**Ipda 2010 Presidential Address**

**Hard Times: the need for pragmatic professional development**

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction**Welcome to the ipda 2010 international conference. I am proud to be President of ipda and to give this Presidential address. I started my professional life as a teacher of geography but first, a little history. **ipda**As its name suggests, ipda (The International Professional Development Association) has at its heart the wish to support, develop and promote good professional development practice. Ipda was founded in 1968 and emerged from the work of University lecturers and researchers in the UK who were involved in the education and training of teachers, and the organisation in recent years has extended both internationally and outside education to encompass a much broader interpretation of professionality and development. The use of networking to enhance the professional learning of those engaged in professional development in all sectors is a key aim, and the term ‘**Association’** correctly describes the relationship between its members. However, in many ways it only partly describes our ambitions which are to be more proactive in bringing together those with an involvement in professional development. **Our aims** * to support, develop and promote good professional development practice;
* to provide a forum and promote networks of individuals concerned with professional development in education and training;
* to monitor and evaluate policy and practice developments;
* to liaise with other education and training groups both national and international;

For many years ipda has had individual members from across the globe, but initially there was little evidence of the impact of its practice beyond members as individuals. The successful annual ipda UK conference has always been an excellent opportunity for professional networking, and the publication of its international journal ‘*Professional Development in Education*’ has made the dissemination of research and examples of good practice a reality through the significant expansion of its international circulation in the last decade. But these cannot fully meet the need to bring together people engaged in professional development which, logistically, needs activities to be as **close to the geographical locus of their work as possible**. A key target for ipda has therefore been the setting up of international seminars, **National Professional Development Organisations and Chapters**. International seminars have included events in Tromso, Norway: (*Continuing Professional Development: A voluntary or Compulsory Activity?*); Copenhagen, Denmark: *(Professional Development Research, Policy and Practice - the nature of the relationship*); Amsterdam, The Netherlands: *(The Professional Development of Teacher Educators in Higher Education) and Cyprus.* National Professional Development Associations and Chapters of ipda have been established in Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland and Cyprus and we anticipate the formation of a Chapter in the Middle East in the near future. It is with great pleasure that we welcome **Professor Pandey** at the conference today to give one of the keynote addresses. Prof Pandey is a representative of the **All India Association for Educational Research (AIAER)** and we welcome ipda India as a fully recognised National Professional Development Association and a full partner of ipda in accordance with the current ipda constitution. **2010 conference**The annual conference is, of course, the best opportunity for networking. It is this community of learning professionals that is at the heart of our work. It would not take place without the hard work and dedication of a number of people and I am pleased to use this Presidential address as an opportunity to thank them for all the work they have put in. Roger Levy (chair), Jim O’Brien (sec), Cliff Jones (VC), Helen, Colleen, Jon, Catharine, Regina. Some give over hours in addition to their day jobs to review articles for the journal. Special thanks also to Katie Peace from Routledge who is the Journal’s production editor for the excellent way she has supported the growth and expansion of the journal in the last few years.We are also pleased to have on our team Prof Kit Field who was recently described as a ‘living legend’. Kit has been instrumental in developing our links with India and has been one of the key players in ipda and the journal over the years. He may be a living legend but he has no sense of direction and he’s no photographer (KJ decapitated)Without making this Presidential address too much like an Oscar ceremony, I must give special mention to Tony Bates who has been central in keeping the body and soul of ipda together since it began. If this were the civil service there would be automatic OBEs all round and Tony would have received his knighthood years ago and Jianghong would be Lady Bates. **The Theme of this conference is CPD in Hard Times**Some more history – or as Michael Gove would say, what would Nelson have done?One of the first articles I wrote was in 1987 – Educational Review – entitled: *the challenge of the ‘New INSET’*. Written at a time of expansion as public funding for ‘staff dev’ increased. Shift away from ad hoc development to focused and funded initiatives. Funding was available and (as is always the case) schools which could spot the opportunity took full advantage of the new funding to set up effective staff development systems. At the time I described it as a **row of terraced houses** where some have had refurbishment grants and been done up leaving the others looking a little shabby. 2010 is a reversal of the economic situation 20 years ago but, if we use the metaphor of the same row of terraced houses, we are now more likely to be talking about **repossessions**.I have not known a time when two major factors have come together so forcefully. One is the economic downturn (this is global) which is creating massive insecurity in all aspects of society. The second for me is equally worrying. It is the emphatic development of policy based on ideology which, of course, is the prerogative of any new government (in the words of Paul Simon, ‘every generation throws a hero up the pop charts’). However, where this differs is in the dismantling of institutions (in a conceptual sense as well as actually in bricks and mortar) which may never be rebuilt. You won’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone (and that’s enough pop song quotations!).So the ‘Hard Times’ are not only economic but they are a fundamental, ideological positioning as well. So how should we approach this new era? Do we need new models of CPD for ‘hard times’? The problem seems to lie in the gap between the pronouncement of the principles, the conceptualisation of the process, and the enactment of practice. In other words, there are three elements in play: * the ‘*political’* element (this is how you *must* do it),
* the ‘*professional’* element (‘this is how you *should* do it’), and
* the ‘*pragmatic alternative’* (this is how we *will* do it)

The key to ensuring effective professional development in its broadest sense must be in ensuring that the ‘*pragmatic alternative’* taken by those who manage professional development within schools is neither a short cut nor a major deviation from the political or professional elements.The political model: CPD as obligationThe political model is characterised by a view of CPD as a contractual duty. The requirement, for example, that teachers must gain the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) before moving into their first headship is uncontested. The ‘political’ interpretation becomes problematic when ideology or expedience override educational principles. Take the England White Paper as an example – some of you will understand this better than me. The White Paper in England published on Wednesday states:‘We will reform Initial Teacher Training so that it focuses on ***what is really important***’ (my italics). (p22)In Wales, the headlines demonstrate the political approach. Of most significance was the withdrawal of CPD funding from the GTCW conveniently announced before the publication of the report by Estyn inspectors praising its impact.Coming back to the NPQH, the DfE White Paper acknowledges the political model when it states:*‘We will reform the National Professional Qualification for Headship ... We are concerned that the qualification has been overly focused on how to implement government policy rather than on the key skills required for headship’ (para 2.38, p27).* That must be referring to the other government then! (in fact one of the striking things about the DfE White Paper is the criticism of previous central government involvement but unapologetically replacing it with new dogma)The professional model: CPD as partnershipDay (1999:6) distinguishes between ‘being a professional’ and ‘behaving as a professional’. He quotes Hargreaves (1994) in identifying the emergence of a ‘new professionalism’ or ‘post-technocratic model’ of professional education by which*‘to improve schools, one must be prepared to invest in professional development; to improve teachers, their professional development must be set within the context of institutional development’* (p.9)This is an important distinction and brings together the ‘job embedded’ element of staff development with the ‘job related’ element of continuing professional development. The ‘professional model’ of CPD builds on the concept of the **‘reflective practitioner’.** The teacher should engage in enquiry, be a **lifelong learner**, form **critical friendships**, **network**, **evaluate** and continually seek ways of improving practice. The ‘professional’ teacher as learner will maintain a professional development **portfolio**, set **personal development targets**, and support the development of others. The professional learner will have extended themselves intellectually within the theory of the profession and will have followed or be following a **Masters** programme in Education.Gary Brace, Chief Executive of GTCW sums up the professional model nicely:***‘… underpinning much of [the professional development framework] is respect for the professional judgement and position of teachers. Recognising that teachers may have individual professional needs that may not always be the same as those of the school, local or central government is one illustration of such respect’*** ***(Brace 2006)*** The DfE White Paper is encouraging on this point:***‘We will make sure that teachers have support for their professional development’ (p24)******‘We will work to support the professional development of all teachers’ (para 2.27 p 24) (my underlining)******‘It is ... vital that we give teachers the opportunity to ... renew the passion which brought them into the classroom’ (para 2.28, p24)***They continue ... ***‘So, from 2011 we will introduce a competitive national scholarship scheme to support professional development. An independent panel will make awards to support those who wish to pursue further study in their subject or broaden their expertise’ (para 2.28, p24)***We’re back to the political model again!Rostow’s model – what would be the ‘take-off’ indicators at individual, institutional and system levels?**The Pragmatic alternative**The gap between the professional model of CPD and the reality of practice is illustrated by a comparison of what **‘should be’** and **‘what is’**. Take, for example, the best practice relating to partnership. This may be considered at a number of levels: the individual, the team, the school, the LA, HEIs and extended partnerships. A list of what ‘should’ be in place can be easily produced. However, when asked to identify which of the elements on the list are operational in their schools, few teachers will identify all and frequently teachers and school leaders will confess that the norm is that very few elements exist in practice.How common are these elements of partnership in the professional experience of individual teachers? Informal questioning of teachers attending CPD activities suggests that the experience of most is **patchy** and frequently teachers do not engage or have the opportunity to engage in many of these activities. If it is generally the case, why?We must ask why there is often a gap between policy, professional understanding and implementation.Studies of the reasons for this ‘implementation gap’ have emerged in a number of disciplines. The study of change has highlighted reasons why some change takes root and other change fails to impact. In the field of political science, Michael Lipsky (1971) coined the phrase ‘street level bureaucrats’ to explain the role of ‘workers’ in the implementation of policy. He argued that *‘… the decisions of street level bureaucrats, ... effectively become the public policies they carry out. … public policy is not best understood as made in ... top-floor suites of high-ranking administrators, ... it is actually made in the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers.’* (p.389-390)He continues:*‘Ideally, and by training, street-level bureaucrats respond to the individual needs or characteristics of the people they serve or confront. In practice, they must deal with clients on a mass basis … Teachers should respond to the needs of the individual child; in practice they must develop techniques to respond to children as a class’* (p.390).Sabatier (1986) refers to ‘advocacy coalitions’. These are groups of people who set a dominant trend and influence the majority. If, for example, CPD is seen as a chore by most teachers, this can be a powerful and persuasive inhibitor of progress in introducing the professional, and even the political initiative. Headteachers facing cuts to their budgets are reluctant to release teachers to engage in CPD outside their own classrooms. This is a pragmatic response to the need to prioritise expenditure. Head teachers meet and form a consensus that this is acceptable. It then becomes the norm.This is a particular issue – in Swansea we have been approached by supply teachers who can’t get access to CPD. However, if teachers are to engage in professional interaction there needs to be some release from the classroom (it’s not the amount of time spent in the classroom that matters but what goes on in that time). We have a significant number of supply teachers (good, high quality individuals, many recently qualified) who cannot access CPD. Many have taken lower paid jobs as classroom assistants. But classroom assistants in many schools are less likely to gain release and support for CPD than teachers so we have a whole school workforce which is reverting to one of the early stages of Rostow’s model. Doom and gloom in hard times? At my university we have been projecting recruitment to our part-time MA (Ed). A fall in 2008-09 recruitment seemed to herald major problems. A slight rise in 2009-10 was followed by a significant rise in 2010-11. This was unexpected, especially with a significant proportion funding themselves rather than fees being paid by their schools. Could be insecurity of teachers – looking to improve their qualifications - or it could be a desire for professional improvement.So where do universities lie in this scenario?It is through professional learning in the context of the school and through critical reflection on that learning that the most powerful development is likely to occur. The strongest foundation for professional development is likely to be a partnership between schools, higher education and other organisations able to support individuals and groups of teachers in their professional learning. This is borne out by the recent Ofsted report on ITT in England which reported that just under half (47%) of ITT in HEI-led partnerships was judged to be outstanding compared with only 26% in school-based programmes.HEIs have moved a long way to build partnerships with schools and other organisations but there will need to be further and quicker progress. The DfE White Paper proclaims: *‘ ... we will invite some of the best higher education providers of initial teacher training to open University Training Schools’. (para 2.25 p 23).* In Hard times, universities will need to look more closely at the options available and, in some cases, close the gaps that exist between themselves and schools. Bates, Swennen and Jones (2010) identify a number of gaps between being a teacher in school and a teacher educator based in higher education. We argue that these are not gaps as such but discontinuities or ‘fault lines’ and they include ‘the differences and perceived differences between the culture of teaching in schools and academic teaching in higher education, the use of educational language in schools and that of higher education, the changing role from teacher to teacher educator in initial teacher education and onwards in CPD, and perceptions of the value and significance of educational research’.**Fault lines**A common theme occurring in the articles in this book and in other literature relating to teacher educators is that of ‘gaps’ between being a teacher in school and a teacher educator based in higher education. In the case of a teacher becoming a teacher educator the individual continues along a professional path which normally begins in higher education (the initial stage as student teacher) then moves into school-based professional learning (as a teacher) to return to higher education as a teacher educator. This is less of a gap and is, to borrow a geological term, more of a ‘fault line’ in the continuing professional journey of the individual teacher educator. Other fault lines or discontinuities occur. They may be philosophical, pedagogical, epistemological or professional and are often accentuated by the language used by those in different sectors. They include the differences and perceived differences between the culture of teaching in schools and academic teaching in higher education, the use of educational language in schools and that of higher education, the changing role from teacher to teacher educator in initial teacher education and onwards in continuing professional development, and perceptions of the value and significance of educational research.In this book, Boyd and Harris (chapter2) draw attention to the differences new teacher educators experience when moving from schools into higher education. They highlight the ‘confusing transition into higher education roles’ concluding that ‘these tensions ... encourage the new lecturers to hold on to their identity and credibility as school teachers rather than to pro-actively seek new identities as academics within the professional field of teacher education’ The terms ‘academic’ and ‘academia’ accentuate the existing or aspired distinction between schools and higher education. (though the use of the term ‘Academies’ applied to schools provides an interesting alternative perspective)**The contractual fault line**The recruitment of appropriately experienced staff to teacher education has often been a problem. Previously, head teachers and other staff have moved into teacher education having fulfilled themselves in senior positions in schools or local government and have brought with them a wealth of experience in working with aspiring and serving teachers. In the UK at least, the enhancement of schoolteachers’ salaries has created a salary gap between schools and higher education and this has restricted mobility of staff. One model of teacher education is that of the Professional Development School (Holmes Group, 1995) in which teacher education (and teacher educators) would be based primarily in schools rather than on university campuses. This would have significant implications for the professional development in that it would require serving teachers not making the contractual shift from school teaching to the education of teachers in universities but would entail **making the zone of contact between schools and higher education more pervious** Teachers would stay as teachers but become both school-based and university-based and engage in research. Teacher educators in higher education would remain contracted to their institutions and engage primarily in research and teacher education with a required annual engagement with classroom teaching and a mirrored programme of secondment to a school to update their classroom and management experiences. There is heavy emphasis on this type of model in England. It is not new and was raised previously in the 1999 Green Paper Teachers Meeting the Challenge for Change. What is different is that the argument behind the scenes is not the positive partnership model of professional development schools but the negative ideology of removing the ‘outdated teacher training institutions’.*In some university departments of education there is still an internal fault line between staff engaged in ITT, CPD and research. This has to be overcome – lateral and vertical permeability***The linguistic fault line**Higher education often alienates itself from teaching in schools by its use of archaic or inappropriate language (the linguistic fault line). Hamilton (2002 p. 137) bemoans the fact that the ‘problem of frozen language is deeply embedded in the history of teacher education. Terms stay the same, even if their meanings are constantly changing.’ Although advocating interactive ways of supporting learning, the higher education professional is often referred to as a ‘lecturer’. Many Governments insist on referring to ‘teacher trainers’, ‘teacher training’ and to ‘trainees’ rather than ‘teacher educators’ ‘initial teacher education’ or even ‘initial teacher education and training’ and ‘student teachers’. A coherent professional continuum is needed, moving from initial preparation, through induction and Early Professional Development into Continuing Professional Development. Teacher educators based in schools and in higher education (and, for that matter in local advisory services) need to be jointly involved in all stages. The professional development process for teacher educators needs to be similarly coherent and should emulate this continuity. **Schools and universities: the territorial fault line**Teacher educators based in higher education institutions are essentially external to the school system. They enter schools either in their official capacity as the supervisor of the student / trainee teacher or, if there is a research or professional development function, by invitation. It is very difficult to effect change through such a relationship (though there is little consensus on whether teacher educators should themselves be agents of change in relation to the school system). Change in schools is most effectively achieved from inside the organisation. When they are supervising or assessing pre-service teachers, teacher educators see inside classrooms very frequently. However, the ethics of engagement are such that they must be non-critical of the learning environments in which they find themselves. They must respect the territory of the classroom in which they are working.Evaluating the effectiveness of the teacher educator in improving teachers is therefore complex. In the pre-service stage teacher educators need to personalise learning for a variety of pre-professional individuals to be applied in a variety of settings with a variety of tools. This cannot be achieved through ‘training’ alone. A key criterion of a ‘student teacher’s’ success is the achievement of the learners in the classroom, often assessed through practice in a variety of schools. The learning support for this pre-service teacher will be provided by teacher educators from higher education and from within the school community and will be central to this achievement. The success must also be sustainable (or continuing). It is not sufficient for someone to teach well during school experience placements and not be able to continue with this quality of provision after qualifying. The effectiveness of teacher educators may therefore be judged not only on the impact of their work away from their own places of employment but also away from the current period of time.But teacher educators based in higher education frequently have little formal contact with teachers in the induction or later stages of their careers (the initial-induction fault line). It is essential therefore that the communities which foster the continuing professional learning of teachers have, at their core, teacher educators who include school leaders, mentors, researchers and academics who are able, through their authority, to reach into the territory of the classroom. **Bridging the gaps**The DfE White Paper in England states: *‘The initial training of teachers is perhaps the most important part of their professional development ‘ (para 2.20 p 22)*No it is not! It is vitally important for a number of reasons that our initial teacher education and training (ITET) is of the highest quality but it is part of a continuing process which operates throughout the professional lifespan of a teacher. In fact it is the split between initial and continuing professional development which arguably has impeded continuity. **Models of professional development** If the definition of teacher educators is taken in its broadest sense to include serving teachers and school leaders as well as staff based in higher education institutions, it provides us with an extremely wide range of professional knowledge and skills required to undertake the role, along with the varied ways in which this professional learning may be undertaken. Kennedy’s (2005) classification of models of CPD presents a useful framework for examining the range of approaches used to support the professional development of teacher educators described by the authors in this book. She identifies nine models of CPD and we need to look briefly at these to identify those which are most appropriate in the current educational climate.The **‘training model’** As always we have to look closely at the use of the term ‘training’. In Kennedy’s model it is viewed as supporting ‘a skills-based technocratic view of teaching ...generally ‘delivered’ to the teacher by an ‘expert’, with the agenda determined by the deliverer, and the participant placed in a passive role’ (p237). The **‘award-bearing model’** emphasises the completion of award- bearing programmes of study, normally validated by higher education. Master’s level programmes for teachers are strongly advocated as a means of developing professional learning. The ‘**deficit model’** addresses CPD as intervention either from the initiative of the individual teacher educator (whether new or continuing) or from the perspective of the institution (ie part of a managed process). The ‘**cascade model’**, in which the individual attends a professional learning activity then conveys information to others The ‘**coaching/mentoring** **model’** and the ‘**community of practice model’** The **‘Action Research model’**, and the development of reflective practice, ...Kennedy argues that through action research, teachers (or teacher educators) might ‘view research as a process as opposed to merely a product of someone else’s endeavours’ It is also ‘a means of limiting dependency on externally produced research, instead shifting the balance of power towards teachers [or teacher educators] themselves through their identification and implementation of relevant research activities’ (p246). Kennedy uses the term **‘transformative model’** to identify her final model of CPD. She defines this as ‘the combination of practices and conditions that support a transformative agenda’ (p. 246). It is, in effect, a combination of the models mentioned earlier and aligns professional development to educational change. **Change**Change has arisen for a variety of reasons, in some cases as a consequence of political change, of major curricula reform, of changes in the economic climate and the wish to enhance educational practice and performance. The International Professional Development Association and its journal ‘Professional Development in Education’ is committed to clarifying and enhancing the role of all who are engaged in professional development. Whether the continuing professional development of teacher educators is instigated by government directive, institutionally-managed processes or the individual professional we need ipda more than ever!  |