

## **The Emerging global vision of the Expert Teacher Designation, a truly international Phenomenon, with local innovations and adaptations worldwide.**

### Research overview

As models of expert teaching have become established across the globe it has become [possible to assess and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and to analyses which ones can be considered the most advanced and most significant as exemplars. This paper presents an emergent typology of models of expert teaching.

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The concept of the 'expert teacher' is an increasingly global phenomenon [Goodwyn,2022] with many advanced systems investing in a formal designation, this is partly explained by education systems profound need to recruit and retain the best teachers, providing them with a career structure, maintaining classroom impact and developing other teachers in the system. This research closely examines the purposes and structures of these evolving models and their successes and challenges in each national context and it traces global influences and the challenges of governance and political control of such designations

There are many examples of the phenomenon with the Advanced Skills Teacher [AST] in Australia [over 30 years] and The Highly Accomplished Teacher [HAT]in the USA [30 years] being the most established. However, some models have already come and gone – the AST in England 1997-2013, the Chartered Teacher in Scotland only lasted 5 years. There are new developments, the Chartered teacher in England, launched by the Chartered College of teaching in 2017 and the Highly Accomplished Teacher in Australia, now 7 years in development, Singapore is evolving an elaborate structure of Leading and Master teachers with several career pathways. Each of these models has been designed for the local system with different models of governance and control for example the totally independent National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the USA, or the completely politically managed system in Singapore [Goodwyn, 2019].

This research examines the purposes and structures of these evolving models and their successes and challenges. It traces global influences, for example the adoption of the HAT designation in Australia, adapted from the USA, the Chartered model beginning in England just as it is abolished in Scotland. The concept frequently acts as a bridge between and across cultures. These changes are part of the challenge of governance and political control of such evolving designations and their relative stability or fragility. The research also examines the emergence of The Lead Practitioner in England as a 'pseudo model'.

Ontologically, the research adopts a Critical Realist [CR] perspective [Archer et al,1998] examining the expert teacher concept as fundamentally concerned with structural, systemic improvement, a potentially emancipatory project for the agentive teaching profession. 'Emergence' is also a key CR construct, here interpreted that 'Expert Teaching' is a universalist entity. Epistemologically the research adopts a phenomenological stance to understanding 'expert teaching' as a designation, examining the structures and stratifications in each system that may enable teacher emancipation or obstruct and diminish it. There is also evidence of what may be deemed 'expert teacher cultures', that is how the ideologies infused in education systems dominate the character of what it means to be an expert teacher. Much of this 'character' is revealed through analysing the descriptors and standards used to define the teacher role and behaviours.

There is a close analysis of the features of various models [Goodwyn, 2024a], its evolution and development and its status in relation to several factors which include:- [1] status within the

profession on a strong/weak continuum, [2] its governance and political status on a continuum of stability/fragility and [3] its effectiveness on a continuum of powerful to weak. An original and emergent typology of the models is presented as an analytical tool.

This level of development of models of expert teaching [Goodwyn, 2024b] allows for international comparisons that examine valuable similarities and important local differences, providing evidence of a range of successful models. An important element of difference is to do with structures of control and governance, is the model 'owned' by the profession, or by the government, or by an independent body. The Lead Practitioner is critiqued as a 'pseudo model' as it is a neoliberal feature of performative school improvement and of no benefit to the profession.

The analysis demonstrates that social, cultural and political contexts inevitably define the local model and may well be part of the strength and stability of certain models. We may have reached a stage where less established systems with rapidly expanding school populations and therefore rapidly expanding teacher work forces may look to these models as adaptable to their local circumstances. It may be argued that such local developments of the expert teacher might be far more effective than relying on foreign aid and advisors or simply 'copying' external models. The establishment of a designation of expert teacher may well have real benefits for raising the status of the teaching profession in systems where teaching is not perceived as a good career, even when it is a respected career. Such teachers can act as advocates for a strong profession with its own voice and professional standards and where teacher autonomy can be a structural part of the designation.

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