

How systems generate, sustain and
promote quality teaching despite the
practice of assigning teachers to out-of-
field teaching positions:
A model for analysing system data

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Dimensions of the “out-of-field phenomenon”: How the stakeholders see it

Teachers

Practice and identity problem: how to overcome the challenges of teaching in a new area

School leaders

Solution: to the problem of teacher shortages and a dilemma for resourcing

Researchers

Research problem: that needs to be understood in order to inform or influence change

Subject associations

Maintain the integrity of the disciplines: PD; advocate for teachers; inform policy and inquiries of the need for more teachers, greater support, better data etc

Universities

Problem for the profession:

ITE: Outside of the responsibility

CPD: Some courses and PD provision

Policy makers

Resourcing/Supply issue: too few teachers, unequal distribution with higher incidences in hard to staff schools or areas of disadvantage
Teacher quality issue

Need to think about how the systems create the conditions for OOF teaching

- Critique focuses on systemic responses, and attends to the relationships between policy and what is happening on the ground in schools and at universities when preparing teachers for the realities of the teaching profession.
- Need to understand how out-of-field teaching has been **produced, contested, and legitimated** in the Australian education arena.

Purpose of the study

- Germany-Australia comparison of system related issues
- To find out how the three systems (University, School, Government) are creating/perpetuating the conditions for, and responding to, teaching out-of-field.
- Teaching quality: generating, sustaining, promoting in the face of out-of-field teaching.

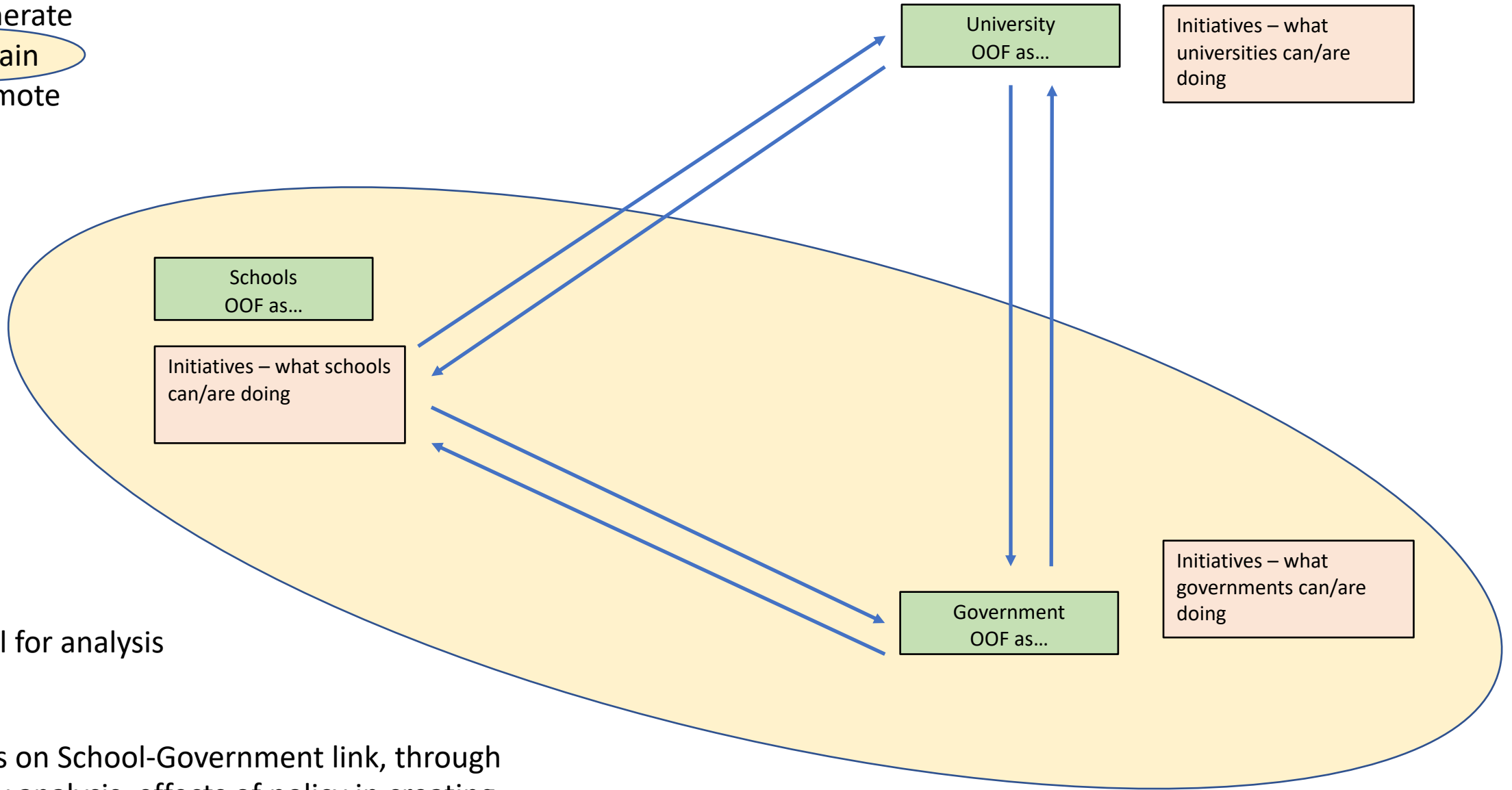
	<u>Innovations</u>(responses to OOF) & <u>Settings</u> (creating conditions for needing OOF) within the three systems (can be: implemented, visionary, possible with support, not possible):		
...Teaching quality	Schools	Universities	Governments
Generating...	Quality programs and teaching practices	Preparing teachers for the 'reality' of the classroom through experiences that raise awareness, build capacity and construct identities in relation to TOOF	Policies relating to teacher education and schools: entry and registration requirements, changes to teacher education structures, recruitment practices, school leadership, work conditions relating to TOOF
Sustaining...	School culture and leadership practices that influence teacher learning and teacher knowledge and practice	Working with schools and teachers to achieve outcomes associated with practicum, provide PD for in-service teachers and school leaders	Interventions, PD programs, funding, direction for school planning
Promoting...	How teaching quality and TOOF is represented publically in the school community and amongst staff, how schools (principals) can contribute to policy that have relationship to TOOF	Contribute to policy around the needs for quality teaching in teacher education, and what quality means, providing an evidence base of effects and processes through research	Conceptualisations of what teaching quality means (eg. POLT, quality teaching framework), how TOOF is represented publicly

A focus on teaching quality:

(G) – Generate

(S) – Sustain

(P) – Promote



Model for analysis

Focus on School-Government link, through policy analysis, effects of policy in creating the conditions for TOOF (capacity to respond is considered elsewhere)

Exploratory study

- Interviews in 2014-2015 with representatives from:
 - Science teacher association – Tasmania
 - Australian Education Union – Tasmania, Victoria
 - Secondary Principals Association – Victoria, Western Australia, Australia, Queensland
- Interviews in 2015-2017
 - 6 School leaders from 3 secondary schools

How the conditions for needing
OOF teaching are created

Social issues contributing to the problems

- Falling student enrolments in country schools, less economies of scale so that teachers have to cover more subject areas
- Fewer people choosing to do maths and science generally so smaller pool from which to attract teachers. Minimal prerequisites for many university courses so high school students encouraged by schools to do low level maths, means fewer people doing maths and physics, possibly contributing to reduced interest in maths and science as careers.
- Low teacher retention in country areas, and teachers generally

Policy setting 1: Teachers qualified and registered as a teacher, not a specialization. Supported by teacher unions. Eg.

- a) Transfer policy in Tasmania
- b) Introduction of 'flexibility' in Victoria (1990s)
- c) Public Services Act in Queensland

Effects:

- Not a question of 'qualification' but 'specialization'
- Teachers registered as a teacher, not a specialization
- 'a teacher is a teacher, is a teacher'
- Can teach in any school at any level at the principal's discretion
- 'Being treated as teacher first, specialist second'. System doesn't allow them to focus on their specialist areas
- Schools have full teaching staff, but the mix of teacher specializations may not match the number of classes taught, 'can't have one of everything', need changes from year to year
- Because of this, doing PD or additional study is not recognized as making them a 'subject' teacher
- Enables limited data to be collected on teacher specialisations in the system, therefore silence about teachers actually in the system, therefore reducing the risk of public critique (Supply and demand report from the DET not made public due to potential cost the the government')

Policy setting 2. Deregulating teacher education: number of places market driven (incoming students) rather than demand driven (destination of graduates)

Effects:

- Universities produce teachers in excess in some areas, not enough in others – over-supply and under-supply at the same time.
- Pressure from subject associations, principal associations and unions to influence the type and number of teacher graduates
- Graduates can't get jobs, despite there still being a problem with out-of-field teaching, and some schools not being able to attract the teachers they need

Policy setting 3. Bringing State school structures in line across Australia (Qld and WA, SA will not comply)

Effects:

- Shortage of teachers in secondary schools, over supply in primary school
- Period of transition for primary teachers to 'upskill' to gain a specialization

Policy setting 4. Increase school autonomy in some states (Vic already had autonomy) to hire teachers .

Effects:

- No longer reliant on a central pool for teacher allocation to schools
- Potential for teachers to be attracted to some schools, not others

Policy setting 5. Funding based on number of school students in state schools.

Effects:

- Set number of teachers in the school and the mix of teachers' specialisations may not match the subjects needing to be covered, particularly where there is a small staff

Policy setting 6. No capping of students in state schools.

Effects:

- Cannot predict the number of students or number of teachers needed
- Can lead to teachers picking up class OOF

Policy setting 7. Policies for dealing with distribution of teachers into difficult-to-staff areas (rural/regional/remote). Eg. Teach for Australia, special allowances.

Effects:

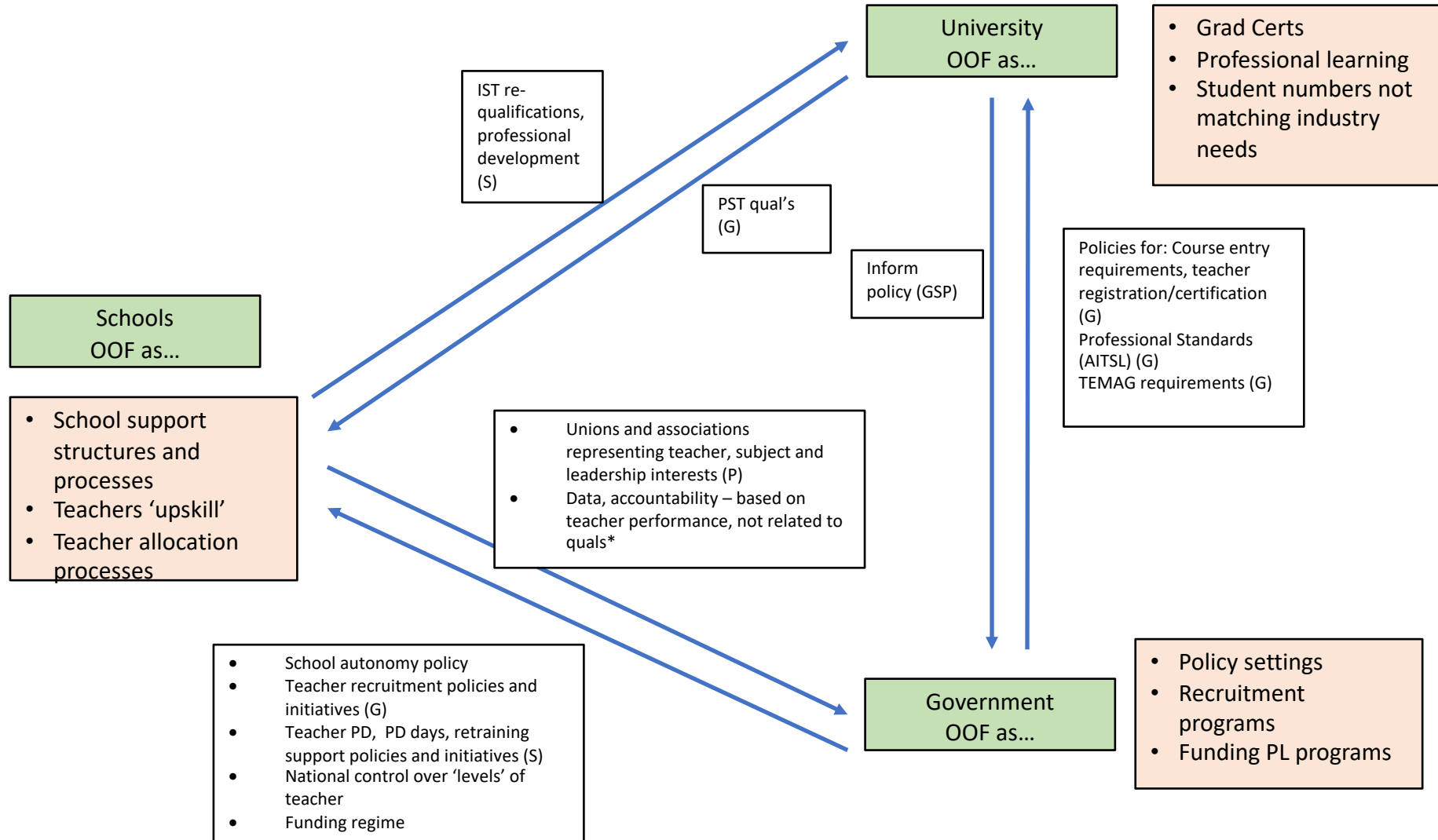
- Some successes in attracting teachers into rural and remote areas
- Retention is poor resulting in 'revolving door'. High staff turnover leads to low student outcomes because of difficult to develop strong teacher professional learning culture and direction. No mid-career teachers to take leadership
- Over-supply and under-supply at the same time

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Conclusion: (1) Why do we have OOFT?

1. Teacher shortage, although OOFT masks the true extent of this
 2. Unequal distribution of teachers - Over/under supply – geographic, hard to staff (low SES)
 3. Attractions issues – because low levels of maths and science interest, low status of teaching profession, low interest in what the job entail
 4. Poor teacher retention contributing to teacher shortage
 5. Funding constraints mean difficulty getting the right ‘mix’ of teachers into a school, especially small schools
- Need to know ‘why’ OOF before can respond appropriately - ‘set in place a plan’

Conclusion: (2) How systems produce, legitimize and contest OOFT

- **Produced:**

- Policy settings that favour flexibility, market driven approaches to getting teachers into the system (deregulated teacher education) rather than being demand driven
- Lack of real transparent data to hide the real extent of teacher shortages, problems with distribution, and ineffective leadership practices

- **Legitimised:**

- Promoting the 'teacher as teacher as teacher', 'a good teacher can teach anything', places the onus and responsibility for change on teachers, and teacher failure is a product of teacher incapacity rather than a fault of the system
- The view by principals that this is a solution to a problem of teacher shortage that can be solved by PD and more teachers, rather than looking at the range of problems that lead to OOFT

- **Contested**

- It's not contested publicly by the government as the language is shifted to teacher quality and teacher shortage rather than the effects of shortage
- It is contested by subject associations who want to protect the integrity of their subjects
- It is carefully contested by teacher unions so as to protect the teaching profession
- It is contested by giving voice, providing data, demanding change