

# The Standards debate

Outcomes, reflections,  
conclusions and next steps?



30th ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
AMSTERDAM 22-26 OCTOBER 2005

# The conference programme

- Large response in papers addressing the theme
- Intensive debates in many sessions
- Thematic thread throughout the conference programme

Conference addresses concerns of many teacher educators



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# Comments in advance

- The Academic Committee is biased
- ATEE's strategy might be a European strategy, but the debate is not only a European debate.
- Emotional debate, values debate, academic debate & strategic debate



# Relation between TE and policy

1. Passive, reactive, compliant
2. Conflictive (power)
3. Interactive/pro-active (persuasive, convincing)

Condition:

- Understand the position and concerns of the other
- Be willing to negotiate, to find compromises
- Be informed
- Strength (position, joined TE-force)



# Poster wall

## 0. General comments

Problem of language and semantics:

~~Standards~~

...Quality, quality indicators, competences...

Borrow good things from national approaches

Be aware of power relationships

Towards empowerment, improvement, self-evaluation

Be bold!





# Statement 1

1. To empower teachers and teacher educators, ATEE needs to engage in the European debate about the quality of teachers, teacher educators en teacher education.

Yes: Let our voice be heard, step in the transnational space  
ATEE might loose its independence

Conditions: involvement, define quality, common position  
(will take time), empowered ATEE

Is ATEE entitled to talk about *teacher* quality?



# Statements 2

2. To stimulate the quality of teacher educators and to facilitate international exchange in (teacher) education, a common frame of reference for the quality of teachers and teacher education in Europe is needed.

Yes, but:

General, open, not prescriptive, diversity, stimulating

No 'standards' (conformity, judgement) or 'competences'  
(technicalities)

Ethical framework / professional language

Qualities of teachers, TE and TEors must be interrelated





3. Teacher standards should be formulated in such a way that they take into account the needs and concerns of different actors: teacher, school, teacher education, government.

All stakeholders: pupils, parents, mentors, ...

Interactive dialogue



4. Standards for teachers should allow for different profiles and teaching styles of teachers.

Yes, allow for self expression

A common ground is possible? Needed!

What are the boundaries: good or bad teaching styles?  
who defines (we) and based on what (outcomes?)





5. Quality descriptions should focus on the quality of teams instead of quality of individual teachers.

Teams as well as individuals (different but related descriptions)



## 6. Standards for teachers: developed by teachers.

Other stakeholders must be involved (community, pupils, tax payers, parents, ...)

Major role for teacher, prepared to discuss with others

Who (First among Equals), how?





## 7. ATEE must take the initiative to develop professional standards for teacher educators in Europe

Not to be developed by ATEE

ATEE's role: to advice, stimulate and support debates in national professional organizations (by spreading experiences, knowledge, research, ...)



8. Indicators for the quality of teachers and teacher educators should include more than just lists of knowledge and skills.

Yes (but what more?)

Attitudes, personality, feelings, values, judgement, motivations, ...

Holistic

Not measurable but observable





# Round table Monday

- Setting the agenda
- No, because ... = yes, provide that ...
- Cultural awareness within ATEE is necessary
- Use of research, ATEE has to be clever and analytical
- Clarify the concepts we use
- Bring the pupils in the debate: they need the best teachers!
- Teachers are the best change agents: TE and ATEE must be innovation partners for schools and government
- Focus on generality: main principles
- Be careful with language used



# Standards symposium

- 13 participants, 10 countries, government representatives involved in defining standards
- Empowering teachers should be at the front, focussing on teacher and school development
  - Two scenario's: empowerment versus 'control'
  - Outcome defined by politicians and managers focussed on quick solutions
  - How to avoid the 'control' scenario ...?
- Agreements for further exchange ...





# Quality descriptions or the use of

## Two levels

- The description of quality indicators
- The way they are used and developed:  
indicators for quality descriptions!



# Conclusions

Common ground for indicators for quality descriptions of **teachers**:

- Active involvement of teachers and other stakeholders
- Not prescriptive,
- Focussed on diversity (of teachers and pupils)
- Focussed on professional development 'banners to follow'
- Teaching = professional artistry
- Holistic perspective
- ...



# Conclusions

Common ground for indicators for quality descriptions of **teacher educators**:

- Active involvement of teacher educators and other stakeholders
- Not prescriptive,
- Diversity
- Focussed on professional development 'banners to follow'
- Educating teaching = professional artistry
- Holistic perspective
- ...



The initiative taken by ATEE to bring up this theme for discussion in the conference of 2005 is very relevant since this is a theme that teachers and teacher educators should not leave to be decided by others. Actually, this is a concern expressed in some of the abstracts, i.e., that many decisions regarding standards for teachers are part of policies that have been established by politician and policy makers, and with little participation of teachers.

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**To be continued !!!**