considered to make good personal tutors. A higher education  
17 teacher needs a combination of instrumental and non-instrumental virtues,  
18 although most will be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in achieving  
19 such a balance. Promoting self-awareness in this way is helpful in preparing  
20 practitioners for the challenges they will face in their teaching role.

21 Here, it might be argued that equipping higher education faculty as ‘reflective  
22 practitioners’ provides an adequate means of preparing them for the moral and  
23 ethical challenges they will face as teachers. Yet, being able to reflect does  
24 not necessarily connect with action meaning that a reflective teacher is not  
25 automatically a good one (McLaughlin 1999). Despite the intuitive appeal of  
26 reflective practice, it does not quite so easily translate into establishing better  
27 or more appropriate actions as a teacher.

28 What is often lacking from the notion of reflective practice is judgement, or  
29 what Aristotle termed *phronesis* or practical wisdom. In many ways *phronesis* is a  
30 better means of understanding the challenges of being a teacher than reflective  
31 practice since it connects values with actions. While craft knowledge or skills,  
32 what Aristotle called *techne*, can help in responding to a limited number of  
33 specific situations, *phronesis* is about deciding what to do more broadly. It  
34 demands some conception of what it means to live a good life and, crucially, the  
35 capacity to do so (Nixon 2008). Yet, more generally, practical wisdom must be  
36 applied in handling the large range of challenges thrown up by managing a  
37 group of students. Techniques, in other words, will never be enough. Pedagogical  
38 *phronesis* is about having good judgement as a teacher. It is what ultimately  
39 makes a good teacher rather than technique or even, to some extent, knowledge,  
40 and takes a lifelong and sustained commitment. Technique and knowledge are  
41 necessary but they are not sufficient.

42 Relationships of virtue stretch well beyond the teaching role. They also deter-  
43 mine how a teacher might meet a range of other professional responsibilities in  
44 relation to the research role, as a public intellectual or as an academic citizen  
45 more generally. Applying virtues to teaching does, however, sharply highlight

1 connections with other areas of professional practice in higher education, such as  
2 research or service work. There are several virtues that are common to being a  
3 teacher and a researcher. Examples might include respectfulness toward students  
4 and research subjects, respectively, or courage to innovate in classroom practice  
5 and in tackling unfashionable or highly challenging research questions.  
6 Practitioners in higher education are also faced with difficult ‘trade offs’ between  
7 the extent to which they devote time to research activities and in preparing for  
8 teaching. Similarly, offering students support beyond formal teaching duties,  
9 such as via personal tutoring or assessment feedback, rarely results in reward or  
10 recognition beyond personal conscientiousness. Here, the use of time spent  
11 on such service tasks might be more rationally spent on developing research,  
12 publication or income generation opportunities. Hence, choices in the use of  
13 time as an academic demand an ethical judgement. This is about maintaining an  
14 ethical balancing exercise between meeting the needs of students and developing  
15 a career where the rewards lie principally in individual achievement for research  
16 and scholarship. Such ethical issues are not easily resolvable.

## 17 Conclusion

18 The assumptions and dominant principles underlying the preparation of higher  
19 education practitioners are narrowly constructed in terms of a psychologised  
20 curriculum that rarely connects with the dilemmas of teaching practice. What we  
21 have, in effect, is a curriculum for the preparation and development of academics  
22 as teachers that is too oriented toward knowledge and skills and neglects the  
23 development of their practical wisdom or pedagogical *phronesis*. The politics of  
24 postgraduate certificates is impacted by the politics of institutional ownership  
25 and often results in insufficient attention to broader aspects of the study of what  
26 it means to *be* a higher education practitioner.

27 What is needed is a curriculum for the preparation of new academic faculty  
28 that reflects a much broader conception of their role in all elements of practice  
29 including research, service activities as well as teaching. ‘Professional responsi-  
30 bilities’ exist in relation to each of these roles, not just teaching. In relation to  
31 the research role, it is unfortunate that ethical matters are seen as part of the  
32 increasingly bureaucratic project approval process. This tends to militate against  
33 a genuine engagement with professional responsibilities in research. Understanding  
34 professional responsibilities in teaching in the same procedurally driven manner  
35 will only serve to undermine genuine engagement. In the age of the unbundled  
36 academic, it is important that we do not lose sight of the responsibilities that  
37 traverse the functions of academic life.

## 38 Note

39 1 This phrase is intended to incorporate a range of similarly titled postgraduate pro-  
40 grammes which aim to prepare academics predominantly for their teaching role. They  
41 will be subsequently referred to as ‘Postgraduate Certificates’.

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