

**The Creation of National Programmes of School Leadership  
Development in England and New Zealand: A Comparative  
Study**

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*This article reports on developments in new headteacher/principal training in England and New Zealand and argues that there are policy similarities between the two countries. The authors suggest that the creation and implementation of comparable school leadership training programmes has formed part of an increasing governmental interest in the importance of leadership development in the two countries that is welcome. There are inherent tensions, dilemmas and dangers in these developments since such centralised initiatives can create an 'orthodoxy' of leadership development practices since both governments have created the expectation that those who undertake leadership training for headship or principalship will comply with mandated requirements in order to conform to centrally defined norms. We suggest that fundamental questions concerning the nature of leadership and the knowledge base of professional leadership, leadership training and professional development remain about that should be posited in order to better inform the practice of leadership preparation in both locations.*

# **The Creation of National Programmes of School Leadership Development in England and New Zealand: A Comparative Study**

## **Introduction**

Comparing education systems is generally a problematic task given the historical, political, cultural and ideological differences that exist between nations. In particular, education reform is initiated and implemented within a national context that has its own distinctive traditions that are 'sometimes overlapping but ultimately unique' (McLean, 1995: v). The authors would suggest, however, that a comparison between England and New Zealand is somewhat less problematic at this historical point, particularly as the pace, rhetoric and theoretical underpinnings of educational reform show marked similarities (Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2005; Thrupp, 2001). The key difference between the two countries is the continued existence and direct influence of local education authorities (LEAs) in England as compared to New Zealand, where no similar organisations exists. The single largest change in the administration of education, in both contexts, has been the introduction of site-based management and increasing accountability by schools for teacher performance and student outcomes. More specifically, headteachers (or principals, as they are called in New Zealand) are positioned as the public face of the school (Fitzgerald, Youngs and Grootenboer, 2003). Whilst teachers undergo training as a prerequisite for entry into the profession, until recently

training for leadership in schools has not been a focus of government policy and provision in either country.

The 1988 *Education Reform Act* (England and Wales) and the release of *Tomorrow's Schools: The Reform of Education Administration in New Zealand* (Government of New Zealand, 1989) established the era of self-managing schools in the two nations under scrutiny in this article. Arguably, this decentralisation of the bureaucracy of educational management shifted responsibility and accountability to schools and had the net effect of establishing a causal relationship between school performance, accountability and public admiration or condemnation. As the professional leader, the principal/headteacher became individually responsible for the quality of teaching and learning and as the chief executive officer was directly accountable for the management of the school. With the apparent intensification of scrutiny of school leadership in general, and principalship in particular, it is reasonable to conclude that effective preparation for principalship is a strategic necessity (Cardno, 2002; Davis, 2001). Moreover, it has been recognised that effective principals are pivotal to the effectiveness of schools in delivering quality teaching and learning programmes (Harold, Hawksworth, Mansell and Thrupp, 2001; National College for School Leadership, 2001; Smith and Piele, 1989). In recent years, concerns regarding teacher performance have been extended to incorporate the role of principal as the professional leader of the school and his/her accountability for the performance of all teachers in the school. It is thus not surprising that leadership preparation and leadership development

programmes are the focus of government attention in a number of countries, as Bush and Jackson (2002) have documented.

In England prior to the 1980s, provision, organisation and funding of school management training and development was patchy and lacked any coherent national structure (Hughes, 1982; Bolam, 1997). The Plowden Report (Plowden, 1967) stated that there was inadequate provision of training courses to prepare either prospective headteachers or deputy headteachers for their future duties and the importance of the availability of in-service training to teachers in schools throughout their careers in order to produce a high-performance teaching force was recognised in the James Report (DES 1972). The failure to address the inadequacies identified in the Plowden Report or to achieve the stated aim of the James Report, to create a continuous process of training from initial training, followed by regular in-service training through every part of a teacher's career, was not addressed in any systematic way until the arrival of 'national programmes' (Brundrett, 2001) of training and development commencing in the mid-1990s under the aegis of the Teacher Training Agency. In New Zealand two significant reports *Professional Leadership in Primary Schools* (Education Review Office, 1996) and *Professional Leadership Training for Principals* (Education Review Office, 1999) pointed to the paucity of training for school leadership and management and the need for New Zealand school principals to 'develop the knowledge and skills that will provide the highest quality of professional leadership' (Education Review Office, 1997:36). The *National Standards for Headteachers* were first issued by the DFEE in 1998 (revised

2000 and 2004) in England and Wales, offering a checklist of skills, knowledge and attributes of effective headteachers and describing the desired key outcomes of headship. These standards, along with the Hay McBer *Models of Excellence* (1999), underpin the leadership programmes currently available in the UK and, less explicitly, the developing programme in New Zealand.

This article reports on seminal developments in new headteacher/ principal training in England and New Zealand and argues that there are policy similarities between the two countries. The authors wish to suggest that the creation and implementation of comparable school leadership training programmes has formed part of an increasing governmental interest in the importance of leadership development in the two countries that is welcome. The authors contend, however, that there are inherent tensions, dilemmas and dangers in these developments since such centralised initiatives can create an 'orthodoxy' of leadership development practices because both governments have created the expectation that those who undertake leadership training for headship or principalship will comply with mandated requirements in order to conform to centrally defined norms. We suggest that fundamental questions concerning the nature of leadership and the knowledge base of professional leadership, leadership training and professional development remain about that should be posited in order to better inform the practice of leadership preparation in both locations. The structure of the article is based on the model developed by Brundrett (2001) and provides an enumeration of the development of leadership programmes in England, a similar adumbration of developments in

the New Zealand context, and an analysis of the lessons that may be learned from the experiences of the two nations. The authors conclude that there are signs of an increasing rapprochement between national initiatives and the work of the academic and research communities in the UK that may form a model for future developments in New Zealand.

### **The development of school leadership programmes in England**

The historic antecedents of modern school leadership developments in England lie in the teacher education programmes whose roots were in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; a period associated with the 'hero-innovator leadership model' (Thody, 2000: 162). Indeed it has been argued that the first 'competency' lists for school managers came in 1816 with Jeremy Bentham's *Chrestomathia* that created the vision of a utopian school (Thody, 2000: 166). In the twentieth century, however, the first impetus to begin to provide systematic education for school leaders in England came from university-based programmes, such as the Master of Education degree, which began to proliferate in the 1960s (Shanks, 1987: 122-123). A number of accounts, and associated models, of the subsequent development of school leadership programmes have been offered (see, for instance, Bolam, 1997, 2003; Brundrett, 2000, 2001), one of the most recent, and most persuasive, of which is that by Bolam (2004) which provided a construction that included three phases: 'ad hoc provision' in the 1960s and early 1970s; 'towards coherence and coordination' in the 1970s, 80s and 90s; and 'a national college' from 2002.

The initial 'ad hoc' provision referred to by Bolam took the form of local, largely LEA organised courses or Higher Education provision linked to higher degree programmes. The first specialist courses in Education were offered at the London Institute of Education in the 1960s and higher degree programmes with elements of Educational Management began to appear in the 1970s (Bush, 1999: 239). By the 1980s taught higher degrees in educational management became an increasingly important part of the portfolio of University courses in England. It has been noted, however, that higher education institutions tended to only see merit in academically orientated courses whereas schools themselves tended to see management as a purely practical activity which was divorced from theory (Gill et al, 1989: 78; Brundrett, 2001: 235) but, by the early 1990s, there was a growing acceptance that skills developed in the workplace should be seen as an integrated part of academic programmes. This created a strong argument for continuing to provide longer courses such as Masters degrees which were 'not narrowly focused and which enable scope for reflection and personal development as well as professional development' (Golby, 1994: 69) and which were flexible enough to retain academic rigour whilst addressing the professional needs of teachers (Black et al, 1994: 36). In response to this call, educational Masters' programmes were developed that offered formalised provision which linked 'on the job experience, individual development and award bearing structures' which would signal a 'radical move away from traditional forms of a management training for Headteachers and towards a management development approach' (Davies and Ellison, 1994: 363). Moreover, the

'professional doctorate' began to emerge in British Universities aimed at 'mid-career education professionals' (Gregory, 1995; Brundrett, 2001: 235). Research on the nomenclature and dispersion of taught higher degrees in educational management in England and Wales in the late 1990s (Brundrett, 1999) revealed a patchwork of provision including certificate, diploma, MA, MBA, MEd, MSc and EdD courses which, despite such confusing variety, provided a comparatively structured provision of progressive academic qualifications grounded in both theory and practice. Thus a ladder of qualifications had evolved from certificates through to Doctoral study that offers school managers the possibility of undertaking academic study, at the highest level, which is linked closely with their professional context (Brundrett, 2001: 235).

Despite this dramatic, if not systematic, rise in higher education provision for school leadership education, governmental concerns about the quality of school management training and development were not allayed and a sustained period of governmental intervention commenced in the 1980s. The most influential of these intercessions was promulgated under the aegis of the Department for Education when circular 3/ 83 (DES, 1983) proposed that extra grants should be made available for management training in schools. Such funding was to be used to establish a number of 'One Term Training Opportunities' (commonly referred to by the acronym 'OTTOs'), which were to be targeted at Headteachers and senior staff so that they would be better equipped for 'the increasingly difficult and complicated tasks of management' (DES, 1983: 17).

The impact of the OTTO courses was summarised by Wallace (1988) who noted that although the scheme had provided a significant response to the increased need for management training, it had not made the impact that had initially been hoped for (Brundrett, 1999, 2001). The courses did, however, have many positive outcomes since they were perceived to be valuable by headteachers, had a significant effect on management, and provided the opportunity for reflection on changes in management practice in a way that was difficult to achieve on shorter courses (Brundrett, 2000: 28-30; 2001: 236-237).

Despite such mixed outcomes the OTTO scheme proved to be only a foretaste of the massive state intervention that occurred from the mid-1990s when the focus shifted to the increasingly influential 'national programmes' which changed significantly the 'power relationship' between the governmental and regulatory authorities and the providers of in-service training (Brundrett, 2001: 237). The remit for the development and management of these programmes originally fell to the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), was held briefly under the direct control of the Department for Education and Skills, and subsequently transferred to the National College for School Leadership which commenced its activities in temporary premises at the University of Nottingham in 2000 before moving in to impressive purpose-built premises on the same site in 2002. Within the framework that emerged preparatory, induction and further training for headteachers revolved around a triumvirate of innovative programmes that are enumerated below.

The Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP) was the first of the headship development programmes to be introduced and commenced operation in 1995. Its central aim was to provide funds 'to support the cost of developing the leadership and management abilities of headteachers appointed to their first permanent headship' (TTA, 1999). The HEADLAMP programme enabled a considerable degree of flexibility for headteachers and governors in their choice of training and training provider since a wide variety of types of organisation gained the status of registered provider including Universities and Colleges, and private training organisations (Busher and Paxton, 1997: 121). Nonetheless Blandford and Squire (1997) concluded that it was LEAs who became the major HEADLAMP providers, extending and consolidating the previous provision of well-established induction and mentoring programmes (Blandford and Squire, 1997: 7) and thus the scheme never fulfilled the purpose of opening up leadership training to a range of trainers chosen in an open market by the governors (Haigh, 1997: 2). External scrutiny suggests that the scheme had both strengths and weaknesses including: concerns about the competence model which underpinned the programme; the assumption, built in to the scheme, that notions of 'best practice' could be conveyed to the candidates; the danger of placing too much emphasis on initial needs analysis (Ford, 1996); the value of variety but not of over-abundance in the number of training providers (Gunraj and Rutherford, 1999: 153); the insinuation that the scheme failed to match candidates' needs with providers' expertise; that the whole project lacked a 'coherent understanding of the

fundamental and underlying principles of practice' (Kirkham, 1999: 21); and that the TTA had failed to ensure the provision of 'high quality training from well evaluated providers (Blandford and Squire, 1999: 27). However, by May 1998, 4689 headteachers had registered to undertake HEADLAMP programmes (Gunraj and Rutherford, 1999: 145) and the impact of the initiative is not to be underestimated. Not least in the importance of the HEADLAMP scheme was that it prefigured the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), its sister programme, in that it was a centrally controlled initiative which was based on a set of generic standards that defined the required leadership and management capabilities of school leaders. The HEADLAMP scheme came under review from 1998, but a report was not completed until three years later when it was found that there was insufficient focus on leadership in context and variability in the quality of programmes (Newsome, 2003). Not surprisingly, since HEADLAMP preceded NPQH, a lack of continuity and progression from NPQH to HEADLAMP was also noted. Recommendations from the review were underpinned by the notion that programmes should be more tightly structured around a number of aims that promoted clear links to NPQH and the professional development of new heads within the context of school improvement. A 'blended learning' approach was also promoted as being consistent with the *Leadership Development Framework* (DFES, 2002). The findings and recommendation of the review have contributed to the new framework for entry to headship. The decision about replacement programmes was publicly announced by the NCSL in January 2003, although the *New*

*Visions* pilot programme, introduced in January 2002, had already indicated the likely direction to be taken. In February 2003, potential providers of the Headteachers' Induction Programme (HIP), designed to replace HEADLAMP, were invited to the NCSL for 'information and consultant meetings', and the new programme commenced in 2003.

The second element of the governmental strategy to improve school leadership arrived in 1997 and was styled the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) This was a complex, centrally controlled but regionally delivered, programme of training and development with an allied, but separate, system of assessment (Brundrett, 2001). The initiative swiftly came under attack for its reliance on a competency system (Revell, 1997) and its 'daunting' nature (Downes, 1996: 27). There were also those who felt that the diffuse structure of the delivery and assessment of the qualification was a weakness and argued for a centralised 'staff college experience' (Bazalgette, 1996: 17). Others felt that there was a danger that the qualification might become too academically rather than practically focused (Pountney, 1997: 4). Moreover Bush (1998) identified three particular areas for 'further consideration and review': firstly, the distinction made between 'leadership' and 'management'; secondly the emphasis on 'best practice outside education'; and thirdly, the weak links between NPQH and specialist masters' degrees in educational leadership and management (Bush, 1998: 328). In response to such robust criticisms the NPQH was completely restructured in 2000 following a major review undertaken by Dame Patricia Collarbone with new contractors being

appointed to offer the revised scheme which commenced in 2001. The new scheme is much more competency-based and is more focused on schools, with a school-based assessment process which is more challenging, individualised and focused on school improvement. It has been acknowledged that the new model transformed the programme and made it 'genuinely and internationally cutting-edge' (Tomlinson, 2004: 231) and these transformations enabled the DfES to make the qualification mandatory for all headteachers from 2004.

The third element in the 'ladder' of qualifications and programmes came with the introduction of the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) which was described as 'The third part of the TTA's commitment to securing excellent leadership' (Green, 1998). The LPSH scheme offered even tighter centralised control than had the NPQH programme. The contract to construct materials was awarded to the management consultancy firm Hay-McBer (with the NAHT and the Open University); although a number of consortia were successful in being permitted to deliver the resultant training package. The programme was designed to encompass a three-stage process including: self-diagnosis; a four-day residential workshop; and follow-up support through Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), coaching and mentoring. Each headteacher was, somewhat contentiously (Bush, 1998: 330), paired with a partner from business who would also contribute to the implementation of the action plan (TTA, 1998b, p 4). The programme was underpinned by a Leadership Effectiveness Model developed by the Hay Group that encompassed the 'four circles' of: 'job requirements'; 'the context for school

improvement'; 'leadership styles'; and 'individual characteristics'. It has been noted that this is a very different model from the National Standards that underpin its two sister programmes since it concentrates on leadership effectiveness and performance and encompasses a very different approach to measuring leadership capacity than does NPQH final assessment (Tomlinson, 2004: 235).

Since the establishment of the three headship programmes, a number of reviews and revisions have been undertaken. By 2005, all three were in their second or third incarnation, with more changes in the pipeline for HIP (jocularly referred to as 'HIP replacement'). These can be seen as intended to streamline elements of each programme (possibly related to cost-cutting) and can also be linked to strengthening the centralised control of delivery through increasingly stringent quality assurance systems. Of the three programmes, HIP has always stood out as an anomaly, in that it has attempted to remain responsive to the individually expressed needs of first time headteachers, thus maintaining a higher degree of choice and flexibility in its make-up and delivery. Recent changes to the programme during 2005 have included the national development of materials for the delivery of 'core' workshops, the topics for which have been prompted by government priorities, and also a planned amalgamation of *New Visions* and *HIP* within an *early headship* framework by September 2006.

The stated focus of this article is on headship/principalship training and development but it is apposite to note that the functions and activities of the

NCSL have come to encompass seemingly myriad initiatives that attempt to address leadership capability in a variety of ways and through all phases of a career in schools and include: Leading from the Middle; online learning and networks information including Talking Heads and Virtual Heads; affiliated regional centres; research and development projects; and the Networked Learning Communities scheme (Bolam, 2004: 260). This rapid, even dramatic, expansion in activity can be seen as both an achievement and a weakness. An end to end review of the NCSL, presented in 2004, noted its 'very significant, even remarkable, achievements' (DfES/NCSL, 2004: 5) but indicated ten key issues which needed to be addressed, leading to six associated recommendations, the latter of which, significantly, commenced with a call for: 'streamlining the NCSL's efforts to increasing its impact, through greater role clarity, outcome focus, goal clarity and efficiency.' The sense that a concern was emerging that the College's overall portfolio of programmes was becoming somewhat diffuse was re-emphasised in the Minister of State for Education's letter to the NCSL in December 2004 which noted the end to end review's call for 'greater precision, discipline, outcome-focus, and depth in the future work of the College' (Minister of State for Education, 2004: 2) and laid out a series of core priorities for its activities. The letter was also notable for its inclusion of a call for 'renewed closeness in formal and informal contacts' (Minister of State for Education, 2004: 7) between the NCSL and the DfES and set out patterns of meetings and protocols to facilitate this enhanced relationship (Minister of State for Education, 2004: 15-16). It is interesting to speculate whether these

developments are part of the organizational life cycle of the college whereby 'those at the top sense that they are losing control over a highly divergent operation' and then 'seek to regain control over the total organization' as outlined by Mulford (2004: 311) or whether they are precursors of some overall and inherent challenge of sustainability (Bolam, 2004: 260).

Whatever the future of the NCSL may be, balancing 'rationality and emotionality', that is the ethical and technical aspects of leadership, remains one of the central dilemmas in leadership development in education. This is not merely a recent dichotomy but is perhaps contrasted more starkly at the start of the twenty-first century after twenty years of a 'dominant, modernist rationality' that appears to characterise recent academic and, perhaps especially, national programmes in England (Thody, 2001: 170). There remains a comparative paucity of external evidence for the efficacy of the national programmes developed in England but such evidence and analysis is beginning to emerge which suggests that increasing numbers of new headteachers feel appropriately prepared for their role (see Male, 2001; Early and Evans, 2004). Nonetheless it remains difficult to attribute this positive development to the activities of the NCSL with any specificity. Despite this lack of empirical evidence for the efficacy of such programmes, the interest in leadership development is becoming an increasingly international phenomenon (Bush and Jackson, 2002: 427). The use of theory to inform training and practice is now widespread but takes many different forms and one striking feature of leadership programmes around the world is actually the variation in models of development employed in order to

reach the common goal of high quality leadership in schools (Bush and Jackson, 2002: 427). It is, therefore, of particular interest that New Zealand would appear to be taking what is in some ways a strikingly similar path in the journey commenced in England in the 1990s. It is to an enumeration of the New Zealand experience that this article now turns.

### **Principal professional development and induction in New Zealand**

The fact that most New Zealand principals had not had specific induction training was highlighted when an OECD report (1998) showed that New Zealand was lagging behind its western counterparts. Recommendations made by the Education Review Office (ERO) that there be 'national requirements for qualifications and training for those applying for principal's positions and for the ongoing training of appointed principals' (Education Review Office, 2000:77) culminated in the release of a report that identified the skills, knowledge, attributes and competencies that principals new to the role would need to acquire and demonstrate (Hay Group, 2001). Clusters of competencies were identified that the report claimed would lead to highly effective performance (Hay Group, 2001:5) and provide a benchmark for outstanding performance (Hay Group, 2001:6). Unremarkably, the model that was introduced as a core finding of interviews and focus groups conducted with a range of principals from a range of schools was not unlike previous models developed in by the Hay group in Victoria (Australia) and Britain (Hay Group, 2001:7). And although this model may have been useful as a framework for the development of principal

training programmes in New Zealand, we remain sceptical of the intentions and worth of the practice of continued policy borrowing between England and New Zealand (Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2005).

The findings of Hay Group's research grouped the skills and knowledge principals needed to acquire and display into the following areas, these display some marked similarities to the key areas of headship as expressed in the *National Standards for Headteachers* in England:

Educational leadership;

Strategic and operational planning, working with the Board of Trustees;

Building community relationships;

Staff management, finance property and administration.

To further explain links between the research findings and the requisite skills and knowledge required by principals, the Hay Group developed an 'Iceberg' model that illustrated the visible competencies (that is, skills and knowledge that were necessary but not sufficient for high performance) that were located above the water line, and invisible competencies (that is, characteristics that provide motivation and lead to greater success) that lay below the water line. For these skills and knowledge to result in enhanced learning outcomes for schools, Hay provided a competency framework that clustered together a series of thirteen skills, values and attributes that were underpinned by the belief that effective principals had deeply held personal convictions about the teaching-learning

process. Labelled as competency clusters, these are broadly defined as (Hay Group, 2001:17-18):

Vision and Leadership;  
Striving for Excellence; and  
Self-Efficacy.

Within each of these competency clusters several inherent characteristics or traits are identified. It is difficult to determine whether these traits can be taught, supported or encouraged; in this regard, the report is necessarily vague. What is evident however is that these traits might contribute to quality assurance processes in schools (Q), might require headteachers to undertake certain tasks or responsibilities (T), or provide evidence that outcomes have been met (O).

Table 1: Vision and Leadership: Characteristics and Traits

Competency Cluster	Quality Assurance (Q); Task (T); Outcome (O)
1. Conceptual thinking	Q
2. Leading others	T
3. Transformational change	O
4. Building Community Relationships	T
5. Interpersonal insight	Q
6. Stakeholder awareness	Q
7. Influencing others	T
TOTAL:	Quality Assurance: 3 Tasks: 3 Outcomes: 1

Source: Hay Group, (2000:17-18).

Table 2: Striving for Excellence: Characteristics and Traits

Competency Cluster	Quality Assurance (Q); Task (T); Outcome (O)
8. Results orientation	O
9. Analytical thinking	Q
10. Gathering information	T
11. Holding people accountable	T
12. Results orientation	O
13. Analytical thinking	Q
14. Gathering information	T
TOTAL:	Quality Assurance: 2 Tasks: 3 Outcomes: 2

Source: Hay Group, (2000:17-18).

Table 3: Self-Efficacy: Characteristics and Traits

Competency Cluster	Quality Assurance (Q); Task (T); Outcome (O)
15. Self-management	T
16. Self-assurance	Q
TOTAL:	Quality Assurance: 1 Tasks: 1 Outcomes: 0

Source: Hay Group, (2000:17-18).

Each of these clusters has four levels of competency. It is recognised that a balance across the clusters and competencies is required (Hay Group, 2001:5); yet as the broad analysis of the competencies clusters indicate, tasks orientation and quality assurance are the key drivers. Whereas demonstration of these competencies might address and/or satisfy stakeholder demands, there are a number of potential tensions. For example, while not all principals will demonstrate the same competencies to the same level at the same time, a cynical voice might ask – is compliance or uniformity being sought? Or, more significantly, does this model offer a template for superior performance or minimum competence that a principal must demonstrate? And how might a principal produce data that validates performance in order to manage for continuous improvement and performance?

The First-Time Principals Programme that was developed to support 198 New Zealand principals was launched in April 2002 (New Zealand Government, 2002). This programme was directly aimed at providing an in-depth induction

programme for first-time principals (Ministry of Education, 2001). Although the 2001 report on New Zealand schools indicated that most of the principals appointed during that year had no 'tertiary qualification in management', (Ministry of Education, 2001) the curious answer to this dilemma was not the provision of management education but *induction training*.

One of the immediate challenges has been the provision of training for primary and secondary principals *simultaneously*. Although some sessions divide the two sectors, even within primary schools there is a wide disparity in New Zealand; from large primary schools of 600+ pupils to schools where the sole teacher is also the principal. Arguably the training needs of this diverse group are distinctive and New Zealand should exercise with caution a 'once size fits all' approach to principalship training and professional development.

The programme for first time principals is neither compulsory nor is it a condition of appointment. Massey and Waikato Universities developed the programme jointly and The University of Auckland won the contract to deliver the programme. This involves three residential courses in the term breaks, two half-day school visits by mentors and e-community support and online learning (Details of this programme are located at <http://www.npo.org.nz>). The modular curriculum is designed to traverse a 'range of topics and issues' and 'recognises the primacy of quality teaching and learning in schools'.

As in England, this enhanced focus on leadership development is to be welcomed and the arrival First-Time Principal Programme emblematises a national determination to enhance the quality of leadership in school. Nonetheless, also as in England, this state inspired programme intervenes in an area of activity that was previously colonised by a number of educational providers, including higher education institutions. It is apposite to notes that a review of New Zealand schools by the Ministry of Education in 2001 indicated principalship is complex and that there can be no unitary model of leadership (Ministry of Education, 2001). Thus, while on the one hand, the New Zealand government has averred that professional development for principalship should be multifaceted, this initial foray into a national programme for leadership development suggests that the imperative to tighten professional accountability and quality assurance mechanisms since 1989 may have provided an agenda for political capture of leadership preparation programmes by government. The writers accept that one way in which government might be assured that principals exercise high quality leadership in New Zealand schools is to develop programmes that mandate both pre-employment and post-employment professional development programmes (Cardno, 2002) and there are strong similarities between the trajectory of developments in England and New Zealand which suggest that the First-Time Principals Programme may be only the first of a number of government forays into territory previously occupied by higher educational institutions.

## **Governmental intervention in leadership development in England and New Zealand: interstitial interlude or permanent arrogation**

Although the enhanced focus on leadership development in England and New Zealand has been timely, there remains a possible tension between leadership *training* and leadership *education*. That is, the development of 'national programmes' in both the UK and New Zealand outside of the higher education has the potential to create two antagonistic groupings: training providers and higher education providers. It is feasible to suggest that recent leadership policy developments in New Zealand have mirrored UK initiatives (Thrupp, 2001) and that there is a slow and certain drift towards uniformity and compliance. Moreover, it is a moot point as to whether a generic competency model that underpins programmes in the England and New Zealand can cater for the complexity of leadership that Tomlinson (2002) and Gunter, Smith and Tomlinson (1999) emphasise. Leadership programmes such as those promulgated in England and New Zealand and the associated historical and political legacies point to the possibility that there are underlying and competing claims as to what constitutes 'leadership' and 'leadership development'. A further troublesome point is that an underlying assumption of both the Hay Group's report and the NCSL's leadership programmes is that principals act as one homogenous group, that their professional development needs can be homogenised and that a normative view of leadership is possible to simultaneously predict and develop. Questions raised by Ribbins (1997) and

again by Gunter (2001), among others, that still need to be fully addressed include:

1. How do we understand the professional practice of leadership?
2. What are the knowledge claims that the leadership development programmes have been based on and how does this 'fit' with debates about leadership, leadership preparation and professional development?

What appears to be evident from the descriptions and discussions of leadership training in both the UK and New Zealand is that there has been a gradual shift in emphasis. Initially preparation for headship or principalship was voluntary and involved the gaining of academic credentials. While the authors acknowledge that initiatives for the formal preparation and professional development of school leaders were necessary, it is feasible to suggest that the formal machinery of policy making at the macro-level dictated the level, form and content of such programmes. As Ozga (1999) has cogently argued, policy is bound up with historical and political demands. Similarly Bolam has pointed out:

... models of leadership development are often being devised in political contexts in which external, 'restructuring' changes, initiated by national, state or local authorities to raise standards of achievement, exert priority over school leaders' own vision of needed improvements (Bolam, 2003:84).

Pointedly, this view can be applied to the current situation in the UK and the developing situation in New Zealand. In essence what Bolam has suggested is that school leaders need to adopt and adapt a repertoire of styles and techniques which suit their own unique situation. He asks how this fits in with 'external prescription' such as implementing centrally determined policies. If the existing professional values of heads/principals are the starting point for leadership development, to what extent do these link naturally with the notion of national standards?

The initial development of national provision of leadership training in both England and New Zealand are to be applauded since they can be seen as the fulfilment of calls for systematic training and development for school leaders that have been made by successive generations of serving professionals, academics, and policy makers. To some extent these initiatives are, however, examples of top-down models in which central intervention was construed as both necessary and needed. Although groups of heads/principals, professional associations, and academic commentators were consulted during programme initiation and development, the creation of leadership programmes in England never and New Zealand has, to date, failed to become the collaborative process of 'managed consultation' that has been a characteristic of, for instance, the Scottish Qualification for Headship (O'Brien, Murphy and Draper, 2003: 61 – 63). For this reason dangers have existed that the sense of ownership by school leaders receded given the inherent drift towards centralisation and compliance

in both England and New Zealand that was intrinsic to the initial model. The question has been asked as to what extent the provision of leadership programmes is a solution to the perceived 'problem' of head/principal accountability and responsibility? (Cardno, 2002). Thus, while this reinvigorated and renewed governmental focus can, on the one hand can be applauded, questions remain as to the extent to which these new and admittedly innovative programmes have met the requirements of the pluralistic approach called for by some commentators prior to the emergence of national programmes (see, for instance, Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993). Such approaches, it was suggested, should engage principals with the theoretical underpinnings of leadership and its complex relationship with the social, economic, political and post-modern world. Herein lies a tension. Should a professional development programme for principals focus on what 'principals need to know' as the Hay research documented? Or, should a professional development programme focus on the theory-practice nexus that could (potentially) frame the programme according to 'what presenters know'?

These questions then bring into a sharp relief a further set of questions. Should principal preparation be mandatory, as has become the case for initial access to headship in England and Wales? Should this occur prior to appointment? Should postgraduate qualifications in educational leadership be a requirement of current and aspiring principals? What role should University 'academic programme' hold? Bush and Jackson (2002:424) argue for work at masters' level for aspiring headteachers:

Given that teaching is a graduate-level profession in most developed countries, there is an obvious logic in regarding subsequent training for the leading professionals in schools to be at or near master's level.

Aligning leadership preparation with postgraduate education may present a way in which higher order intellectual skills can be fostered within the practice of leadership and management. Bush (1995) has commented that knowledge of theory, research and practice by principals is vital in extending the ways in which leadership can be exercised that draws on more than the leader's own professional and personal biography. This challenge may promote a connectedness with or in leadership programmes and provides opportunities for leadership programmes in both UK and New Zealand to advance the scholarship of educational leadership that is underpinned by practitioner inquiry and theory that is firmly grounded in educational practice. One of the first ways to facilitate this possible approach is to move away from a model that is based on a competency framework that arguably offers a 'one size fits all' solution. Clearly, leadership preparation programmes that are inextricably linked with theory-research-practice have the potential to reduce opportunities for uniformity and compliance. In England the NCSL has chosen to encourage interconnectedness between national programmes and academic, university based, programmes through the encouragement of partnership with higher education institutions in order to facilitate reciprocal remission from the requirements of NPQH on the one side and Masters degrees on the other. The

NCSL has also sought to reach out to the academic community by becoming one of the most significant funding bodies for research in educational leadership in the UK and its director of research, himself a highly distinguished academic in the field, has noted publicly that 'the College is strongly wedded to supporting research which investigates how leaders make a difference' (Southworth: 348). Whether such developments are mirrored in New Zealand remains to emerge but New Zealand developments in particular are at a stage of progression that mean that nation is in a unique position to develop its educational leaders in ways that do not merely replicate the Victorian (Australia) or UK models.

One of the most sage of commentators on educational leadership development programmes, Ray Bolam, has applauded the recent initiatives in England, especially the creation of the NCSL, because of the breadth and innovative nature of the programmes that have been created (Bolam, 2004: 260). Yet, as noted earlier in this article, that same commentator notes potential strategic instabilities that face the NCSL including the danger of rapidly changing priorities of governmental and institutional incumbents and more menacingly, the overall sustainability of programmes that are funded by governments whose priorities may change over time (Bolam, 2004: 261-263). As New Zealand sets out on its own journey in the development of nationally mandated programmes a number of questions emerge including: Can the current programme provider in New Zealand realise the demand to develop competent school leaders? Can the differing strands underlying the programme development process be drawn together to facilitate a coherent and comprehensive professional development

programme? And, finally, how might we be assured that the programme that is delivered is evaluated to ensure that visionary and practical principals are the next generation of principals in New Zealand schools? Significant weaknesses have been identified in the overall conception of competency or standards-based models of training and development (Brundrett, 2001); the various incumbents and individuals who have developed and led the English national programmes have striven hard to ameliorate some of the most seminal of these problematic issues, no doubt a similar process will be undergone in the New Zealand context. It remains open to question whether governmental intervention in leadership development in England and New Zealand will be an interstitial interlude or permanent arrogation.

### **Conclusion: shaping the next generation of school leaders**

Few, if any, could deny that standards-based programmes have assumed apparent dominance in the training and development of school leaders in both England and New Zealand. It is, presumably, the directness and apparent simplicity of such models that is attractive, since they subsume the notion of a clear articulation of the elements of any activity linked to firm and measurable training objectives (Brundrett, 2000:96). Whatever the reasons for the dominance of such methods, questions remain as to how far the governmentally inspired leadership programmes have moved beyond the more reductivist elements of the competence paradigm towards educational programmes that develop the kind of reflective knowing and higher order cognitive abilities that

will undoubtedly be required by leaders in the increasingly complex world of educational leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The challenge of creating new, professionally relevant, programmes that develop articulate, confident and astute leaders should not and cannot fall alone to any one national agency isolated from the research, commentary and analysis of a wider educational constituency. If school leadership courses are to be successful they must integrate the best of academic programmes and take full account of emerging research evidence; they must also reflect the unique context and characteristics of each individual principal or headteacher. There are positive signs that the policy makers and policy implementers in England are increasingly interested in regionalising the work of school leadership development and in working together with a wide range of stakeholders in the academic and local communities. This is wholly to be welcomed and the authors would hope that this broadening of the model of leadership development will continue to be increasingly embedded with the practice of the two nations.

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