Tensions between policy and practice in New Zealand secondary school appraisal: A critical analysis

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MEdL

2017

Tensions between policy and practice in New Zealand secondary school appraisal: A critical analysis

A thesis submitted to
Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Educational Leadership (MEdL)

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School of Education

2017

Abstract

Annual appraisal of New Zealand's state teachers has been a legislated requirement of Board of Trustees employers since 1997. Over the past 20 years, accountability mechanisms implemented to placate the manufactured public crisis about the state of education have, over time, shifted from the reassurance provided by local policy to the examination of individual teacher performance. Teacher appraisal itself is a complex performance management process with accountability and development requirements for both the teacher and the school, yet the hierarchical structures reinforced by neoliberal ideology and managerial practices have privileged accountability requirements over development opportunities. Instead of understanding appraisal in the dual terms of accountability *and* developmental or the exclusive terms suggested by either accountability *or* development, this thesis encourages school leaders to give greater attention to the importance of teacher *development for accountability* and *leader accountability for development.*

This study focuses on the dichotomy between the espoused conditions of appraisal explained in school appraisal documentation with the experiences shared by 13 curriculum leaders across three South Auckland secondary schools. The research methodology combined case study design with critical theory and the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Following a group interview with five curriculum leaders from one school and individual interviews with four leaders from the remaining two schools, participant narratives were written as a series of representative vignettes. The stories of these leaders were then synthesised to create a meta-narrative to challenge the reliance on top-down policy to determine teacher professionalism.

This study uncovered four main findings. (1) To counter the myriad of accountabilities required by external agencies, the schools have aligned professional development and performance management systems. (2) Despite the illusion of systemic cohesion provided by this rational alignment, appraisal practices are fragmented and vary between departments. (3) Positioned between accountability mechanisms, professional development in the form of professional inquiries has generated a culture of evidence collection. Beneath the surface of espoused commitment to this development sits leader reticence to profess dissatisfaction with these artificial practices. (4) External accountability measures may enhance the appearance of professionalism, but greater responsivity to bottom-up practices grounded in collegiality and interdependence is needed if more professional understandings of accountability are to be realised.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of learning.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

BoT   Board of Trustees

EC   Education Council

ERO   Education Review Office

HoD   Head of Department

MoE   Ministry of Education

NCEA   National Certificate of Educational Achievement

NZQA   New Zealand Qualifications Authority

PLG   Professional Learning Groups

PMS   Performance Management Systems

PPTA   Post Primary Teachers' Association

PTC   Practising Teacher Criteria

RTC   Registered Teacher Criteria

TRB   Teacher Registration Board

Chapter 1   Introduction

A response in part to perceived public dissatisfaction with teachers and their performance, appraisal has been a mandated requirement of New Zealand state schools since 1997. Entrusted with the dual responsibility of meeting accountability and development needs for schools and teachers alike, appraisal is precariously poised at the junction of policy and practice. Done well, teacher appraisal will satisfy accountability requirements, simultaneously serving the interests of the profession by targeting the professional development goals necessary to improve practice; done poorly, it threatens to perpetuate bureaucratic compliancy cultures, foster performative practices and disrupt traditional understandings of teacher professionalism. The thesis presented in this study, however, argues for a reconceptualising of the accountability and development divide. Rather than focussing on accountability *or* development, or accountability *and* development, greater emphasis should be placed by school leaders on the interdependence of accountability *for* development and development *for* accountability if teacher appraisal is to best serve the interests of professional teachers and the students in their care.

Central to this study is a concern with the affective costs accompanying the effectiveness and efficiency demands informing New Zealand's secondary school performance management systems. Of interest is the way in which external accountabilities have impacted on the identity, sense of professionalism and understandings of what constitutes effective practice. By examining the teacher appraisal processes operating in three Auckland secondary schools and sharing the experiences of thirteen curriculum leaders, this research highlights: the shortcoming of professional standards' dual role in assuring professionalism and informing practice, the personal cost of performative practices including evidence collection as a way of satisfying external audit requirements, the need for school alignment to be informed by bottom-up understandings, and the need for appraisal procedures to be more attuned with collegial, supportive practices if they are to inform professional growth.

Policy and practice

Policy

The *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988) reforms of the late 1980s, named after the principal policy document, marked a new era of devolution for New Zealand's schools. Intended to reduce state expenditure during a time of global austerity, the reforms reasserted government control of education policy and the national curriculum, whilst entrusting elected community representatives, or Boards of Trustees (BoT), with the business of day-to-day school management. Freed from the obligation of financing the unwieldy Department of Education

Regional Boards, the government, through the newly established Ministry of Education (MoE) and Teacher Registration Board (TRB), was now better positioned to ensure school policies met the accountability requirements of the State Sector Act (1988) and the Education Act (1989); but without the previous requirement of providing individual school support. Nearly twenty years have lapsed since these reforms, but the conditions they established continue to shape understandings of teacher professionalism, accountability and what counts as effective practice. Policy, though, refers to more than simply the conditions of employment outlined in legal statutes or to acts of compliance required by school board of trustee documentation. For policy is not only a text, as it includes "any course of action (or inaction) relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation of resources" (Codd, 2007, p. 167). In this way policy may be said to function as a discourse which, as Ball (1990a) explains, is "about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (p. 2). When applied to the appraisal context, consideration of policy requires the nature of teacher and employer relationships be examined and the varying degrees of autonomy and control each is able to exert. When allowed to function as a source of top-down power, policy legitimises preferred government practices and reduces teacher professionalism by empowering others to make judgements about the quality of teacher work.

Practice

Understood in general terms as relating to what people do or as a means of improving their performance, practice, when examined through a critical educational lens, draws attention to: how effective practices are decided and controlled, whose interests are best served by perpetuating these conceptions, and the nature of the relationship between teachers and those to whom they are held to account. Nicolini (2012) suggests that despite the multiple, and at times conflicting, interests of practice theory, what unites the field is an understanding of practice as a "routinised activity of the body" (p. 5). This act of routinising represents a challenge to teacher professionalism as autonomy and responsivity must inevitably give way to conforming to already sanctioned behaviours, so that what emerges is an understanding of effective practice as a euphemism for "following rules" (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, p. 5).

The Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand

Overseeing the rules of practice for New Zealand's teachers is the government-selected, rather than teacher-elected, Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (EC) which replaced the TRB in 2015. The Council's first act was to rebrand the Registered Teacher Criteria, a set of twelve professional standards, as the Practising Teacher Criteria (PTC - included as Appendix One) and by doing so draw greater attention to the contestable nature of practice. The Council explains

the separation of registration and practising certificates as necessary because the former is concerned with the membership of the profession whilst the latter is "focused on assessing ongoing competence" (Education Council, 2015b). Seemingly paradoxically though, the PTC seek to simultaneously "establish minimum standards of teaching and provide an aspirational framework of continued professional learning and development" (Education Council, 2015c, p. 3). Any developmental intention however, is undermined by the frequency of the word 'evidence' which features 10 times in their 13 page handbook and the compulsion that "evidence of professional practice meeting the Criteria must be provided through an appraisal process to a professional leader who then makes final recommendations to the Council" (Education Council, 2015c, p. 4). Importantly, the Council only trusts professional leaders to make recommendations, retaining for themselves the right to "audit and moderate at least 10% of appraisals for teacher practising certificates each year to ensure teacher practise (*sic*) judgements are robust and consistent" - an auditing responsibility which they, in turn, have returned to the MoE's auditory arm, the Education Review Office (ERO).

The Council is currently engaged in a nationwide teacher appraisal research project, which as their website asserts, will better enable teachers to answer "what does effective appraisal against the Practising Teacher Criteria (PTC) look like?" It is an important question no doubt, one which promises greater procedural clarity for teachers and school leaders alike, as well as providing an assurance mechanism for the New Zealand public that its teachers are meeting the standards required of them. But as is so often the case, the devil is in the detail. For hidden within the Council's seemingly innocuous question resides a chimera with an insatiable appetite for evidence inherited from neo-liberal managerial discourses which value individualism, competition and profit at odds with the Council's espoused commitment to building stronger collaborative, collegial and community relationships. By advocating for an effective appraisal system, the Council perpetuates a number of unexamined assumptions about the nature and necessity of teacher performance management in New Zealand. Co-opted from the private sector, effectiveness, along with the neoliberal pairing of efficiency and economy, privileges a mechanistic view of education which equates worth with the maximum output gained from the minimal input. Ensuring one's value and enhancing one's position in such a managerial climate means teachers are required to not only focus on improving the learning outcomes of their students, they must also commit to constantly proving their own worth. Of value in a managerial environment which values appearance, as indicated by the interest in what effective appraisal 'looks like', is that data which can be recorded, measured and ultimately compared with other data collected for the performing schools market. This is likely to see the proliferation of data-generating activities and possibly even encourage performative practices as teachers busy

themselves preparing evidence for submission to line managers for performance scrutiny and the allocation of either sanctions or rewards.

Professionals, professional standards and performance

Distancing teachers from professional conceptions of their work presents a number of political benefits including the justification of externally imposed accountability systems and increased devolution of school managerial practices within schools (Beck, 2008). Devolved governance does provide schools with the ability to respond to context but this apparent freedom is constrained by government steerage of policy, curriculum and accountability responsibilities – to create the diluted local leadership phenomenon Wright (2001) calls bastard leadership. Surrendering accountability to powerful external agencies means school leaders are re-positioned as line managers, accountable not only to those above them but free to push their traditional responsibilities further down the line, an act which has left many middle leaders feeling uncertain, stressed and in some cases in a state of crisis (Pinto, 2015; Watkins, 1993).

This is by no means unexplored territory in the research literature with writers such as Codd (1999; 2005b), Fergusson (2000) and Fitzgerald (2008) having already examined the relationship between the de-regulation of the educational sector, the re-regulation of the teaching profession and the subsequent erosion of teacher professionalism. Many writers contend that because neoliberals favour competitive, individual practices, they will be suspicious of professions and see them as anti-competitive monopolies (Connell, 2009). Rather than seeing teachers as professionals, a market view promotes a view of teachers as functionaries (Codd, 2005b), compliant technicians (Weber, 2007) or competent craftspeople (Moore, 2004), and their work a form of practical knowledge (Beck, 2008) in need of the same scrutiny and supervision as other managed workers. As with any skilled work, job expertise is still necessary and of value in a market economy, but there is little need for effective teachers to challenge curriculum knowledge or the intentions and prejudices of society's dominant players who author educational policies and recommended practices (Apple, 2006; Beyer, 2002; Connell, 2009). Positioning teachers as workers, however, justifies the imposition of other managerial principles associated with free-market capitalism including performance indicators, measurable outcomes and employee supervision. So what becomes of value in a performative environment is no longer the 3Rs of traditional education (reading, writing and arithmetic), or even the equity of socially responsive curriculum movements, but the maintenance of a teacher-proofed education system oiled with the 3Es of neoliberalism: economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Helsby, 1999; Morley & Rassool, 1999).

Professional standards

Professional standards too have played their part in disrupting traditional understandings of teacher professionalism. Consistent with neoliberal practices, standards simplify the complex into conveniently packaged, readily auditable competencies, to promote individual and therefore competitive practices between teachers (Connell, 2009). Professional autonomy is inevitably compromised by such a practice as the ability to respond to context and situation is left to a set of universally applicable standards to decide what is important. Contradictorily serving as both a minimal competency expectation and as an aspirational tool, professional standards threaten to shift teacher preoccupations with input and process to an overriding concern with measurable output and product: from a focus on monitoring student progress to one of documenting their own. Securing the effective teacher stamp of approval means learning experiences must be evaluated in terms of the quality of evidence they produce, with those which produce measurable data proving imminently more useful. Disconnected from the accountability teachers have to peers, communities and the students they teach, mandated performance management systems concerned with meeting predetermined criteria may well be complicit in promoting even more data for public scrutiny, data which is always in the espoused public interest (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004), but perhaps counter to the intent of developing collegial, professional relationships and stronger educational communities.

Accountability

If accountability means taking responsibility for one's actions, as it is commonly assumed, then it is difficult to imagine why those responsible for student outcomes should not be or would not want to be held to account. Yet commonly held understandings of accountability are often exploited by governments and their real intentions concealed so that teachers can be positioned in ways that suit government interests. By imposing accountability forces, the government is able to privilege external over internal forms of accountability and replace professional conceptions of accountability - that is teachers holding themselves accountable to their peers, students and community - with managerial or bureaucratic forms of accountability. Silencing these alternative forms of accountability means that accountability becomes a convenient catchphrase to justify the imposition of other new public management strategies including line management and surveillance. MacBeath (2009) suggests that accountability encompasses marrying two reinforcing ideas: answerability and enforceability; yet in today's devolved environment it is difficult even to know to whom one is answerable and acceptance of enforceability can just as easily be replaced by submission to power. As Gabbard (2008) insists, accountability is best understood as a calculated process for "stripping away teachers'

autonomy and their feelings of creative interchange within a community of other teachers and learners" (p. 192).

Research context

The complexity of modern school environments and the multiple expectations of teacher appraisal means it is inevitable a tension will exist between what is written in policy and what is experienced in practice, between the espoused state ideal and the lived reality for New Zealand's secondary school teachers. This study examines the approaches three Auckland secondary schools have taken to navigate the multiple requirements of the appraisal process and the impact that recent political manoeuvrings have had on the leaders entrusted with carrying out these procedures. The research took place in three co-educational schools in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, identified in this research by the nomenclatures Tahi High School, Rua College and Toru College (one, two and three in Māori) and is informed by document analysis and the voices of thirteen curriculum leaders. The objectives of the research and their corresponding location in the manuscript are outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Research aims, questions and thesis location

Research aim	Research question	Thesis organisation
To critically examine the political forces informing contemporary understandings of effective teacher appraisal.	What policy and political manoeuvrings inform appraisal systems in New Zealand's secondary schools?	Part One: Policy and Practice Chapter Two: Policy Review Chapter Three: Literature Review
To understand how teacher appraisers have been able to accommodate shifting expectations of the appraisal process.	What approaches have three secondary schools taken in order to navigate the multiple expectations of appraisal? Have school leaders experienced a shift in their understandings of appraisal and what constitutes effective teaching practice as a result of school approaches? How have leader conceptions of professionalism and accountability been affected by appraisal changes?	Part Two: School Case Studies Chapter Four: Methodology Chapter Five: Case Schools
To reconceptualise understandings of appraisal more consistent with developing the teaching profession.	Where appraisers feel a degree of compromise has been made - to what extent have they been able to find spaces that value more developmental approaches? How can appraisal processes and understandings be modified to further enhance the interests of the teaching profession?	Part Three: Interpretations and reinterpretations Chapter Six: Cross-case interpretations Chapter Seven: Reinterpreting appraisal

The critical and hermeneutic position

Whereas neoliberalism hubristically posits rational measures borrowed from business discourses as common-sense solutions with universal applicability, the critical position offers insight into the way historically negotiated political structures and power relationships work to control people through these so-called common-sense practices. Ribbins and Gunter (2002) present the critical position as one of five knowledge domains of educational leadership research, relevant to the work of school leaders as it strives "to reveal and emancipate leaders and followers from social justice and the oppression of established power structures" (p. 378). Discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, the critical paradigm has emerged to challenge both subjectivist and objectivist knowledge constructions by refusing to limit its interests to describing what it uncovers; instead, it actively confronts ideological structures which perpetuate social inequalities, before presenting alternatives for a more just and equitable society.

To temper criticisms of excessive self-certainty accompanying the critical position, and as a means of enriching the interviews held with the curriculum leaders, a hermeneutic understanding as presented by Hans-Georg Gadamer (2013) was adopted. Gadamer suggests that unlike the physical and natural sciences, engagement with the human sciences requires a commitment to exploring the conditions in which understanding take place rather than with pursuing truth as exalted by the empirical tradition. Understanding, Gadamer extols, is an interpretive act requiring constant examination of self-prejudice, an ever-ready openness to the possibility of others' understandings and a realisation that any understanding produced can never be definitive as there will always be room for subsequent interpretation. One of the central assertions of hermeneutics is that research and analysis of any variety require an awareness of one's own consciousness and the values residing tacitly within. Such values and the predispositions they support, hermeneuts maintain, unconsciously determines the nature of all inquiry (Steinberg, 2012). Hermeneutical approaches do, however, complement critical investigations as Halverson and Rosenfeld Halverson (2011) assert because, unlike positivist or practical approaches to education research, "hermeneutic inquiry creates critical knowledge by situating education processes in historical, social, economic, or political contexts" (p. 325).

Thesis outline

The thesis is organised into three parts. The first part draws upon the theoretical, investigating how policy has moulded today's appraisal environment. The following chapter examines the role New Zealand educational policy since the reforms of the 1980s has played in shaping contemporary attitudes towards teachers and deciding how their performance should be

assessed. In Chapter Three the focus shifts from New Zealand's political landscape to the tensions within the performance appraisal literature itself. Attention is given in the first instance to the nature of appraisal and recommended best practices, before exploring the contested fields of accountability, professionalism, performance and practice.

This sense of unease continues in Part Two of the thesis which marks a transition from the theoretical to the practical. Chapter Four opens with a discussion of the critical position's dissatisfaction with traditional research paradigms and explores its interest in liberating people from oppressive power relationships. This, in turn, is followed by an extended discussion of case study methodology and an introduction to the schools and participants involved in the study. Chapter Five places the spotlight on the appraisal practices-in-action at each case school by comparing the reported-reality of the appraisal leaders with the idealised-reality espoused in school policy documentation.

The final section of the thesis, Part Three, brings together the many tensions competing for dominance throughout the thesis. Chapter Six focuses on the synthesised case generalisations and draws attention to the fragmented departmental realities that undermine the cohesion of professional development and performance management mechanisms advertised on paper. Chapter Seven situates the study's findings within New Zealand's policy history, before offering a reconception of the accountability and development appraisal divide, acknowledgement of the study's limitations and suggestions for future research in this critical area.

PART ONE – POLICY AND PRACTICE

Part One of this study is a critical examination of the political and legal discourses that have contributed to contemporary understandings of effective appraisal practice. Chapter Two outlines how these understandings have been shaped by inherited neoliberal politics tracing the policy developments that introduced New Public Management into New Zealand's education system. Chapter Three retains this interest in neoliberal politics but shifts the focus to the appraisal literature in order to analyse how the reforms have reconstituted teacher identity and contested for control of their work.

Chapter 2   Policy Review

The 2015 addition of the Practising Teacher Criteria to the myriad of legislated performance management requirements already in existence marks the latest political challenge for New Zealand's teachers in what has been a tumultuous and at times acrimonious relationship with its government. Taking as its starting point the economic reforms of the 1980s, this chapter examines the role that market managerial forces have played in restructuring the education sector and politicising of teacher performance. Under New Public Management, social services including education were no longer positioned as public goods, but commodities subject to the same market principles more readily identified with the private sector. The autonomy traditionally enjoyed by the teaching profession was now seen as a self-protective anachronism removed from the assurance needs of a public who had lost confidence in its teachers and the quality of their educational product. Enshrined in law by the State Sector Act of 1988 and the Education Act the following year, calls for greater teacher accountability were answered and a raft of changes introduced which not only devolved school management to locally elected boards of trustees but reconfigured understandings of teacher performance and accountability which continue to this day.

Market reforms

An ominous year in literary circles, the 1984 election of New Zealand's Fourth Labour Government announced a new 'common sense' approach to New Zealand politics which transformed the traditional relationship between state and citizen. The post-war supportive State guided by Keynesian economic interventionism was replaced by a new enabling government, who, in the wake of the global economic collapse precipitated by the 1970s oil crisis, embarked on an ambitious plan of deregulation in order to reduce national expenditure. Continuing a twentieth-century trend of going wherever Great Britain went, the neoliberal reforms of Margaret Thatcher's New Right ideology which simultaneously preached government austerity and market principles of consumer choice and competition found their way to our shores (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Doherty, 2007; Olssen et al., 2004). Three years after the Labour Party's rise to power, the reforms which had hitherto focused on economic restructuring, were, in Labour's second term under the watch of Prime Minister and new Minister of Education, David Lange, extended to the social welfare, health and education sectors. As part of the reforms, new government agencies were introduced including the Education Review Office (ERO) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA); with the most significant being a new Ministry of Education (MoE) to replace the Department of Education and its heavily resourced regional offices.

The rise of market managerialism

Before the establishment of the Teachers Council as part of the reforms legalised in the Education Act (1989), the Department of Education held advisory and auditory responsibilities for schools, a dual role identified as a conflict of interest in the *Report of the Education and Science Select Committee: the quality of teaching*, better known as the *Scott Report* (1986), which the authors concluded compromised the Department's ability to sanction poorly performing teachers (Cardno, 1999). Whilst the recommendations of the *Scott Report* were not enacted in law, its criticisms about the Department of Education's lack of control over teacher performance found strong allies in Treasury[1] officials, the National Party[2] in opposition, the media and the Business Round Table[3] who together were able to manufacture a crisis about the state of New Zealand education (Grace, 1991; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998). Perhaps not surprisingly, Treasury Officials were especially critical of what they saw as professionally compromised relationships, referring to them as provider capture and typical of the profession's continuing acceptance of low educational standards (Court & O'Neill, 2011). The Treasury paper *Government Management: Volume II* prepared for the victor of the 1987 election is indicative of the pervasive managerial principles at work that were to shape educational reform. Penned in rational neoliberal prose, the report argued that New Zealand's educational outcomes were not consistent with the return expected of a $3 billion investment venture engaging a third of the country's population. The report explained that "education is never free as there is always an opportunity cost to the provider" and that "educational services are like other goods traded in the market place" (p. 33). Institutional and financial restructuring was deemed essential if more productive outcomes were to be realised, including alleviating the government of the exclusive financial and administrative burden of resourcing state schooling and confronting the self-protecting interests of teacher unions which "militates against regional and subject differentials in pay and conditions … and hinders the application of incentives for high performers and sanctions for poor performance" (p. 10).

The Picot Report and Tomorrow's Schools

Charged with surveying and then mapping the road to education reform, *Administering for excellence: Effective administration in New Zealand*, better known as the *Picot Report*, and the ensuring government policy response, *Tomorrow's Schools,* arrived in 1988. The *Picot Report* was critical of the Department of Education's blurred, and at times conflicting, lines of

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[1] Treasury is the government's chief advisory on economic, financial and regulatory policy.
[2] The National Party of New Zealand is a centre-right political party, and traditional rival of the left-leaning New Zealand Labour Party.
[3] The Business Round Table was a think tank of business chief executives who advocated for pro-market public policies.

responsibility, and recommended that New Zealand's overcentralised system be replaced by local boards of trustees, who, as representatives of a new partnership between teachers and the community, would be better equipped to respond to local needs. The Department's susceptibility to "pressure group politics" (p. 24) and slow decision-making tendencies would be neutralised by the new terms of managerialism which valued choice, individual competence, cultural sensitivity and good management practice. As explained in the *Picot Report*, local institutions were now to be seen as the "building block of educational administration" (p. 1) with decisions made by Board of Trustees in accordance with their soon-to-be established local charters. Whereas the *Picot Report* saw school principals as collaborative professional leaders, the subsequent *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms directed greater importance to a leader's management duties and were instrumental in reconstituting day-to-day working relations between teachers and their former principals, now managers (Court & O'Neill, 2011).

The State Sector Act (1988) and the Education Act (1989)

An attempt to counter public dissatisfaction with the work of teachers and the problem of how to best bring teachers into line with other state employees, appraisal, in the form of required assessment of teachers by employing boards of trustees, entered New Zealand legislation as part of the 1988 *State Sector Act*. Seemingly innocuously phrased after the more ominous heading of the "Performance of teachers", the opening clause of Section 77c of the *State Sector Act,* established that "the chief executive of the Ministry of Education may from time to time prescribe matters that are to be taken into account by employers in assessing the performance of teachers." It was a provision frequently employed. The first being the *Education Act* (1989) which devolved school governance so that a history of "dependence gave way to independence almost overnight" (Gamage & Zajda, 2009, p. 12). Part seven of the *Education Act* subtitled "Control and Management of State Schools," compelled all schools to have a charter outlining aims and objectives. Espoused as representing a new commitment to social democratic principles which would see professionals in consultation with their community, the reforms legitimised market managerial practices of choice and competition at the local level whilst legitimising greater government control by indirectly steering schools towards preferred accountability practices (Court & O'Neill, 2011).

Alternative reform understandings

Countering the argument the reforms were copycat neoliberal solutions borrowed from overseas have been those writers eager to draw attention to the longstanding tradition of excessive centralism within New Zealand's administrative history. They highlight how the enduring social myth of equality perpetuated the self-serving interests of those already in power

to further ostracise those traditionally denied a voice, including Māori (Macpherson, 2014; Openshaw, 2009). Whereas the like of Court and O'Neill (2011) contend that the collective *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms were part of a sustained hegemonic plan to dismantle school management structures dressed up as community responsiveness, Macpherson (2014) suggests the reforms were less about transferring administrative responsibilities and more about shifting the balance of power in favour of parents and the community, and leadership decisions closer to the classroom. Even in *Government Management: Volume II,* there is a concern with inequity, albeit one expressed as inequitable outcomes, which recognises that "state funded educational assistance at pre- and post-compulsory stages are largely 'captured' by middle and upper class, Pakeha groups" (p. 16) at the expense of Māori language development and community engagement. Wylie (1999, 2012) concludes that despite the stated intention of the reforms to better serve the learning outcomes of low socio-economic and Māori students, these students and the schools serving them "gained the least" (p. xxi, 1999) from the *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms. Finally, it is worth remembering that for David Lange the failures of devolution were neither of policy nor intent, but of the competitive discourses that undermined what he envisioned as a democratic, responsive management model. Speaking ten years after the inception of *Tomorrow School's*, Lange (1999) remained committed to a responsive education system inspired by democratic ideals but despondent that consumerist forces including enrolment zoning and balloting had promulgated an education system of winners and losers.

Performing performance management

The term 'performance management' debuted in New Zealand educational print when explained by ERO in *Managing Staff Performance* (1995) as "the way in which a board acts as an employer and the policies and processes it has in place to ensure that its staff deliver services which effectively meet the needs of their clients (that is, the students)" (Collins, 1997, p. 4). However, it was the Ministry of Education's (1997) release of *Performance Management Systems 1* that first outlined how the quality of these services was to be assured. The first in a series of five documents, *PMS 1* announced the importance of policies and procedures for meeting performance management goals and objectives explaining that the "primary purpose of these requirements is to provide a positive framework for improving the quality of teaching (and therefore learning) in New Zealand schools" (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 1). *PMS 1* introduced the *principles, features* and *aspects* of future teacher appraisal. The *principles* required appraisal be consultative, open, transparent, flexible, confidential, and have a professional development orientation. The *features* section necessitated that BoTs have a policy outlining their school's annual appraisal processes. The *aspects* documented the teacher tasks that were to be appraised: teaching responsibilities (planning and preparation, teaching

techniques, classroom management, classroom environment, curriculum knowledge and student assessment); school-wide responsibilities (contribution to curriculum leadership, school-wide planning, school goals, effective operation of the school as a whole, pastoral activities and student counselling, and community relationships); and management responsibilities (planning, decision-making, reporting, professional leadership, and resource management). Yet, it is the succinct justification in the question and answer section which highlights the influence of managerial accountability and bureaucratic steerage forces in informing mandated appraisal: "the Government, through boards of trustees, requires assurance, on behalf of taxpayers, that teachers are being supported by sound management systems and practices and in turn are providing high-quality learning opportunities for students" (p. 6).

Memorably labelled the impossible triangle by John O'Neill (1997), he asserts the method of appraisal outlined in *PMS 1* "consigns schools and their members to a relatively pointless mechanical observation, interview, attestation, and documentation merry-go-round which saps the energy of all concerned without contributing anything tangible to the development of classroom teaching and learning" (p. x). Couched in masculine, contractual language, both the *PMS* 1 and forerunning documentation including the *Draft National Guidelines for Performance Management in Schools* (Ministry of Education, 1995) were criticised for privileging hegemonic social constructions at the expense of minority and equity interests (Neville, 1997; O'Neill, 1997). Almost twenty years have passed since the arrival of the *PMS 1*, and whilst the document does not feature on the Ministry of Education's website, the culture of compliance and prescriptive appraisal they established remains ever present; as evidenced in the third of the National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) introduced in 1993 and last updated in 2013, which requires boards to "develop and implement personnel and industrial policies, within policy and procedural frameworks set by the Government from time to time, which promote high levels of staff performance" (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Professional standards in New Zealand

Two separate sets of professional standards have developed in New Zealand in order to meet teacher preparatory and remunerative requirements. In the case of the former, the Graduating Teacher Standards were implemented in 2008 by the New Zealand Teachers Council to assure a greater degree of consistency amongst graduates from the expanding number of teacher training programmes. These seven standards incorporated professional knowledge, professional practice, professional values and relationships; however, they were not assessed, meaning quality assurance occurred at the design rather than decision stage (Nusche, Laveault, MacBeath, & Santiago, 2012). The professional standards for teachers by contrast "have

assumed greater importance because of their link to pay progression for teachers through the attestation process" (Nusche et al., 2012, p. 86). Written into the primary teacher collective contract in 1998 in order to secure pay parity with their secondary teacher colleagues, and then into secondary teacher collective contracts the following year, the professional standards outlined the expectations for beginning, classroom and experienced teachers as their career progressed. Prior to 2009 the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions were used for registration purposes and examined professional knowledge, professional practice, professional relationships and professional leadership. These were replaced in 2010 by the Registered Teacher Criteria and implemented the following year; this set of 12 criteria covered two dimensions: professional relationships and professional values, and professional knowledge in practice. The Registered Teacher Criteria were then, in turn, renamed the Practising Teacher Criteria by the Education Council, which came into being on 1 July 2015 as initially enabled by the *Education Act* of 1989 and *Education Amendment Act* of 2015.

Conclusion

Succinctly summarising Australia's experience of devolution as "centralised decentralisation" Blackmore (1995, p. 45) could just as easily have been speaking to New Zealand's educational reforms. Liberating local communities to better engage with schools, the reform movement also tightened the reigns on teacher performance and accountability. Education, which had traditionally been seen as being concerned with creating social capital was now about growing human capital in preparation for the job market (Apple, 2006; Codd, 2005a, 2005b; Connell, 2009). As producers of this human capital, teachers were required to assure their new BoT employers, as well as the tax payer in general, through mandated appraisal systems that they were in fact doing the job they were paid to do and had historically been trusted to do. By the end of the twentieth century, the scrutiny that had been directed at the education sector's management structures during the 1980s was being applied to teachers themselves. Performance management with its accompanying performance indicators became a tool for employer evaluations about teacher efficiency and productivity as well as a technology to satisfy external accountability demands. But as a tool forged in bureaucratic managerialism it would also exist as a potential instrument of control.

Chapter 3   Literature Review

Whether seen as an annual exercise in mandated compliance, or as an opportunity for development and advancement, teacher appraisal is charged with proving and improving performance – both of teachers and their employers. However, the political interest in teacher performance outlined in the previous chapter combined with the increased influence of external agencies has necessitated a shift for many schools away from developing their teachers towards ensuring accountability mechanisms are in place. The consequences of such a shift are far-reaching, affecting not only teacher practice but also traditional notions of teacher performance, professionalism and accountability. This chapter commences with an appraisal of the appraisal literature exploring the accountability and development divide before moving to an examination of the traits that typify best, or in more neoliberal terms – effective, appraisal practice. After considering the way competing understandings of accountability and professionalism affect teacher practice, the polysemy within contemporary teacher performance is considered: as an assessment of work and as a play staged for the benefit of others. Finally, in response to the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's rebranding of the *Practising Teacher Criteria*, a critique of professional standards and practice is offered which highlights the tension between government-mandated and more critical understandings of professionalism and practice.

Appraising appraisal

With origins in the corporate sector, appraisal may be understood as a complex, ongoing and evaluative process, which alongside induction and staff development, proves an integral part of employment performance management systems (Cardno & Piggott-Irvine, 1997; Middlewood, 2002; Middlewood & Cardno, 2001). Charged with the dual responsibilities of professional development and accountability, appraisal is responsible for improving both individual and organisational performance (Cardno, 2012; Cardno & Piggott-Irvine, 1997; Flockton, 2012). At the individual level, this will include evaluation of goal achievement and identification of future needs; whilst at the organisational level, attention should be given to the success of the organisation in connecting individual performance with institutional aims as outlined in charter objectives (Cardno & Piggott-Irvine, 1997).

Tensions in appraisal

Sometimes the appraisal tension, or tug-of-war as Fitzgerald (2001) suggests between accountability and development, is understood in formative and summative terms. In such instances, an emphasis on the formative is likely to be concerned with development and feedback, and the summative approach with comparing performance with external criteria so

that pass or fail judgements may be made (Montgomery, 1999). Middlewood (2002) warns schools that the cost of favouring accountability practices will be staff alienation and hostile relationships, teachers avoiding admitting weaknesses and a narrow focus on measurable targets; whereas a focus on development without accountability is likely to see weaker teachers insufficiently challenged and comfortable teachers stagnate; and, from Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs, and Robinson (2004), disrupted connections between personal and school goals.

Grootenboer (2000) offers two perspectives of appraisal; one which is bureaucratic, typified by hierarchical and summative processes, and professional appraisal, which champions a culture of self-review within a supportive, collegial environment. The consequences of either approach are considerable: in hierarchical, regulating institutions, likely costs will include guarded communication, micromanagement, a decline in trust, and the propagation of rules and rigidity (Tschannen-Moran, 2009), and a proliferation of contrived collegial practices (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990). Whereas in institutions with high levels of relational trust there is likely to be open and honest communication, learning dialogue and constructive problem talk (Bryman, 2007; Cardno, 2012; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009), stronger collaborative learning relationships and a learning climate built on trust and care (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004).

Whilst the compliance pejorative is rarely offered in the school performance management literature as an appraisal objective, Natriello (1990) presents an alternative to the accountability and development divide, positing effective performance management as the means of influencing individual performance whilst simultaneously presenting legitimate control systems as being worthy of compliance. Smith (1989) offers a series of binary oppositions which will be evident in a working environment when determined by either an accountability or developmental focus: incompetence or competence; hierarchical or professional partnership; looking at the past or looking to the future; hearsay or shared experience; suspicion or trust. Powney (1991) rejects the dual purpose notion entirely, surmising that "appraisal must be either about development or about judgement. It must be either formative or summative. It cannot be both" (p. 84); a view dismissed by the likes of Stronge (2006) who sees the pairing as having supporting interests and necessary for fulfilling public disclosure requirements. Over a decade earlier, Cardno and Piggott-Irvine (1997) suggested that the default position of New Zealand schools was to embrace professional rather than democratic understandings of accountability, which was to neglect the accountability schools have to legitimately elected, democratic authorities (Middlewood & Cardno, 2001). Similarly, Timperley and Robinson (1998b) highlight the dual nature of democratic control which includes both bureaucratic democracy or legislative

control and communitarian democracy which recognises the need for engagement with local stakeholders.

The Education Review Office's (2014) key finding from their 173 school study, featuring only 27 secondary schools, is that "it is not enough to develop an appraisal system that focuses on professional accountability alone," instead appraisal "should be experienced as a component of self-review framework that focus on improving achievement for all students" (p. 1). The report notes that the most successful schools feature leadership which integrates appraisal with goals identified in strategic and annual plans, the principal's performance management system and decision-making about professional development. Also raised in the report is the considerable variance in the quality of appraisal experiences between secondary school departments. The report concludes that whereas 20 percent of primary schools in the study had high-quality appraisal systems, only four percent of secondary schools had appraisal systems that effectively improved teacher capabilities and student outcomes.

Making appraisal 'effective'

Appraisal is often misunderstood as being an annual meeting, a view dismissed by O'Neill (1997) because "an annual, formal appraisal round is not likely to secure the critical self-analysis or collaborative working needed to promote teacher development and enhanced student learning" (p. x). Instead of being seen as a noun, that is to say, something to be done, appraisal is better understood as a verb, and more specifically, as expressed by the participle in the present progressive tense structure, an ongoing process of continuous dialogue, made up of formal and informal contributions drawn from performance data (Cardno, 2012; Cardno & Piggott-Irvine, 1997). Because appraisal is likely to involve the mediation of disparate understandings of past performance and future development as understood by the two parties, it is inevitable that conflict will arise from time to time. To minimise this potential discord, it is necessary to ensure that conclusions are derived from data that has been objectively collected and triangulated (Piggot-Irvine, 2003). Whilst the analysis of data collected from multiple sources over a prolonged period is invariably recommended in the literature, the OECD (2014) does acknowledge the potential for this to produce conflicting messages. Whether performance data is even able to be collected without overly privileging the empiricist tradition is questioned by a number of writers (Connell, 2009; MacBeath, 2009; Poster & Poster, 1993; Smith & Blasé, 1991); with some suggesting that the rise of the school improvement movement with its data-driven focus (Evans & Tomlinson, 1989), and the prolific publication of the educational leadership industry may have been unwitting accomplices for the managerial agenda by making teachers even more accountable to external agencies (Forrester, 2011; Gunter, 1997).

Best practice

Given that appraisal occurs at the nexus of past performance and future consequence, it is hardly surprising that for many performance management is a time of anxiety that professional concerns will be exposed as weaknesses, resulting in stress and even fear (Cardno, 1995; Larsen, 2009). With these affective considerations very much at the forefront, Timperley and Robinson (1997) recommend school leaders develop their interpersonal skills in order to anticipate and then articulate tensions to staff, and foster a culture which sees appraisal judgements as opportunities for inquiry rather than as evidence for punitive actions. Appraisal should then be seen as being primarily a relational rather than mechanistic process, one which relies on productive rather than defensive dialogue in order to foster spaces conducive to developing shared understandings and professional growth (Cardno, 2012). As with any relationship, these exchanges are most likely to prosper when they take place in cultures where confidentiality, transparency and trust exist as relational norms rather than as adopted behaviours (Piggot-Irvine, 2003). Supporting these relational dimensions, a commitment too must be evident in the performance management system which recognises the need for clear guidelines and understanding of the appraisal process, commitment to resourcing including time and training, the setting of deep objectives focussed on teaching and learning, and that the process be independent of disciplinary procedures (Piggot-Irvine, 2003). Her findings are mirrored by the recommendation of the Post Primary Teachers' Association (2012) who endorse appraisal practices that are: collaborative, transparent, integrated, differentiated, developmental in focus, mutually accountable, well resourced, and which make use of data "fairly and wisely" (p. 18).

International views of best practice

These best practice appraisal recommendations are consistent with those presented in the international literature which sees teacher feedback and evaluation as integral to raising student experiences and outcomes (Middlewood, 2002; OECD, 2014; Waters et al., 2004). Successful teacher evaluation programmes require an established climate of school trust (Diffey, 1987; Hopkins & Bollington, 1989; Middlewood, 2002; OECD, 2014) and involve teachers in the planning and implementation stage (Down, Chadbourne, & Hogan, 2000). Best practice will also reflect individual pedagogical and personal needs (Tuytens & Devos, 2014) and involve negotiated understandings of appraisal criteria, expectations, and processes (Diffey, 1987; Montgomery, 1999; Nuttall, 1986). It is essential that appraisers receive adequate training (Hopkins & Bollington, 1989) and have a highly developed understanding of the work being appraised (Diffey, 1987). Marzano and Toth (2013) recommend that teacher evaluation systems draw data from multiple sources collected over multiple periods of time, value teacher work

outside the classroom including planning and preparation, have a developmental orientation, provide an accurate representation of the range of teaching abilities among teachers and be hierarchical - by which they mean evaluate the extent to which school leader actions have facilitated professional growth opportunities. Moreover, the appraisal interview must link with other performance management components to ensure outcomes inform subsequent actions including professional development opportunities (Diffey, 1987; Middlewood, 2002; Nuttall, 1986); and throughout the entire process, student learning must remain the primary focus (OECD, 2014). Conversely, Frase and Streshly (1994) suggest that ineffective teacher evaluation programmes typically fail to deal with incompetent teachers, feature a disconnect between identified teacher needs and provided professional development, are unsuccessful in delivering feedback that could benefit practice, and are undermined by leader reluctance to commit necessary time and resourcing.

Wragg, Wikeley, Wragg, and Haynes' (1996) seminal two-year study of over 1100 teachers' experiences of appraisal, found that 49% of teachers surveyed changed their practice as a consequence of their appraisal experience. Occasionally cited in the literature as evidence of the ineffective nature of appraisal, the writers advocate the importance of classroom observation, training of appraisers, appraisal resourcing, consideration of peer appraisal, and caution against the dangers of mandated appraisal. More encouragingly, the OECD's (2014) international study revealed that for over 60% of teachers surveyed, appraisal did in fact lead to positive changes in practice. The 41 school leaders, including 20 secondary teacher appraisers, in Kyriacou's (1997) English study, believed the teachers they appraised benefited from their objective feedback, reflecting and discussing their practice with a more experienced colleague and from having their good practice seen and affirmed. These same leaders spoke favourably of how the appraisal of others acted as a stimulus for their own critical reflections, provided an insight into other classroom practices and helped to forge stronger relationships with junior colleagues. Moreland (2009) found that senior leaders in more demanding schools could use appraisal to help raise flagging spirits or to challenge underperforming departments, middle manager or teachers; whereas Bennett (1999) speaks of the relational benefits of observing and learning with colleagues, and the resulting systemic benefits of improved departmental planning and increased staff engagement with school management processes. At a teacher level, Deneire et al. (2014) discovered that when the appraisal focus is developmental and the outcomes are concluded as being fair judgements there is also likely to be a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction; a conclusion reiterated in the aforementioned OECD (2014) report.

Accountability

As with professionalism, accountability remains a commonly cited yet elusive and politically contested concept which competes between democratic, professional and managerial understandings for dominance in both the literature and school settings. Beck (2008) sees professional accountability as entailing not only accountability to any number of governmental, managerial or consumer authorities but also accountability for achieving the standards or performative criteria these bodies impose. For Codd (1999) accountability may be understood as being either external or internal: the former, the norm for most schools with its emphasis on line management, reporting and recording, and low trust, and the latter, a practice founded on professional responsibility typified by commitment, loyalty and a sense of duty. Vossler (2005), however, views accountability as both a bureaucratic force for reassuring and appeasing public sentiment as well as a market force privileging public choice. These neoliberal positionings of accountability mean education must necessarily become less concerned with student progress and instead focus on internal cohesion and legitimating the school's position in the current performance market (Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2015; Locke, 2015; Ransom, 2007).

Accordingly, it is an external form of accountability which has prevailed in many Western countries whereby teaching success, as with other public servants, is met "only by satisfying and complying with others' definitions of their work" (Day, 2007, p. 602). Hargreaves (1995) contends that imposed changes tend to be absorbed by school maintenance structures such as appraisal, which in turn threaten to further tip the balance in the favour of accountability by reconstructing appraisal as a tool of management for judging and controlling teacher competence through surveillance. Externally driven appraisal practices are likely to entice low-trust understandings of accountability and disconnect professional and pedagogic practices (Fitzgerald, 2008) as greater weight must necessarily be given to meeting contractual compliance than in nurturing practitioner moral agency (Codd, 1999). This conclusion is challenged by the likes of Bell and Stevenson (2006) who argue in their anthology that the control of teachers achieved by external forms of accountability, whether understood as public or market accountability, is surpassed by the control exerted by the internal accountability achieved through performance management. For these writers, internal accountability is a process for assessing how successful teachers have been in applying prescribed pedagogy to raise pupil performance test results with appraisal serving as the site for establishing the parameters of effectiveness and efficiency.

Professional relationships are compromised in an externally controlled climate as it is the superior who is required to evaluate appraisee responses, before measuring and evaluating them against expectations or standards and issuing praise or sanction. Subsequently, it is they

who have the most to gain from legitimised observation, not those they are charged with developing (Bartlett, 1998; Busher & Saran, 1994). Teacher identity is further compromised as effective teaching becomes that which can be seen to achieve measurable outcomes (Sachs, 2000). Summarising the critical position, Fitzgerald (2001) concludes that one of the consequences of New Zealand's educational reforms has been the substitution of public accountability for what was once professional accountability and autonomy, precipitating the rise of appraisal understandings as a "quality control mechanism assured within a framework of compliance" (p. 118).

Managerial accountability

Managerial approaches to governance not only legitimise hierarchical observations for comparative purposes but promotes the development of what Peters (2004) calls the prudential self, that is to say one who acts with calculated self-interest. As the name suggests self-management requires greater consideration of the practices conducive to successfully managing the self. To improve one's position in the competitive market it is necessary to monitor not only those lower in the hierarchy but colleagues and indeed one's self too. Drawing upon Jeremy Bentham's panopticon metaphor, Olssen et al. (2004) explain how surveillance which forces compliance creates not only a self-monitoring individual but a self-managing unit as well. 'Down-the-line' monitoring is an integral part of accountability when informed by bureaucratic approaches, but by creating a self-managing unit, responsibility is ultimately passed on to the individual to 'keep an eye on' themselves. This presentation of self-monitoring as a desirable managerial outcome is evident in an Education Council (2015a) webinar entitled *Strengthening understandings of Appraisal* which invited participants to evaluate the extent their school's current appraisal practice "enables staff to take responsibility for monitoring their own practice" (p. 4). This is not to suggest that self-reflection is undesirable but rather is included as a contemporary example of how indirect steerage has positioned evidence and self-monitoring as a marker of efficiency and therefore successful teacher practice.

The consequences for an appraisal system informed by managerial modes of accountability are not limited to the reconstitution of teacher identity. They are in fact plentiful and include: the illusion of collaboration as justification for internal and external surveillance (Busher, 2006; Codd, 2005a; Fielding, 2006; Wise & Leibbrand, 2001); the development of competitive, tick-boxing cultures (Forrester, 2011); and the need for fabricating or performative practices over authentic acts (Ball, 2001) - otherwise known as the rise of "impression management" practices (Thrupp, 2006, p. 3). Teaching and learning relationships are likely to be compromised by managerial accountability and will be evident in the erosion of trust (Codd, 1999, 2005b; Fitzgerald, 2008) or, the reinforcement of hierarchical school divisions (Youngs & Grootenboer,

2003), the further fragmentation of already poor appraiser and appraisee relationships as well as the spoiling of once positive relationships (Larsen, 2009), and potentially most destructive of all - the collapse of systemic learning approaches (Gunter, 1996).

This last cost to learning as brought about by compliance driven conceptions of teacher evaluation is accentuated by Cardno's (2012) reminder that a focus on the supervision and evaluation of teachers and teaching is likely to impact on student learning. Sinemma and Robinson (2007) note that appraisal systems, regardless of whether they are informed by outcome or performative measuring approaches, invariably direct only minimal attention to the relationship between teaching and student outcomes as the focus of the scrutineer's gaze continues to be on what teachers do rather than on how students learn. The findings of Sinnema and Robinson's (2007) study is one of three investigations which inform Robinson's (2009) Leading Teacher Appraisal chapter in the much vaunted *Leadership Best Evidence Synthesis*. Although the 28 schools informing this chapter were either primary or intermediate schools, there is every reason to believe the concern of the writers about the disconnection between appraisal discussion subject matter and student learning is equally pertinent to the secondary school context.

Alternative conceptions of accountability

This is not to suggest that teachers should not, nor do not want to, be appraised or held to account. Fitzgerald (2008) recognises appraisal to be a teacher right, but importantly teachers want the feedback they receive to be informed by professional rather than managerial understandings of their work (Down et al., 2000; Fitzgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003). Of interest to many writers is the nature of the relationship between teachers and those to whom they are accountable and the relative involvement of each party in determining the accountability process (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Fitzgerald et al., 2003). Whereas teachers are likely to be suspicious about management's intentions when new appraisal systems are introduced which seem to promote data gathering activities (Down et al., 2000), they are more likely to be accepting of appraisal initiatives when involved in decision making processes such as being promised a critical voice in the review of school level appraisal policy and practice (Fitzgerald et al., 2003), especially when, as two of the writers, Youngs and Grootenboer (2003) in a follow-up article assert, those being appraised are less likely to view appraisal practices as being as open and transparent as their leaders are. This symptomatic tendency of hierarchical management is reinforced by Senge (1990) who explains that leaders tend to perceive themselves as being far more rational, open, empathetic and democratic than those they lead tend to do.

Performance and performativity

Numerous authors have drawn attention to the threat managerial reforms present in reconstituting teacher identity (Codd, 2005b; Connell, 2013; Gordon, 1992), but few have spoken with the alacrity of Ball. Drawing upon Foucault's (1979) thesis that modern institutional controls target the soul through the disciplinary forces of surveillance, normalisation and examination, Ball (1990b) introduces appraisal with the subheading "the art of punishing" (p. 158) before presenting appraisal as a technology of objectification which through hierarchical observation and normalising judgements reduces the teacher to something that is "calculable, describable and comparable" (p. 159). When seen in this light, appraisal may be likened to a form of confession with its developmental goals a penance intended to make teachers even more productive (Ball, 2008). Whereas conceptions of appraisal discussed earlier in this chapter encouraged it to be seen as an ongoing exercise; more critical alternatives such as those presented by Ransom (2007) challenge the merits of a system that has transformed appraisal from an annual event into a constant performative state. Increased monitoring and the resulting self-regulation may well have transformed performance management into a system of performativity, requiring actors to continuously perform for their auditing audience (Ball, 2003). Whilst reflexivity and reflection will later be offered as behaviours often associated with autonomous conceptions of professionalism, for Ball (2008) they exist as elements of performativity which "colonises all aspects of practice and requires us to be constantly reflexive and self-disciplining, weighing up the costs and benefits of our actions in terms of their investment in productive terms" (p. 53).

Lyotard (1984) understood performativity to be the quest for optimal efficiency: "the best possible input/output equation" (p. 46). According to Ball (1998), performativity, alongside target setting and accountability, enables governments, albeit from a distance, to regulate teacher behaviour. Elsewhere he encourages a reflexive position that encourages teachers to ask "are we doing this because it is important, because we believe in it, because it is worthwhile? Or is it being done ultimately because it will be measured or compared? It will make us look good!" (Ball, 2003, p. 220). Contrasting with Ball's performativity terrors have been those writers who have offered performativity as a way of accessing new spaces for personal and professional growth. Whereas the individualising nature of external mandate means that resistance is likely to be experienced at the personal level and manifest as abandonment, disaffiliation or de-politicisation (Hall & O'Shea, 2013), Strain (2009) for instance, pitches performativity as an opportunity for resistance. He concedes that while performance may be limiting, an awareness of performativity can be liberating and productive. For in the same way an actor can play a part without compromising their identity, so too can teachers participate in

a fabrication play, before heading off-stage to develop their craft through self-reflexive, self-actualising practices in preparation for their lead role in the classroom.

Being professional

Professionalism is a constantly changing, elastic concept employed to fit the needs and political interests of the time (Whitty, 2002, 2008). Traditional explorations of professionalism in education tended to compare the work of teachers with criteria typically enjoyed by traditional professions like medicine and law. This structural approach saw the labelling of teaching, along with nursing and social work, as 'semi' or 'quasi' professions (Etzioni, 1969), an approach which has been criticised by numerous feminist scholars including Fitzgerald (2001) for privileging exclusionary hegemonic interests. Contemporary definitions by contrast are often more interested in the relationship between teachers and their governing bodies and how both cite professionalism to further their own interests. Where once professionalism was likely to be paired by the State with accountability and by teachers with autonomy, a myriad of different understandings has emerged which has seen what might be called a burgeoning culture of adjectivism flourish as theorists offer competing conceptions of professionalism.

Professionals and professionalism

Hargreaves (2000) presents four historical movements which have shaped contemporary understandings of teacher professionalism: the pre-professional age, the autonomous professional of the 1970s, the collegial professional of the 1980s, and the post-professionalism of the twenty-first century - which will either see the expanse of collegial and community relationships or further restriction and the inevitable de-professionalism of teachers. Sachs (2000) embraces collegial and community collaboration as essential to building what she terms democratic professionalism, but seems resigned to the inevitability of it being usurped by managerial professional understandings. Brundrett and Rhodes (2011) by contrast offer the frank and condemning assessment that any "notion of the autonomous professional has become redundant and has been replaced by a state-imposed regime based on the external measurement of quality through an onerous and burdensome system of inspection and testing" (p. 12).

In his much-cited work, Hoyle (1980) presents ten indicators of a profession. When synthesised, a profession emerges as any occupation which after extensive higher education performs a crucial social function. It requires adaptable skills and socialisation by professional values including client interests. The specialised nature of a professional's work demands the freedom to make decisions, a voice in shaping public policy, control over the exercise of professional responsibilities and autonomy, and high levels of prestige and remuneration. This matter of

autonomy is itself worthy of brief consideration. For Larson (1977) it is autonomy which separates professional and proletarian work; conversely, cries of autonomy may simply exist as a strategy for avoiding accountability (Hoyle & John, 1995). A number of writers draw attention to the self-serving nature of autonomy which prevents the building of collaborative practices by promoting individual and competing professionals (Codd, 2005b; Fergusson, 2000; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

Tschannen-Moran (2009) explains that a profession requires members with specialist knowledge and a dedication to the welfare of those they serve, whereas for Fitzgerald (2008), it is the presence of self-regulatory rather than hierarchical forms of control that best typify a profession. Hargreaves (2000) highlights the difference between professionalism which should be seen as "improving the quality and standards of practice" and professionalisation which is "improving status and standing" (p. 52). Demirkasımoğlu's (2010) literature review traces the sociological, political and educational contesting of teaching professionalism before simply concluding "that it means certain standards and is related to proficiency" (p. 2047). Kristinsson (2014) sees professionalism as certified knowledge, skill and care, with care involving a tripartite commitment to the occupation's internal values of service to society, attention to moral behaviour and occupational standards. Codd (2005b) employs an even more philosophical approach stating simply that "teachers who are professional are people who embody fundamental educational values" (p. 202). Recognising the changing nature of values held by new teachers, Stone-Johnson (2014) suggests that professionalism be understood not in old or new terms as Hargreaves' (2000) conception may encourage, but as parallel in order to recognise the frustrations of experienced teachers who may see appraisal as a "compulsory chore" or a game requiring careful execution (Bartlett, 1998, p. 486) as well as the more accommodating inclination of teachers new to the profession. This is not to suggest that new teachers are unaware of the potential conflicts between autonomy and accountability, but acknowledge that as former students themselves educated in performative school cultures, they are perhaps more comfortable with their post-performative identities (Wilkins, 2011), and also recognise the value of performance conversations as a way of securing the professional attention of more experienced colleagues (Bartlett, 1998).

Looking at professionalism critically

Grace (2014) explains that the professional's traditional role in society was "to speak truth to power" (p. 18), a critical responsibility which has been increasingly constrained by what he calls the "market colonisation of all forms of social service" (p. 24). Challenging the quality-matching approaches listed earlier, Evans (2008) recognises that critical analyses of professionalism should be less concerned with member qualities than with exploring the value of the service

offered by members of that occupation to those in power, concluding that the true cost of decentralisation has been teacher de-professionalisation. Similarly, for Ozga (1995), professionalism is better understood as a form of occupational control. One way this control manifests is by transferring the accountability of teachers formerly to professional peers to the state (Fitzgerald, 2008): a dire situation which she earlier contends has been exacerbated in New Zealand by the Ministry of Education's shift from governance to a "pivotal role in ensuring ERO conducts accountability audits of appraisal policy and procedures in schools"(Fitzgerald, 2001, p. 116). Mather and Seifert (2011) explain control as the mitigation of teacher consent and external coercion. All professions have some interaction with government control argue Whitty and Wisby (2006) but note it is the relevant strength of this bargaining relationship that determines the strength of each profession's mandate. When coercion is legitimised in policy, individual autonomy and trusting collegial relationships are inevitably sacrificed as teachers must inevitably defend their work territory: as the authors caution "treat professional workers like labourers and they will behave like wage slaves" (p. 30). Unfortunately, this in turn is likely to result in calls for even stronger leadership and greater control mechanisms which may manifest in any of the six forms of control presented by Smyth et al., (2000): regulated market control, technical control in the form of teaching materials such as textbooks, bureaucratic control often evident as line management, corporate control with its tendency to establish economic priorities as school foci, ideological control through normalised hegemonic practices and the exercise of disciplinary power including dress, routines and monitoring.

The practice of critical professionals

Alternative understandings of professionalism champion active participation, critical reflection, and reflective practice. Writers enrolled in this school of thought are likely to speak of re-professionalism rather than de-professionalism, welcome involvement from a range of educational stakeholders and speak of democratic professionalism (Whitty, 2008). Appraisal processes grounded in context which work from the 'bottom–up' are likely to challenge status and power (Wright, 2001) and embrace Bennett's (1999) call for "one professional holding him/herself accountable to him/herself in the presence of another professional with a more focused view on pupil achievement and the teacher's contribution to it" (p. 413). Ryan and Bourke (2013) for instance, recognise that enacted professionalism occurs when teachers engage in reflexive mediation between subjective concerns such as their own beliefs and values with objective community, staff, student and system needs. Similarly, Larrivee (2000) sees critically reflective teachers as practitioners motivated by a philosophical and ethical commitment to their learners and their practice typified by continually challenging personal assumptions and power inequities at both classroom and school levels. They are by no means

the first to offer reflection as a critical component of teacher professionalism and practice with many writers including Cardno (2012), Cardno and Piggot-Irvine (1997) and Sachs (2000) indebted to the pioneering work of the likes of Chris Argyris (1990) and Donald Schön (1983).

For Fitzgerald et al. (2003) reflective practice that incorporates collaboration, freedom and self-efficacy challenge more bureaucratic understandings of professionalism which foster competitive, hierarchical and individual practices. Sachs (2003a) recommends five principles or behaviours which typify her activist professional: a commitment to ongoing personal, professional, and political learning, participation, collaboration, cooperation, and activism. Whitty and Wisby (2006) explain how collaborative professionalism and democratic professionalism, however, are not synonymous. Whilst both espouse a commitment to engaging with a wider range of educational stakeholders than traditional approaches fostered, collaborative professionalism is tainted by the state's desire to limit teacher influence rather than any espoused commitment to embracing community agency.

Professional standards

Because bureaucratic appraisal systems fail to recognise the complexity of teachers' professional knowledge and practice, professional standards have been explored in many western countries as a possible solution for not only raising the status of the profession by making the work of teachers more clearly defined, but also offered as a panacea to the problem of how best to bring teachers into alignment with other state services employees. Not only has the teaching profession been historically unsuccessful in evaluating its own practice and providing its excellent teachers with access to justified high levels of professional development, argue Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004), it has also been unable to offer convincing alternative systems to the public. Proponents of professional standards recognise their potential for raising the status of the profession by making their skills and knowledge explicit both to teachers and the public (Mayer, Mitchell, Macdonald, & Bell, 2005). Nusche et al. (2012) for instance insist that "teaching standards are a key element in any teacher appraisal system as they provide credible reference points for making judgements about teacher competence" (p. 74) - very much the antithesis of Cardno and Piggot-Irvine's (1997) assertion that appraisal is for those already competent. Professional standards are also said to support teacher development by creating a tiered framework to support teachers throughout their career (Darling-Hammond, 2012), targeting areas for future development, and informing subsequent learning goals when embedded in a culture of self-assessment and collegial discussion (Koster & Dengerink, 2008). Moreover, they may serve as a measure for symbolic and material rewards for good teaching including remuneration (Piggot-Irvine, 2000) and have been shown to be a useful means of

accessing withheld professional learning opportunities from reluctant leaders (Down et al., 2000; Ingvarson, 2002).

A critical view of professional standards

Critics of professional standards recognise that instead of the espoused enhancement of teaching and teacher quality, any process which endeavours to marry pre-defined lists with teacher performance is likely to have an adverse impact on teachers and understandings of their work. Professional standards threaten the normalisation and universalisation of teaching practices adversely affecting those who are, simply put, not standard. Although professional standards recognise the importance of knowledge, character and especially performance, there is less importance placed on creativity (Preedy, 2001; Upsall, 2001), teaching passion or care for learners (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996); or on developing practices that promote reflection or critical thought (Beyer, 2002; Niesche, 2013; Sachs, 2003b). Often missing from professional standards is a concern with ethics or social justice (O'Neill, 2000, as cited in Middlewood & Cardno, 2001). Professional standards have also been criticised for their tendency to: assume a static knowledge base (English, 2006), anticipate future problems with prescribed solutions (Gronn, 2003); ignore contextual differences (Middlewood & Cardno, 2001), perpetuate hierarchies and divisions within schools (Connell, 2009) and marginalise those whose interests fall outside of dominant social constructions including race and gender (Blackmore, 1999; Niesche, 2013).

Sachs (2003b) concedes that professional standards could be seen as an initiative for teachers to gain professional control over what constitutes professional work, but suggests that competency discourses threaten teacher autonomy by positioning teaching as a technical, rather than professional, activity and as such may be better understood as a mechanism of control. Even more troubling is Sachs' (2003) fear that when professional standards are used to inform professional development teachers will become complicit in their own exploitation. Professional standards have also been criticised for their emphasis on teacher behaviour, rather than the attitudinal, emotional and intellectual expectations of professionals (Evans, 2008; Ryan & Bourke, 2013). Teachers themselves are likely to cast professional standards in a negative light when they are seen to reduce autonomy, or when an assumption is presented to them that an assessment of their work will by default improve teaching and learning (Mayer et al., 2005). The teachers in Bourke's (2011) Queensland study noted the inability of professional standards to capture either the situational or relational demands of what they saw as their vocational calling rather than job - a founding tenet of the early professions, most typically of the clergy (Grace, 2014). Importantly, many writers insist that these standards must be developed with teacher consultation rather than be imposed (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2004), be aligned with

other performance management indicators such as standards-based evaluations of practice (including observations and planning) and consider the impact on student learning and support of colleagues (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

Practice

Earlier in this manuscript, it was suggested that the positioning of teaching as a form of practical knowledge was integral to the neo-liberal agenda. Teachers themselves have been historically complicit in this process often viewing theory as something to be endured through their training and disconnected from the more important practice awaiting them in the classroom (Vossler, 2005). Peters (2015) shares this concern suggesting that post-war educational concerns with culture and calls for reflective practitioners have prioritised the practical over the theoretical. Instead, he invites teachers to be open to the subtle differences of interpretation found in seven philosophical traditions of practice (phenomenological, Marxist, positivist, cognitive, ethical, pragmatic and poststructuralist) and to be cautious about viewing their practice as an "unanalysed given" (p. 70). Similarly, Shalem (2014) is weary of instructional approaches grounded in action which neglect theoretical content because "placing teacher's judgement primarily in experiential knowledge contributes to further de-professionalisation in teaching" (p. 93). This becomes even more dangerous when the form or practical knowledge valued originates from policies and procedures borrowed from spheres outside of education such as the business sector.

For Aristotle, there were three types of knowledge: *episteme*, concerned with *theoria* or truth; *techne*, with *poiesis* or 'making'; and *praxis* or informed actions as guided by *phronesis* or practical wisdom (Kemmis & Smith, 2008a; Nicolini, 2012; Peters, 2015). Kemmis and Smith (2008) worry the cost of increased external influence in shaping educational discourses has been the removal of praxis from contemporary understandings of practice. Whereas, they see praxis as an "action that is morally-committed, and oriented and informed by traditions" (p. 4) – very much the domain of the early professional discussed earlier - effective practice, by contrast, has simply come to mean fulfilling compliance obligations. For these writers, as it was for Codd (1999), the cost of this shift has been the erosion of teacher status and the reduction of the teacher practitioner from responsive agent to dutiful operative. Bottery (1996) proposes five ethics which he believes underpin teacher understandings of professional practice: the recognition of the provisionality of knowledge, an appreciation of one's own subjectivity, reflective integrity, humility and the employment of humanistic education. The challenge of course in a performative context is with measuring these standards. Practice then like accountability or professionalism is far from being a neutral term. It requires teacher consideration of how practice is shaped by the practices of others including inherited purposes,

legislative outcomes and other professionals' relationships with the state if they are to retain agency and control of their own practice.

Conclusion

Bound by the external accountability requirements of the Practising Teacher Criteria, the Education Council and the Education Review Office, it may well be that a new 'impossible triangle' has been forged to replace O'Neill's which threatens to further disrupt traditional teacher understandings of their work, identity and sense of professionalism. These instruments of control not only restrict autonomy by privileging bureaucratic rather than professional forms of accountability, they necessarily elevate the importance of evidence and performative practices. In such a managerial climate, the developmental aspects required of appraisal may be compromised so that performance management is reduced to the charade of managing the performance. Alternatively, it may well be that decentralisation, with its accompanying democratic accountability, has provided greater clarity both within the profession, and between teachers and the public, about the nature of teacher work and what constitutes effective practice. Naturally, a vast difference exists between expectations espoused in policy and the lived realities of teachers as they go about making sense of the appraisal experience in their unique context. The remainder of this manuscript endeavours to gain an insight into the personal experiences of appraisal beginning with the following chapter which outlines the methodology employed, so that a greater understanding about whether recent appraisal mandates have compromised or enabled developmental, professional practices may be reached.

PART TWO – SCHOOL CASE STUDIES

Part Two shares the stories of appraisal at three Auckland secondary schools: Tahi High School, Rua College and Toru College.   Chapter Four explains the philosophical underpinning and functional research design informing each case. Chapter Five describes how each school has navigated the multiple expectations of appraisal by examining school policy documentation and listening to participant voice.

Chapter 4   Methodology

The critical paradigm contends that, despite their supposed division, objectivist and subjectivist research approaches are more concerned with describing the world as it is rather than advocating for how it should be, which has done little to transform the lives of those marginalised by the interests of society's dominant players. Critical theory, by contrast, confronts the injustices caused by historical and contextual power relationships before offering an emancipatory alternative for the oppressed. In order to understand the effect these relationships have had on teacher appraisers and to temper the dangers of self-certainty within the critical position, a hermeneutic approach was selected. Following a preliminary discussion of critical theory, I introduce the three case study schools. Next, an explanation of the principles of hermeneutic inquiry is offered, especially as understood by mid-twentieth century German philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer (2013), which, combined with more contemporary literature on interview methods, helped shaped the interviews which took place with 13 curriculum leaders. The chapter concludes by considering how the tension between rational research methodologies and those appropriate for hermeneutical inquiry was reconciled by paying close attention to analytical procedure.

Epistemological, ontological and methodological position

For subjectivists, reality is not something that can be captured, examined or replicated. It is instead, situationally and contextually bound and in a state of constant negotiation as people go about making sense of their everyday lives (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Whereas the natural and physical sciences endeavour to explain phenomena, the subjectivist tradition is more concerned with understanding, and the hermeneutic approach with understanding the conditions in which understanding takes place. Rather than objectively observing phenomena and recording data, the interpretive position recognises that we are always a part of constructing the understanding we seek (Gadamer, 2013); meaning for the subjectivist no data is neutral as we are always part of the understanding we seek.

Critical theory's origins may be traced to the Frankfurt 'school's' interest in the unresolved matter of class consciousness in a post-Marxist world (Hartas, 2010). Today critical theory incorporates a diverse range of interests including those of race, gender and sexuality. Whilst its expanding interests mean critical theory eludes any concrete definition, it is a field unified by a commitment to confronting the injustices and inequalities perpetuated by historical and social power structures and interests which justify inequalities and prevent the oppressed from enjoying freedom (Alvesson & Deetz, 2006; Cannella & Lincoln, 2012; Cohen et al., 2011;

Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003). Oppression, as understood in this study sits alongside Rogers' (2011) definition of an "obstruction of one's human essence and development" (p. 4), which she sees as the unfortunate, if not inevitable, cost to human agency caused by restrictive structural conditions. Critical theory involves not only raising consciousness about social inequalities, it also upholds a firm commitment to interrogating ideological constructs which position inequality and oppression as inevitable and unavoidable norms, before providing a transformative agenda which outlines practical goals for achieving greater social equality and freedom (Cannella & Lincoln, 2012; Hartas, 2010; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003; Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2012; Shields, 2012). It is this interest in enacting change that has seen critical theorists divorce themselves from the descriptive limitations of the empirical tradition upheld in both the natural and many of the human sciences, which remain focused on explaining the world as it is, preferring instead to advocate for how society ought to be. Hermeneutics appears at the methodological level for Guba and Lincoln (2008). This study, however, follows in the footsteps of Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer who elevated hermeneutics to the ontological level in that it frames all 'levels' of research inquiry, both consciously and subconsciously.

The rational approach favoured by the physical and natural sciences is often likewise reflected in the research methodology literature which invariably presents a top-down instructional guide on how to best descend the ontological, epistemological, methodological and methods landscape - all before entering the research field. This is not without difficulty for studies such as this one which relies on philosophical understandings as they inform all 'levels' of the research taxonomy. Critical theory invariably enters the research taxonomy at the epistemological level. For Denzin and Lincoln (2008), critical theory sits alongside positivism and post-positivism, constructionist-interpretive and feminist post-structural approaches. For others, critical theory presents a challenge to the technicist approaches favoured by both positivist and subjectivist legacies (Cohen et al., 2011) because of their enduring "silence on issues of politics, values and ideology" (Greene, 2010, p. 63).

I selected a critical approach for this study because it presented a way of navigating what I perceived to be inherited inequalities between New Zealand's teachers and their government; these having been perpetuated through hierarchical power relationships in schools which are often negotiated at the appraisal site. I entered the teaching profession in 1998, and over the past twenty years my own experience of appraisal, firstly as an appraisee and in more recent times as an appraiser, have become increasingly dependent on external mechanisms to inform effective practice. I believe a critical approach to be especially suitable for educational research because its emancipatory interest pertains to a vast number of school groups who fall outside

of those privileged by dominant hegemonic interests: teachers directly, and indirectly through the impact teacher appraisal policies and practices have on students. An additional reason for employing a critical approach was because it confronts the taken-for-granted assumptions that inform policy at both the local and national levels including the suitability of an appraisal system steeped in the neoliberal ideology of free-market globalisation as explored in Chapter Two. Invariably presented as logical or common-sense, these ideologies serve to protect the interests of those with power, threatening to further restrict the freedom of those affected by their decisions – a condition made even more dangerous when the oppressed, in this case teachers, come to understand their plight as the natural state of affairs. Hence, the knowledge that emerges through critical theory's advocacy for change is likely to be seen as "undeniably dangerous knowledge, the kind of information and insight that upsets institutions and threatens to overturn sovereign regimes of truth" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003, p. 433).

Case study

Celebrating the importance of the localised and particular, case study serves as an ideal mechanism for exploring possible tensions between espoused realities of national and local policies with the lived realities of curriculum leaders experienced in situ. Simons (2009) outlines a number of advantages of case study including the opportunity to experience on site the complexity caused by distant policy and programme initiatives, experience multiple and indeed contested views of social phenomena, capture the lived day-to-day reality of the participants in the language of the setting and recognise that any investigation of human truths will invite alternative readings which welcome the reader's involvement in meaning making. Conversely, researchers using case studies must contend with intensive time demands and the potential for extensive data production, as well as counter criticisms surrounding its lack of systematic procedure, dependence on researcher subjectivity and inability to fulfil positivist requirements of rigour, cross-checking and generalisation (Cohen et al., 2011; Simons, 2009; Yin, 2014). To help address these concerns a comparative case study approach as theorised by Yin (2014) was undertaken. Documents and interviews were collected and then compared to form case findings which were then in turn compared with the findings of the other two case schools.

Case selection

I selected the three Auckland case schools after removing all schools other than Auckland secondary schools from a spreadsheet of decile[4] changes of New Zealand state and integrated

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[4] A school's decile rating is "a measure of the socio-economic position of a school's student community relative to other schools throughout the country" with "decile 1 schools being those with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities" (Education Council, 2016).

schools for the 2014/2015 period sourced from the Ministry of Education website on March 1st 2016: this included all composite schools (Year 1-15); contributing primary (Year 1-6) and full primary schools (Year 1-8); intermediate (Year 7-8), integrated (schools with a religious charter); language immersion and special education schools. The remaining 76 secondary schools were reduced to 33 after the decision was made to conduct the research in schools under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education's South Auckland branch in recognition of a scholarship I received from the AUT University's southern campus.   Also, because my own teaching experience has been predominantly in mid-decile schools, I decided to focus my interest on schools within the 3-8 decile range. After the schools outside this range and my own school were removed, the selection pool had been reduced to 15 schools.

Taking heed of Shields' (2012) caution about the tendency for critical researchers to elevate their own assumptions to universally held truths and to shape their research methods and findings to align with their own ontological biases, I felt it necessary to conduct the study in schools with performance management systems recognised for their developmental focus. I read the latest ERO review for each of the 15 schools recording favourable comments about aspects pertinent to this study such as 'performance', 'effective use of data', 'reflective practices', 'commitment to improvement', 'review and evaluation', and 'accountability structures'. After receiving ethics approval from the AUT Ethics Committee to undertake the study (approval number 16/94, received on the 14th April, 2016), I contacted the principals of the two preferred schools for permission to conduct the study at their school, analyse their school's teacher appraisal policy documentation, and interview up to five middle leaders with curriculum or learning area (as opposed to pastoral or discipline) responsibilities about their appraisal experiences at the school (Appendix Two); both declined.

A further sixteen schools were contacted during May 2016 to participate in the study: seven schools did not reply to the mailed invitation or follow-up email; one principal gave permission albeit reluctantly, but when none of the curriculum leaders responded this opportunity too was lost; a further four schools declined. Cited reasons for choosing not to be participate included: appraisal system transition, teacher workload pressures, inconvenient timing, senior leader portfolio reshuffle, an already committed principal diary and filled academic research quotas. Unexpectedly, a lifeline was thrown by one of the four declining principals a few weeks later, when she agreed to the study taking place on the condition that the proposed individual interviews were replaced by a group interview at an already scheduled curriculum leaders' meeting in order to minimalise staff disruption. The deputy principal with responsibility for appraisal at Tahi High School was forthcoming with policy documentation, an overview of the appraisal process and a commitment to passing the participation information sheets to the

middle leaders. Five leaders made themselves available for the group interview. Group interviewing does present a number of advantages, especially when the participants are well used to debating ideas in each other's company as was the case with the Tahi leaders, including the reduction of discomfort or unease for any one individual and the potential for agreement to emerge. Challenging these advantages is the potential harm of groupthink, a possible reluctance to share personal stories that differ from the participant's established meeting persona, the difficulty of keeping the conversation on track and difficulties of checking for consistency and attribution after transcription (Simons, 2009), as was experienced first-hand when none of the requests for transcription verification from the Tahi High School participants were answered. An additional challenge experienced in the group interview was the dominance of the two male speakers and the comparative silence of the women participants as can be inferred by the percentage word count of each speaker: Brian (32.7%), Chris (23.6%), Dianna (10.7%), Elinor (15.6%), Francis (8.2%) and my own (9.2%). Reducing the group interview into each speaker's component proved critical in isolating individual voices for the vignette preparation which had unfairly favoured the male speakers in the initial coding process.

In the interim, the decile parameters previously employed were removed from the selection criteria so that all secondary schools under the South Auckland Ministry of Education's direction were now considered. After reading the ERO reviews of the newly eligible schools, a further ten schools were approached of whom only four replied, including one positive response. Rua College welcomed me into their school community almost immediately; the deputy principal with appraisal responsibilities proved equally as generous with her time and school documentation as had been the case at Tahi High School and was instrumental in coordinating the meetings with four curriculum leaders. The three schools that declined cited similar reasons to those mentioned previously; the remaining six schools did not reply to either the letter or follow-up email. A further nine invitations were sent during June, bringing the total number of contacted schools to 27 before Toru College agreed to participate, and permission was received to approach their curriculum leaders. Table 4.1 calendars the school selection process.

Table 4.1 School selection summary

	Schools invited	Invitation accepted	Invitation declined	No response to either invitation or follow-up
April 14th	2	0	2	0
May 1st - 14th	6	2*	3	1
May 15th - 31st	10	1	3	6
June 17th	9	1	1	7
TOTAL	**27**	**4**	**9**	**14**

* One of these schools was excluded when, after receiving principal permission, no middle leaders gave their consent to participate in the study.

School documentation

Documents represent a stable, contextually bound, accessible form of data likely to be couched in the natural language of the setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) which is a view tempered by Cohen et al (2011) who caution that documents are just as likely to privilege top-down idealised views; in Argyris and Schon's (1974) terms this may better reflect the school's espoused theory-in-action rather than speaking to the realities of those affected by the document. Fitzgerald (2012) reminds us that, like observations and interviews, documents exist as raw data awaiting interpretation, but, data that is indicative of each school's unique context and culture, offering insight into the processes valued in decision-making activities. All three schools were forthcoming with teacher appraisal documentation. In addition to the appraisal and attestation policies readily available on their school website, Tahi High School shared their performance appraisal procedures document, appraisal timeline, teaching gap analysis reflection tool, a blank copy of a teacher's appraisal summary report and an infographic demonstrating the relationship between pedagogy, professional learning and appraisal in action at Tahi High School. The deputy principal at Rua College, Hillary, generously handed over the appraisal folder all staff received in 2015 as well as the professional development and appraisal forms guiding practice in 2016. Including internally authored documents and those from outside agencies, the Rua College documents amassed to 73 pages, which for purposes of analysis were categorised as: overview, teaching as inquiry, cultural responsivity, appraisal, and meeting template documentation. Toru College granted access to their staff's appraisal booklet which combines performance management and professional development requirements. This was supplemented by performance management and personnel policies obtained from the school's website. At no stage of the research was any documentation completed by teachers sighted. Documents were analysed for authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning as recommended by Scott

(1990); they are discussed in the following chapter and included as appendices: Tahi High School (Three), Rua College (Four) and Toru College (Five).

Philosophical hermeneutics

For those steeped in a scientific tradition which promotes detached objectivity, critical theory's seeming self-assurance in its ability to pre-suppose a problem, locate it, and then announce an alternative possibility sits uncomfortably with the rational way of thinking celebrated since the time of the Enlightenment. To help appease this criticism, a philosophical hermeneutical approach was selected for making sense of the research interviews. Hermeneutics is explained by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) as an "approach to the analysis of texts that stresses how prior understandings and prejudices shape the interpretive process" (p. 16). More romantic than etymologically accurate as it may be, Hermes, the messenger of the Greek Gods, is often employed in the literature as a useful hermeneutic symbol. Rarely, however, is the work of any messenger a case of simple reiteration; it is as Cohen et al (2011) suggest a job that demands "recapturing the meanings of interacting others, recovering and reconstructing the intentions of others" (p. 32). Today's hermeneut, like our classical forbearer, understands the exchange between sender and receiver to be a complex, dialogical, relational experience: one that is historically and socially bound demanding mediation of participant prejudice and language, and accepting that any understanding is only ever provisional and subject to subsequent interpretation (Cohen et al., 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Kinsella, 2006; Steinberg, 2012). Three of the thirteen curriculum leaders I knew prior to the study, having studied alongside one and the other two through English teacher associations. These relationships proved invaluable in sourcing other participants and verifying appraisal processes at Rua and Toru Colleges. Recapturing the appraisal experiences of the remaining ten participants, however, was reliant on a solitary interview. Mediating their understanding of appraisal proved more demanding, especially when only five participants replied to the request for transcript verification. In order to give a clearer voice to their appraisal narrative, which I felt had been reduced through coding, I undertook to try and interpret their understanding by reconstructing their intentions as representative vignettes.

Gadamerean hermeneutics

The framing, conducting and analysis of interviews was drawn from German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method* in which he presents dialogic understanding as a rival to both objectivist and subjectivist knowledge constructions. Drawing upon his earlier classical studies, and especially the Aristotelian notion of phronesis, Gadamer develops a picture of hermeneutics as a form of moral knowledge or practical wisdom, best learned through doing.

Whereas techne or scientific knowledge can be learned and its outcomes predicted, this is never true of Gadamer's hermeneutics which requires its participants to engage in constant discursive, reflexive conversation in order to better understand the conditions in which understanding takes place (Abma & Widdershoven, 2011; Gadamer, 2013). For Gadamer, tradition can never simply be cast aside so that an objective understanding can present itself. Instead, tradition is ever-present: as responsible for shaping who we are, and the questions we ask, as it is for establishing the conditions in which understanding takes place. In Gadamerean terms, we live with an historically affected consciousness, or within a world already shaped by the effects of earlier interpretation; a philosophical condition sometimes referred to as the double hermeneutic. Hence, it would be a misnomer to declare my own appraisal experiences as the beginning of my interest in this topic as to do so would be to ignore how my consciousness has been shaped by my inherited cultural and linguistic ancestry. Rather than trying to distance myself from these subjectivities, a Gadamerean perspective not only recognises that "there is undoubtedly no understanding that is free of all prejudices" (p. 506), but that understanding requires active engagement with our prejudices (Schwandt, 2003). Similarly, as a researcher, I am unable to separate myself from the understanding I seek, as understanding requires interpreting not only my own interpretations of the appraisal experience but also the interpretations of others as informed by their own historically affected consciousness.

Interviews

Voices from seven of the eight New Zealand Curriculum learning areas or subjects were heard - Languages proving the only exception. The participants with pseudonyms and areas of curriculum responsibility at Tahi High School were Brian (Technology), Chris (Social Sciences), Dianne (Mathematics), Elinor (Art), Francis (Art); Rua College were Imogen (Social Sciences), James (English), Kane (Mathematics) and Lani (Science); and at Toru College were Mark (Physical Education), Nadia (English), Owen (Mathematics) and Paul (Social Sciences). The deputy principals at Tahi High School and Rua College who supplied school documentation were given the pseudonyms Anne and Hillary for reporting purposes. In studies such as this which favour discursive, reflexive exchanges, including those with the self, ethical responsibilities will be evident throughout all stages of the research. Wellington (2015) asserts that "ethical considerations override all others" (p. 113), and recommends honesty and openness to guide researcher decision making. Writing from a feminist perspective, Halse and Honey (2010) prefer researchers employ care and responsibility. To uphold these values, great care was taken to ensure that participants volunteered informed consent based on an honest communication of the research concerns as outlined in the participant information sheet (Appendix Six) and verbally explained before signing the consent form (Appendix Seven). The openness required

of Gadamerean inquiry and ethical consideration was respected by sending participants indicative conversation statements before the recorded conversation took place, inviting participants to verify their conversation transcript and 'final' interpretative vignette, and by upholding a firm commitment to using each participant's words in the research report that presented the best understood interpretation of their reality. Finally, in respect of confidentiality and privacy concerns, time was spent selecting pseudonyms for schools, participants, and any third parties they mentioned.

Interviewing is an excellent tool for developing insight into the inner-worlds of participants and the subjective experiences that define everyday lives (Kvale, 1996; Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011; Travers, 2010). This study's interest in the meanings and understandings people construct to make sense of their appraisal experiences heightens the importance of the interview as a research method. As it was for Gadamer, the interview, helpfully conceptualised as an inter-view by (Kvale, 1996), may be understood as the interactions of mutually interested participants meeting at the building site of knowledge (Basit, 2010; Hobson & Townsend, 2010; Kvale, 2006). Although the semi-structured interview format that was selected to oversee the interviews is perhaps counter to the organic, open intent of Gadamerean dialogue, it was selected to support the first-time researcher and to act as a point of reference for participant preparation. It was also deemed preferential to the tendency for highly structured questionnaires to assume common understandings between interviewer and interviewee and perhaps solicit responses that better reflect researcher preconceptions than participant reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Significantly, Gadamer rejects the very possibility of conducting a conversation, highlighting how predetermined direction and associated control is counter to the openness required of hermeneutics; he insists instead that we "fall into conversation" (p. 401) if we are to be authentic in our intention of allowing an understanding to emerge that is independent of the will of either participant. Despite the limitations of using such a framework, it was hoped that the interview questions would retain the flexibility necessary of authentic in-depth conversations which are well placed to capture participant perspectives (Travers, 2010). One advantage of using a Gadamerean perspective is that it emphasises the importance of the interpersonal experience rather than permitting the interview to be reduced to merely a means for objective data collection. Even so, following Wragg's (2002) recommendation that data collection methods be piloted, the interview questions were submitted to three middle leaders at my own school for comment and further developed under the guidance of my thesis supervisor to ensure they were consistent with the objectives of the research. The resulting questions (Appendix Eight) were not asked systematically, or in some instances in their entirety, but as triggers to guide the fall through conversation.

Data analysis

This study's primary interest in the way that appraisal meaning making is constructed, understood and played out in social settings meant I gravitated towards qualitative approaches. Where qualitative studies deviate from their quantitative cousins is in their conceptualising of traditionally enshrined scientific principles. This means that scientific demands of validity, reliability and generalisability must be adapted for social research and are often substituted in the qualitative literature for credibility, authenticity, dependability, trustworthiness and transferability (Basit, 2010; Coe, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Validity, in positivist, or scientific terms as Wellington (2015) prefers, is generally understood as being concerned with the degree a method "measures what is supposed to measure" (p. 30), and reliability with repeatability (Bryman, 2007). When applied to the qualitative field, reliability becomes less about removing conditions of variance and more about focusing on the researcher's particular values, their ability to communicate the decision making processes informing the study and its findings, and the degree to which these findings are congruent with participant experiences and understandings (Maxwell, 2010; Mears, 2012; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Not only does transferability, unlike its positivist cousin generalisability, recognise the situated, contextual nature of knowledge, importantly it shifts the locus of judgement from the investigator to the reader to determine the applicability of the findings (Greene, 2010).

Interview analysis

Varying in duration between 40 and 120 minutes, the interviews produced a combined total of over 58 000 words. Analysis, when understood to take place after data gathering is completed, is to once more privilege the empirical tradition; however, in subjectivist research, or as in this study, research more closely aligned with the subjectivist approach, data collection and analysis are inseparable and iterative (Bryman, 2008; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). But before undertaking any traditionally understood notion of analysis, it was necessary to complete the interview transcriptions, which I did myself in order to protect participant confidentiality and to build greater familiarity with the data set. Transcription itself is an interpretative act, one which removes the text from the social world that generated it demanding the imposition of written conventions to represent oral and interpersonal rule systems (Cohen et al., 2011) including my punctuation choices and decision to remove extensive hesitations, repetitions and examples of anacoluthon before sending the transcript to the participants for verification. Five of the thirteen participants verified the interview transcripts. I then followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) recommended three-step process of data reduction, data display then conclusion drawing: all transcripts were summarised (Appendix Nine), assembled for each speaker (Appendix Ten) and then synthesised with other school speakers after an extensive process of

relationship mapping to produce interview clusters (Appendix Eleven). The synthesised categories which emerged were: for Tahi High School: appraisal practice, appraisal purpose, accountability, evidence and professionalism; Rua College: appraisal structure, purpose and process, collegial practices, TAI and evidence, EC and PTC, professionalism, performance and performativity, accountability, leadership experiences and challenges; Toru College: appraisal systems, accountability, practice, PTC and evidence, performativity, resistance and resentment, leadership and supporting structures.

Participant vignettes

After the interview syntheses were completed it was evident the process of transcript deconstruction and category reconstruction had diluted the participants' voices and their concerns to produce a sanitised representation of their appraisal experiences. Treating all interview sections as being of equal importance had failed to reflect the discomfort several participants had felt about speaking out against their school's practice which had seen them in the early stages of the interviews confirm practices espoused in appraisal documentation as school norms before later sharing more personal accounts. After whispering "we're [Toru College] not so big on professional development" Nadia admitted "I feel like I'm telling tales on school." Similarly, Paul's initially benign acceptance of his department's attitude towards evidence collection progressed from "I feel like my department are pretty sound in what they're doing. They just get on with it" to "if I come out and be totally bluntly honest there's a lot of a negativity, and it's not just in my department" to:

> It's an [expletive] waste of time y'know? People tick boxes and pretend they're involved in it and y'know …. and it's a waste of time and people aren't going to say that to you because they may not want to be judged and feel unprofessional.

To reclaim the individual voices which I suspected had been diluted through synthesis, I undertook to write a representative vignette for each participant which I hoped would better represent their individual stories. I re-visited the recordings paying close attention to how stories were shared. During this stage of analysis I gave greater importance to hesitations and variations in volume, as well as listening for topics the leaders tended to gravitate towards. I then wrote a chronological summary of each participant's career noting where changes in schools, positions or politics had shifted their appraisal position. Whereas the time limitation of the one-off interview had inevitably compromised the opportunity for, in Gadamerean terms, the participant's and my own horizons to fuse, writing the vignettes afforded me the time to come to terms with participant perspectives that differed from my own. I felt this to be a more ethically responsible, knowledge-generating practice. Nine of the vignettes were verified by the

participants: seven without alteration and two after suggested amendments were made. All thirteen vignettes appear in the following chapter.

Case and cross-case analysis

Conclusions drawn from the interview analyses and vignettes were then paired with the conclusions drawn from the document analysis to form the findings for each case (Appendix Twelve). These findings were then in turn sythesised to form the study's four main findings and are discussed at the beginning of Chapter Six. While commonality is an attractive outcome, for strengthening validity claims and suggestions of transferability to other New Zealand secondary schools, it is worth remembering Stake's (2006) caveat that the importance of multi-site generalisations should not be overstated as the focus of case study work needs to remain on telling the story of the unique or, as in this study's case, giving voice to the stories of those silenced by appraisal politics.

Conclusion

All understanding is a matter of interpretation – an act complicated by the role our historically affected consciousness plays in prohibiting any separation of self from subject. Making sense of how teachers understand their appraisal experiences and the role that others have in shaping their realities, however, requires more than applying 'rigorous' research methodology to recount or reproduce understandings when it is through dialogue that knowledge is created. This requires a firm commitment to constantly mediating between fore-projections and pre-judgements, being open to the interpretation offered by the conversation partner, remaining subservient to the text, and accepting the limitations of all interpretations - including those published as 'final' interpretations in the forthcoming chapters – if more democratic understandings of professionalism are to be enjoyed.

Chapter 5   Case schools

As well as enjoying close geographical proximity, the three co-educational secondary schools in this study are also of: similar size (1300-1600 students); decile rating, Tahi High School (4-7), Rua College (1-3) and Toru College (1-3); and equally reflective of South Auckland's rich multicultural diversity. This chapter is organised into three parts, focusing in turn on each school's appraisal practice. After briefly introducing each school an overview of the systems in use as explained by documentation is presented. After which, a series of vignettes is included as a narrative representation of the appraisal stories which were shared by middle leaders; these vignettes give voice to the 'lived reality' of leaders whose experiences highlight the void between policy and practice.

Tahi High School

Nearly half of the 1500+ students at Tahi High School are of Pākehā (European) descent. Māori students account for nearly a quarter of the roll, with Asian and Indian communities making up the majority of the final quarter (Education Review Office, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2015). A comparison of achievement data sourced from NZQA suggests that Tahi High School students enjoy similar NCEA Level 1 and Level 2[5] successes to those in decile 3-7 schools nationally, but perform slightly better than students at schools with the same decile rating.

Appraisal documentation

Six documents were analysed as part of the Tahi High School case study, summarised in Appendix Three. The latest ERO report commends Tahi High School's excellent senior leadership strategic planning, commitment to community relationships, learning partnerships and embedded culture of analysis which is reported as being integral to improved student outcomes. The report speaks favourably of the school's performance management systems and practices of teacher self-review but recommends a renewed commitment to reflective inquiry and evidence collection and the alignment of department goals with measurable targets.

Changes of the past two years have included a shift from period-long class observations to walkthroughs, PLGs to professional learning partnerships, paper storage to online portfolio, and the amalgamation of teacher professional inquiries with the PTC. Professional partnership pairings are formed after teachers conduct an interrogation of student achievement data and reflection of classroom practice, decide upon a learning focus with the assistance of their

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[5] NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement) Level 1 is the national qualification typically undertaken by students in Year 11 and NCEA Level 2 by those in Year 12.

appraiser, who is usually either the curriculum leader or appointed deputy, before having their partner decided by senior school leaders. Accompanying the shift towards professional partnerships has been the increase in evidence collection and curation expectations. All teaching staff are required to maintain a professional portfolio which includes evidence of record keeping and evaluation, planning and lesson reflections, professional growth, relationships with colleagues and the community, and for four synthesised PTC. Each of these requirements must be verified by an appraiser.

The Appraisal Policy explains that appraisal is linked with professional development and relational pedagogies and is an essential part of the school's commitment to annual improvement. Supported by the school's longstanding commitment to positive relationships, priority learners and restorative practices, appraisal is charged with raising student outcomes. As espoused in the Appraisal Policy, annual appraisal of management along with teaching and learning are not only Ministry of Education stipulations but an essential process for fostering organisational and individual development. Five overarching aims of appraisal are listed: confirming teacher roles and responsibilities, raising the quality of learning through improved practice, identifying strengths and weaknesses, facilitating professional opportunities and levels of support, and developing management skills. The policy emphasises the importance of individualised developmental foci for staff but stresses the necessity for alignment with existent school goals and priorities as documented in annual and strategic plans.

The preparation section of the policy requires staff to spend Term One analysing their previous year's performance data to inform personal goals, familiarise themselves with the PTC, form professional learning pairs and finalise goals in consultation with appraisers. The action stage of Terms Two and Three demands teachers: consider how e-learning, literacy and culturally responsive pedagogies will be incorporated into learning programmes; participate in a continuous inquiry cycle of trial, re-evaluation and refinement as developed with professional learning partnerships or groups; collect student appraisals; complete lesson observations and walk-throughs; and cultivate evidence for professional practice portfolios. The process is completed in Term Four when appraisers and appraisees meet to complete a summary report centred on verifying evidence for four synthesised PTC categories: professional relationships (PTC 1), professional learning programmes and practices (PTC: 4, 6, 8, 12), culturally-effective pedagogy (PTC: 3, 9, 10) and teaching, learning and assessment (PTC: 5, 11, 12).

The policy advertises effective appraisal to be that which is "honest, fair and objective" with the "main focus on inquiry into individual teaching practice from which developmental goals are established." Should teachers feel dissatisfied with appraisal personnel or processes they are

entitled to a review with the principal or delegate if the principal is already involved. Assurance is provided that principles of confidentiality and privacy will be upheld throughout all stages of the appraisal process. All appraisal documentation remains the property of the appraisee which only relevant curriculum and senior leaders are entitled to view. Should competency procedures be undertaken, the policy reassures that judgements will not solely be made on the appraisal outcomes and that a different performance management process will be implemented. Finally, the policy highlights that reporting to the BoT is an integral part of accountability mechanisms, but reassures that annual reports will be informed by performance appraisal outcomes not individual performance.

Group interview

After meeting with Anne (the DP with acting appraisal responsibilities) to discuss appraisal policy and procedures, a group interview was held with Brian (Technology), Chris (Social Sciences), Dianne (Mathematics), Francis (Art) and Eloise (Specialist Classroom Teacher). A vastly experienced and highly qualified group, the leaders' stories explore the dual tension of accountability and development inherent within the appraisal process. Whilst committed to the internal shift of inquiry to facilitate learning and professional partnerships, the group remain less convinced about the ability of imposed accountability forces to simultaneously advance the interests of all members of the profession and inform practice.

Despite the occasional inconsistency between the practice espoused in the policy and procedures documentation and that practised in their departments, the curriculum leaders support the shift towards professional partnerships and the increased importance given to data and evidence for informing learning goals and appraisal judgements. They support inquiry driven teaching and learning processes and recognise the critical role the EC play in enhancing external understandings of teacher professionalism. One favourable outcome of the shift towards greater teacher accountability has been the emergence of a 'show and tell' appraisal culture which has freed the leaders from feeling culpable for sourcing evidence for their teachers. However, understanding of the requirements of the changes is far from cohesive; the leaders acknowledge there is considerable variance in practice across their departments and report that the speed of the introduced changes has led to widespread uncertainty amongst teachers as to how the school requirements are expected to manifest in classroom practice.

The leaders see evidence as necessary for fulfilling accountability demands to both internal and external agents, but the practice of collecting evidence itself is seen for some as being artificial and disconnected from the lived reality of teaching. Those teachers in the formative stages of their careers are more likely to diligently undertake the task of portfolio maintenance than their

more experienced colleagues, although it is their commitment to improving and engagement with colleagues that is seen as improving practice rather than the upkeep of professional records. Conversely, the more experienced members of their departments are less likely to commit to the performative demands of appraisal upkeep. In part, their disengagement is aided by the job security to be found in school recruitment and retention challenges but may also stem from their period of teacher training which often predated student responsivity movements or from a suspicion of government motives. It was suggested that for these teachers appraisal is seen as an annual exercise in tick box compliance removed from practice and as such was likely to generate retrospective scrambling practices rather than organic, everyday evidence collection.

Having experienced very few professional development opportunities on leading appraisal, most leaders were reliant on either their formative experiences of appraisal or expectations of their senior leaders to shape their current appraisal understandings. The leaders reported difficulties with shifting job expectations over their careers including increased workload pressures and administrivia, reconciling mechanistic and relational understandings of appraisal, and difficulties overseeing required changes in practice without the necessary supporting structures. The selection rather than election of EC members is a source of unease for several leaders; however, for most leaders, the EC is seen as an agency enhancing others' perception of teacher professionalism. The PTC is better suited to identifying shortcomings in practice than facilitating required changes which, combined with overlapping and at times competing criterion, has added to the confusion over evidence suitability and accountability requirements.

For the leaders, accountability is inherently personal deriving from a sense of responsibility to their students and the local community. Evidence is seen to provide integrity to appraisal processes and legitimacy for external agencies to expect teachers to prove they are doing the job entrusted to them. Yet the degree of expected interrogation is at odds with the salary and status teachers hold in the community which has done little to enhance teacher professionalism or facilitate changes in practice.

Participant vignettes

Brian

In his tenth year and final term at Tahi High School, Brian was the dominant voice in the group, with his contribution amounting to nearly a third of the data produced and equivalent to the combined total of the three women participants. He initially explains appraisal as a "supportive tool for those who come up short" but as the interview develops he increasingly focuses on its limitations. He recalls being observed within the "first few weeks of getting the job, just to check

I wasn't an axe murderer," but then not for another eight years when the new appraisal process was introduced. This made it difficult to commit to the appraisal process at first: "having had no investment in the appraisal process for me as a teacher, it was then hard to go to teachers and then try to hype it up. But there's lots of teachers who work at the same school for thirty years with no ambition or desire to change."

Appraisal, which at many schools is according to Brian "wishy washy" with "everyone too nice and polite to say anything" and "signed off on the last day before we go down to Christmas dinner," has he feels become more meaningful at Tahi High School with the increased focus on evidence as it "provides integrity - without evidence you're just making subjective calls."

He enjoys the new appraisal "show and tell" dynamic which "very much sees the appraiser saying 'show me what you have collected about your practice and talk me through it.'" He acknowledges that "the appraisal system works very well for those teachers that [*sic*] are competent," but for the ones who need it the most, appraisal poses a threat which is likely to be met with resistance and a tendency to blame the students for any shortcomings in practice. However, without "sanctions in relation to poor practice" there is little incentive for his more experienced teachers to commit to the appraisal process; especially when in his traditionally male dominant subject area, he finds "it's like pushing water uphill trying to change their practice." When the group was asked whether the PTC had improved the practice of their more experienced teachers, seven seconds of silence passed before Brian mused "you could say leopards and spots at this point and dogs and new tricks, but I don't think it's changed at all." In instances where major changes to teacher practice were required, Brian felt that teachers were often isolated by the lack of support they received by appraisal systems and especially the PTC which focused on weaknesses and failed to value improvement.

> Rather than [showing] you've done really well, really improved teaching and learning and you've made real strides forward in your practice but [because] you haven't got the other 11 boxes ticked, no chance mate [of passing your appraisal].

Brian suggested that collaborative, professional teachers enjoy the appraisal opportunity to share ideas: "They like to have those conversations. Y'know, that's what helps them thrive; those good teachers that's what they enjoy, hearing feedback and percolating ideas." Yet importantly, it is the teacher's commitment to improving, not the measuring stick that is responsible for any improvements gained: "I don't think it's changed those teachers we think of as the better ones and those that we think need to improve their practice. Whether it's improving practice - I don't honestly believe that it is."

Chris

Responsible for a staff of twelve and teacher of four different subjects, Chris is astutely aware of the school's appraisal tensions. He sees the recent changes as encouraging a "more meaningful appraisal process," but recognises that many teachers have struggled to align professional learning and performance management systems and have been left feeling "lost" as to how "different educational document focuses are supposed to be reflected in their teaching."

"Odious" and "officious," yet valuable for targeting areas for growth, Chris sees appraisal as encompassing an "awful dichotomy - you have to do something that's relational but then you have to do it in a mechanistic way."

> So much of what's in the appraisal process is organically done by teachers every day, every hour. How many conversations do you have with a teacher who comes in and says 'I'm having troubles with this student or this class. How can I solve this?' … And then it feels artificial to say 'hold on a second, let's just collect that and put it over here so that someone knows that I'm doing this.'

Chris finds the emphasis given to the interrogation of practice and collection of validating data imposed on the teaching profession as disproportionate to their salary and standing in the community and symptomatic of a lack of trust in teachers as indicated by the following exchange with Eloise.

> Chris: What other professional body has such an intricate level of analysis?
>
> Eloise: Nurses do.
>
> Chris: And they actually meddle with people's lives - life and death situations … Lawyers don't have to do this and they get paid a mega load, doctors don't have to do this, nurses do, well because no one trusts nurses – but you trust doctors. We're not getting paid $95 000, but you're expected to reach this very high professional level of reflection and understanding.

Although Chris views appraisal as a mechanism that ties "little nodes of interest" both internally and externally, he recognises its limited ability to facilitate changes to identified areas requiring improvement. Despite its supposed concern with development, a lack of professional development on appraisal itself means that appraisal experiences are dependent on the understandings and experiences of individual appraisers. Challenging the idea that appraisal exists as a process to inform better practice, Chris sees appraisal merely as an outcome of everyday teacher processes and good practice. Not only is appraisal not needed to improve the practice of the good teachers, appraisal fails to meet the needs of those who need its support the most. Better suited to identifying weaknesses than facilitating change, appraisal processes often fail to support the teacher through their required development.

They just have to turn up to the classroom the next day and carry on and somehow make changes … If you're a soldier and you can't shoot straight, we'll take you off the battlefield, and when you hit the target we'll let you back in. There's no break for them [teachers] in that respect.

Dianne

Dianne oversees the Mathematics department, one of the largest departments and one by her own admission which is yet to embrace the recent changes. Removed from daily reflection-in-practice, she believes that for many of her staff, appraisal is best understood as an annual gathering of evidence undertaken once the senior students leave for examinations so that they may "be ticked off." The teachers who benefit most from appraisal are those who make themselves vulnerable through honest reflection, receive positive feedback and reassurance from walkthrough observation feedback. However, she concedes "the process doesn't actually make those teachers who don't think they're doing anything wrong do anything better." These "hard work people," are invariably experienced teachers, often in positions of responsibility who are very aware of the school's staffing difficulties. Knowing how difficult it is to find replacements means these teachers can insist on advanced warning of any intended walkthrough visit and have been known to protect themselves by manipulating their timetables and class sizes. To illustrate her point, Dianna explains how it has taken seven months to fill an Assistant Head of Department position.

> That's a long time and we do have people that at the end of the day, for the better of the students, it would be better if they weren't in front of those students but there's no one to replace them.

Having only made the appointment the day before, the difficulty of explaining the school's appraisal system is fresh in her mind. Despite the school's documentation presenting a coherent, unified account "trying to explain the process to him itself was like … umm I'm not too sure, I think that's what's happening, but it's up there and you know you've got to do it and you've got to collect this stuff."

The very practice of collecting stuff is not without difficulty for Dianna especially when there is so much uncertainty about what is deemed acceptable evidence and when the immeasurable is often the most satisfying. She describes the low-level classes she has chosen to work with in recent years who "hate" her subject, who make great personal if not curriculum gains:

> By the end of the year they come in every day, they get their books out, they're happy to learn … and you actually see a change in them as a person as well. Not just in terms of Maths and you become … someone they can see as helping them to get somewhere. Not just a teacher who is filling in the day in the classroom.

Finally, she laments the very personal cost of external accountability forces which undermine teacher professionalism and legitimise the need for measures like the PTC especially in departments like hers.

> If you were valued as a professional, you'd get more people buying into the profession, more people wanting to be teachers. If people saw teachers as an amazing profession to go places with rather than 'that's a good fall back' we could rely on our departments to grow teachers from within.

Eloise

As SCT, Eloise is not directly responsible for appraising any staff this year but has done so in the past and, alongside the DP in charge of appraisal, has assisted in the development of the school's current appraisal structure. She explains appraisal as a follow-up conversation to the inquiries undertaken by staff as informed by the naturally occurring evidence they have collected. The PLGs and learning partnerships are intended to be "fluid" and responsive to staff need but she concedes there are inconsistencies in approaches across the school, and in some cases, open resistance, which she believes is typical of any school change. Her announcement that formal observations occur each term is met with surprise and then an admission that this is not the case by those at the table.

Eloise sees evidence gathering as a natural extension of everyday practice, and the maintenance of a portfolio that documents "relevant and exemplary practice" as critical to upholding professional standing: a trait well established in recent graduates, but likely to be disputed by more experienced teachers: "A lot of it's about positioning too in terms of where that teacher is positioning themselves as teacher or learner" with those positioning themselves as learners far more likely to benefit from observation, appraiser and student feedback and critical learning conversations. Eloise notes the limitations of a universal system intended for both the incompetent and exemplary but believes schoolwide practice would be enhanced by a more cohesive understanding of what exemplary evidence looks like and a greater commitment to tying appraisal conversations with learning inquiries.

Eloise sees the relationship between teachers and the EC as "a bit of a catch-22." The EC ensures professionalism by providing a tangible body to whom teachers may be held accountable, but as a "body elected for, rather than selected by" its members, it has interests to protect outside those it professes to uphold. She is quick to point out that the people on the EC are "solid" but highlights the inconsistency that sees school "boards of trustees have a staff rep (representative) on it. On the Education Council, there's no one." She suggests that this imposition serves as a reminder of the way that teachers are positioned by government agencies and the assumption that they require external oversight to do their job.

> We're one of the most undermined professions in the world probably, especially in our country where we are not valued and yet … no one at our pay level is expected to interrogate their practice as much as probably we are.

Francis

The longest serving teacher at Tahi High School in the group, Francis oversees the appraisal of three teachers in her curriculum area of Art. The last to introduce herself, and then leaving the meeting early, meant Francis contributed the least to the eventual transcript, producing a little over eight percent of the final word count. However; before her departure, Francis offered an important counter story to explain the reluctance of more experienced teachers to engage with appraisal initiatives, casting professional anxiety and suspicion of accountability forces as the cause of their supposed dissent.

During her career, Francis has experienced mounting pressure as a curriculum leader that has seen "administrivia increase twentyfold." She acknowledges the importance of appraisal and accountability but wonders whether the pendulum shift in favour of accountability has been at the "expense of creative teaching and the development of the curriculum … I just wonder if we've gone too far." She likes how the importance placed upon staff reflections and goal setting has meant the "focus has shifted from the HoD having sole responsibility for analysis" and nurtured a culture of "self-management" which in turn has helped the collective practice of the department grow through shared reflections. However, she worries about the collegial costs associated with accountability. She recalls completing a certificate in middle management with Carol Cardno many years earlier when the emphasis was on fostering collegial relationships: "that was all about the relationships you build up with your department … but now it's mechanistic." This mechanistic focus assumes a common need across the teaching profession which ignores the accumulated experience and expertise acquired over a career:

> A lot of the things we're asking our people to do, collect this, and this, and this, it's sort of mechanistic, because people who have been teaching a long time they're going to have all that sort of stuff … so you wonder about the rationale for spending all that time collecting it.

Finally, she worries that the cost of greater accountability could be increased competition between not only teachers within the school, but also between teachers across schools in a re-branded form of performance pay. She empathises with a lot of the "older teachers" who have spent most of their professional career campaigning against performance pay as a teaching incentive and knows that for a lot of them appraisal whilst espoused as a "really open-ended, non-judgmental type of process" intended "to improve teaching" looms as a "personal attack."

Tahi High School findings

Annual evaluation of all aspects of school performance at Tahi High School, including teacher performance, is an essential component of the school's commitment to raising student outcomes. Professional learning, responsive pedagogy and appraisal are espoused in policy as interdependent aspects of professional teacher practice, with the former two responsible for overseeing the collection and curation of evidence needed to fulfil appraisal requirements. A number of recent shifts in professional development practices including the move towards professional inquiry partnerships have led to a number of inconsistencies between school leaders about the appraisal practices-in-use which differ to those espoused in school policy. This uncertainty is compounded by the reported confusion amongst the staff about the form initiatives are expected to take in classroom practice.

Multiple expectations of appraisal play out in school policy documentation, where the developmental focus of appraisal based on individual staff needs competes with existing school objectives charted in strategic and annual plans. Job descriptions containing agreed objectives and outcomes sit alongside external conditions of employment outlined in Collective Agreements, professional standards, Ministry of Education and ERO recommendations, and the PTC. Reassurance is provided that principles of confidentiality, privacy and trust will be upheld throughout the entire appraisal process and appraisal judgements will not contribute solely to any competency undertaking; however, the procedures documentation reminds staff that appraisal outcomes do contribute to pay increment attestation decisions. Further tensions appear at a personal level for the leaders who experience difficulty reconciling the improved perception of teacher professionalism caused by the introduction of the RTC and now PTC with the lack of status and salary enjoyed by teachers in society. Greater integrity has been brought to the appraisal process by the school's professional inquiry and evidence focus yet this work is undermined by variances in school understanding and a perception that the changes have been unable to target or support identified areas of teacher improvement. Identified by the participants as a mechanistic and relational tension, appraisal at Tahi High School incorporates a complex myriad of school foci with multiple expectations for both teachers and leaders which have met with ERO approval; however, the leaders are keenly aware of the inherent PTC tension which seems to assume that measures intended to satisfy scrutineers are equally well placed to oversee improvements in teaching practice and learning outcomes.

Rua College

Visitors to Rua College are greeted by a sign celebrating the teaching and learning focus highlighted in a recent ERO report and buildings showcasing student murals that reflect the rich

tapestry of cultures that make up the school's roll of approximately 1500 students. Nearly 60% of Rua College's learners are Pasifika, 25% are Māori, and a further 20% descend from Asian cultures (Education Review Office, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2015). The students enjoy comparable levels of NCEA success as those enrolled in schools of a similar decile rating.

Appraisal documentation

Twenty-one documents were analysed as part of the Rua College case study, summarised in Appendix Four. As documents are discussed below the corresponding table code is provided.

Appraisal at Rua College is a complex, complicated and for several participants, confusing experience. This is not evident, however, in the favourable recent ERO review which compliments the robust, integrated professional development and performance management systems. Explained in the appraisal manual in diagrammatic form, e-learning, literacy, responsive pedagogy and the school's PB4L[6] programme are positioned between professional learning frameworks and learning communities. These communities are then aligned with strategic goals, departmental goals, junior class collaboration, teaching as inquiry and appraisal to highlight the interdependence of school structures in the school's goal of raising student achievement. Teaching as inquiry is presented as nine calendared checkpoints requiring: data analysis; engagement in professional learning streams - a phrase not found in any other documentation, defining personal inquiry process and goals, appraiser observations and feedback meetings, and inquiry analysis. Teachers who share similar junior classes undertake an inquiry centred on critical reflection and data-informed teaching whilst teachers of senior classes undertake a similar investigation but without the specified data sources. The opening section of the manual includes SMART (2c) and GROWTH (2d) questioning trigger templates to assist with inquiry goal informing; there is also a series of self-reflection questions adapted from the Teacher Professional Learning and Development BES which targets the learning outcomes of Priority and Māori students through reflection and interruption of practice, and by connecting learning priorities with school goals.

Considerable attention is given to the importance of evidence in the appraisal manual. Couched in terms that are less about ensuring compliance and more about collecting data to inform transformational practice, evidence is simultaneously responsible for informing inquiries and deciding successful practice. Both a formative and summative force, evidence is to be kept in an electronic portfolio and presented to an appraiser so that a final holistic judgement for each practising teacher criterion may be made. An eclectic view of evidence in the documentation is

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[6] Positive Behavior for Learning (PB4L) is a popular MoE school initiative aimed at supporting wellbeing and achievement through reinforcement of positive behaviour (Ministry of Education, 2016).

encouraged which includes lesson and unit planning, peer feedback on pastoral care and curriculum capabilities, annotated professional readings, and audio and visual recordings to accompany the obligatory student voice summaries, observation assessments, and PLG and individual inquiry outcomes.

A firm commitment to Māori achievement appears in the classroom observation templates as evidenced by the alignment of the PTC with Tātaiako cultural competencies[7] and the influence of Te Kotahitanga, a popular national reform initiative targeting Māori engagement and achievement. Four separate documents attempt to map the intersection of competencies and PTC with a fifth sitting in draft form. The responsive pedagogy co-construction tool requires teachers to cite evidence for each of the four competencies: Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Tangata Whenua and Ako. The translations offered in the document are included as 3a. The Synthesis of RTCs and Cultural Competencies document colour-maps the RTC with the Tātaiako and invites electronic completion of evidence collected for five Tātaiako: Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Tangata Whenuatanga, Ako and Wānanga. These same five competencies appear in the third document taken from *Tātaiako - Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*. Other than replacing RTC with PTC the school version is the same as that available on the EC website which offers behavioural indicators for registered teachers and leaders for each competency. The Backward Evidence Mapping Rubric (3d) sourced from an external professional development provider also aligns the *Tātaiako* and RTC*:* this time with the additional invitation to source three bundles of evidence for each competency. Finally, the Culturally Responsive, Relational Pedagogy Rubric which is being considered for implementation in 2017 announces six culturally responsive practices: Mahitahi / kotahitanga, Ako, Whanaungatanga, Wānanga, kaupapa and Whakapapa. Interestingly, Wānanga, which in *Tātaiako - Cultural Competencies* is explained as the participation in robust dialogue for the benefit of Māori learners' achievement (p. 13), and, as leadership in the Backward Evidence Mapping Rubric, is described in the Relational Pedagogy Rubric as the use of data to enhance learning for Māori students. Should the document be introduced teachers will be required to self-assess their practice as being either transactional or satisfying externally imposed requirements, transformational or working to improve student outcomes, or transformative which will see teachers working for equity and social justice.

Whilst not directly referenced, the conditions outlined in *PMS 1* (Ministry of Education, 1997) are evident in the school's appraisal policy documentation (4a). The Appraisal Policy explains the needs for schools to integrate appraisal and professional development and ensure alignment

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[7] MoE and Teachers Council led initiative highlighting the cultural competencies required by teachers in order for Māori learners to enjoy success as Māori (Ministry of Education, 2011).

between individual and school goals. The Principles and Aspects sections of *PMS* 1 appear verbatim; however, there are a number of discrepancies between the Features of the Appraisal Process section outlined in *PMS 1* and the Legal Requirements' more general account in the school policy. Missing from the document are the four requirements of *PMS 1* that school appraisal policies specify: the person responsible for the implementation of appraisal policy, the process to be followed, a statement on confidentiality and the process for dealing with disputes. Also missing from the Legal Requirements document is the requirement that the appraiser be identified "in consultation with the teacher concerned," any mention of the phrase "development objectives" which are required to be achieved during the appraisal period, "written specification of the assistance or support to be provided," and any "opportunity for the teacher to discuss the achievement of the performance expectations" (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 5).

Although the appraisal components template (4b) is externally sourced from the EC, it is interesting to note the shifts in understanding between the Rua College version in use and the version sourced online in March 2017, including, the shift in the understanding of appraisal in the Performance Management sector from being "annual for growth and development" to "annual for teacher professional learning development." The need for "support to be provided" has been removed from the Process sector: "Evidence collected" has become "Evidence curated" and the "next steps" bullet point in the Appraisal Discussions sector has been amended to read "Next steps / concerns" marking a tangible shift towards a greater accountability emphasis in appraisal understandings. The summary section (4g) of the appraisal manual has staff map evidence collected from student voice (4f), teacher voice, cross-curricular learning groups or PLG, observations, and other sources, with each practising teacher criterion.

Appearing as appendices in the appraisal folder, the final documents analysed were the PLG meeting templates (5a and 5b). Leaders ensure each group is able to cite evidence they have pursued an appropriate curriculum focus, established appropriate learning goals based on data reflections, targeted priority learners, and sustained a commitment to regular action, reflection and evaluation.

Individual interviews

Interviews were held with Imogen, James, Kane and Lani, the leaders of the four learning areas referred to in many New Zealand schools as the core subjects of Social Sciences, English, Mathematics and Science. With well over fifty years of combined experience at the school, the four leaders were well placed to outline the changing nature of teacher appraisal at Rua College. Far from being a part reflecting the whole, the interviews revealed departmental approaches

and attitudes that differed vastly from one another and the standardised practice espoused in school documentation. Whilst the four leaders were committed to the appraisal process and recognised the importance of their role in facilitating staff progress, only one of the four participants was especially committed to the professional standards as a way of boosting practice. The other three, by contrast, felt improving practice had less to do with adherence to accountability systems and more with fostering strong professional relationships and supportive learning cultures.

The four leaders perceive collegial relationships to be important in improving departmental practice and performance. Maintaining a commitment to open, critical conversations was seen as a key ingredient in shaping meaningful and sustainable change and more influential in shaping changes to practice than external accountability mechanisms. Whilst the leaders described school goals as part of a hierarchical culture, their own department goals were felt to be a mediation of school and personal goals, and therefore removed from any criticisms of perpetuating hierarchical discourses. The leaders included SLT as part of their valued collegial relationships acknowledging their openness, availability and approachability.

Helping staff navigate what were often seen as complex, overlapping initiatives was an important aspect of the leaders' work. Modelling inquiries, providing evidence exemplars and classroom visits were practical strategies frequently employed. Providing clarity and reassurance, especially about evidence expectations, was seen as important, challenging and time-consuming. This was especially so in departments with a high number of teachers at-risk of not meeting appraisal expectations. The leaders hoped for a shift in job understandings more in keeping with coaching models and networking cultures. Time constraints and the inability to enact desired changes were the most frequently cited challenges encountered by the leaders; inconsistencies in school processes and expectations of leaders had left one leader feeling the subject of derision for taking a greater accountability stance.

The place of evidence in the school's integrated professional development and performance management culture is a source of contention and division amongst the leaders. Those in favour speak to the benefits of collecting naturally occurring evidence as being indicative of professional behaviours, supplying useful data to assist with cross-subject teaching and learning, and as an antidote to professional stasis. Those less in favour drew attention to the institutional uncertainty about what constituted sufficient evidence, dissatisfaction with equity caused by the priority learner focus, and offence at having to prove themselves despite extensive experience and expertise. Despite these personal misgivings, the leaders reported that their teachers were mostly willing to meet the evidence collecting requirements asked of them.

The leaders were more interested in the PTC than the EC who were accepted as an agency for supporting teacher interests. The PTC was credited with ensuring inquiries remained focused on student learning and for their role in provoking meaningful reflections in sometimes neglected aspects of practice. Those critical of the PTC highlighted their overlapping complexity, saw them as a source of additional yet unproductive work, and voiced uncertainty about how to reconcile the bicultural requirements with the multicultural student population.

Professionalism, for the most part, was explained by the leaders as a responsive, altruistic calling at odds with measurable associations of imposed bureaucratic criteria. However, improving accountability mechanisms within the school was seen to enhance professional credibility. According to the leaders, staff are keenly aware of BoT expectations and sensitive to the consequences of not meeting performance targets, with several staff having admitted to feeling pressured and stressed by these expectations. Perceived costs also included a narrowing of curriculum focus and student creativity. Leaders were critical of the rise of what they saw as forced reflections intended to satisfy accountability purposes and, for one leader, this was indicative of the reductive tendencies of neoliberal governments which place increased accountability on individual workers whilst simultaneously retracting financial support.

The leaders advocated for more local, responsive conceptions of accountability which entrusted greater decision-making responsibilities to school leaders and community stakeholders. Whilst there was a general reluctance to credit externally imposed accountability mechanisms with initiating change, the integration of the PTC into the appraisal system had provoked greater interrogation of practice which was viewed favourably, and in some instances clarified participant understandings of their influential role in leading departmental change. Concern was raised about the individualising tendencies of increased accountability demands if unaccompanied by collegial, supportive cultures.

Participant vignettes

Imogen

Of all the study's participants, Imogen was the most effusive in her praise of the transformative impact the PTC had on classroom practice and the strongest advocate of accountability for development as a fundamental requirement of professionalism. Imogen has undertaken an ambitious developmental plan for her department, underpinned by a philosophy of annual improvement in each of the twelve PTC. Professional stasis is intolerable as her department's appraisal procedures are geared towards "proving development and not proving constantly that you're just an amazing teacher when you're actually the same you've been for ten years."

Imogen has implemented a hierarchy of development for each criterion which in doing so may well have exacerbated the accountability pressures experienced by her staff.

> We went as far as saying that for each PTC if they [her teachers] were at low development, high development and medium development so that they could see it wasn't just a tick or a cross. I wanted to recognise the fact that you might be really good at a PTC but then this year have you shown high development in that PTC because of the fact that there's this change in that process now where you have to show that you've improved.

For Imogen, appraisal is both hierarchical and collaborative: hierarchical in the sense that there is an imposed top-down goal setting expectation, but a process that is inherently relational, dialogic and supportive: "It's not a test and it's not 'let's see if you've dropped the ball', it's really collaborative in that sense and definitely something you want them to learn from and not be punitive." This learning focus means that appraisal is:

> Not a tick the box, this is about you showing how you have improved this year. What have you done differently? It might not have necessarily succeeded in your improvement but you've done something to try and develop.

Before the integration of appraisal with the PTC and professional learning groups, Imogen felt that the "onus was on me to produce evidence" for the staff's documentation at their annual appraisal meeting and because:

> I haven't asked for anything on paper previously I couldn't hold them accountable whereas now … if you can't show me development then I can't say that you're developing as a teacher. I feel like the onus is now off me - even though I have to be accountable now for the development of my staff.

For Imogen, the PTC serve two important roles, they "keep inquiries focused on something that's meaningful around student achievement" and they have enabled her to challenge professional stasis in her department, meaning some of her more experienced, yet underperforming, teachers were "finally getting shown up around their weaknesses," weaknesses which have either been ignored, or protected by self-interest and positions of school responsibility over a prolonged period of time. Not only did the PTC help these staff see the required areas of improvement, they also helped clarify Imogen's professional responsibilities as a leader entrusted with overseeing these changes. Although Imogen suspected that her use of the PTC meant that her staff now felt a greater accountability to her than they had in the past, she felt her own sense of accountability as a leader was dependent on the support she provided her staff to enable their development. For Imogen accountability is integral to improving practice, but importantly it is a shared accountability between teachers and their leaders, with the latter responsible for establishing the conditions conducive to the growth of the former.

> There's the expectation that okay you've got staff that are weak, well it is your responsibility to make sure that they're not weak by the end of the year or to move them forward through a process of development.

Moreover, this responsibility for development is not limited to those in need of greatest assistance because even the more successful teachers have "weaknesses in their practice we've never really addressed before so it's making them accountable and it's making me accountable for development."

The challenge of transforming practice was seen as daunting, and as personally challenging as it was professionally. Imogen knew the significant time she had invested working with individuals, often two hourly afterschool meetings, was appreciated by the staff she worked with, but felt it unfair:

> The crap [sic] my staff get because they have Imogen as their leader and their appraiser. [I've] just got to have thick skin I guess; it doesn't bother me, but what bothers me is around professionalism. I know they're just having a crack [sic], but I know they're having a crack because it's not being done properly by their appraisers.

As an appraisee Imogen holds similar expectations for her appraiser as she does for those she appraises as the stakes of student achievement are too high to leave to chance:

> She [my line manager] totally holds me accountable and she questions 'so what's this about?' and 'tell me about this evidence' … so she's hard, she's hard but I like that because it's real. It's not fake and it's not fraud.

James

For much of James's early career, appraisal was a summative process requiring a one-off observation and a performative box-ticking exercise to "self-justify" his year.

> It was just really, yeah you're doing all right. Show me your lesson plans. The principal would come and do a lesson observation, and everything was tickety-boo …Then at the end of the year, we got this document so that we could tick the boxes, all for the sake of the senior leadership (team).

The introduction of the portfolio approach which seeks to capture naturally occurring evidence alongside the PTC has created a more "organic" approach better aligned with James' personal conviction about the importance of appraisal as a developmental tool operating within a departmental "learning culture" built on "sharing good practice". Appraisal for James provides:

> A chance for us to self-reflect, a chance for us to show off, and also a chance to look at gaps and work out how we can develop in areas we might need to develop to meet those standards … I think the way we approach it here is a way to work with our colleagues. Sharing the good things we're doing and then working on developing those areas that may be short.

James recognises that the PTC play an important role in "proving we're a profession … I think we would lose a sense of our professionalism if we didn't have them" but is less sure of their role in improving departmental performance:

> I think what has improved practice in our department really has been the collegiality in terms of the sharing of how we do things and what we do and then they just seem to marry with the PTCs … to be honest we really fit those acts of evidence to the PTCs as an act of compliancy. It has to be done. Is that to say we wouldn't reflect if it wasn't for the PTCs? Absolutely not, we're highly reflective.

He is wary of entrusting teacher goals to the PTC:

> I think it's more up to a teacher to discern what area I want to progress in further. They might identify something in their previous year's appraisal that they might like to show improvement in their following year. I think that should come of our own volition.

> I think we're always more weary or cynical of these great layers of accountability. Generally, I think the teachers know what they need to do and they know ways in which we can best do it to meet the challenges we've got here and if you asked the teachers whether being part of the appraisal process helps make you meet those challenges better I don't think any would say yes.

James likened the practice of proving oneself against an external set of criteria and Imogen's annual improvement as being "almost a hallmark of neoliberalism isn't it? Forever improving, forever improving." And the EC and their PTC as representing the increased site accountability that accompanies devolved governance.

> It economises for government, for the Ministry (of Education), by making us all more accountable. We have to justify ourselves through the mechanism of accountability and compliancy whereas the support we may have enjoyed in the past has been taken away in a sense. Schools are now … more independent bodies … there's almost a reductionism in terms of the resources from the government, yet a greater emphasis on us for efficiency and excellence.

James believed the cost of such a positioning could prove detrimental if teachers continued to aspire to 'effective' or 'best' practice, suggesting "maybe good practice is what we need to be looking at because best means it couldn't get any better." To support this good practice, James supports an appraisal system that "devolves the hierarchy structure and evolves a more networking culture which is more in keeping with 21st century thinking."

Kane

Kane has 36 years of teaching experience, the last 14 of which have been at Rua College. During this time he has been a teacher, HoD, Assistant Principal, Principal and a Senior Education Officer. Kane's early experiences of appraisal consisted of compliancy and surveillance practices which felt like "a kind of punishment." Teachers were assessed by tick boxes and given an annual grading. Appraisal, "was designed to help the teacher improve … but it was basically a threat."

With bemusement, he recalls his earliest experiences of appraisal: "My HoD used to check my rubbish bin. After I had closed my classroom door and gone home, he'd come around snooping" before presenting his discoveries at the next department meeting.

In stark contrast to these early appraisal encounters, Kane insists that he is "not the boss", but a "facilitator" of development. Kane's sense of accountability is inherently personal, drawn from a high degree of moral responsibility he feels to the students who have been entrusted into his care by the local community: "My goal is I must improve the lives of those kids that I teach, that's the only goal I have in my mind."

Kane sees himself as a role model who shares his experience so that his teachers may share his vision: "I want my teachers under my care to believe what I believe." Possessing such an attitude means that any notion of appraisal being used against teachers is immediately dismissed as "unethical" as appraisal "shouldn't be taken as a threat, it shouldn't be taken as something against you", but rather as a "checkpoint system for teachers … to keep them on the straight track." And should they fall? "Bring them back."

Teachers in Kane's department are trusted to act as autonomous professionals working within a collegial, supportive environment. This is not to say that there is no accountability nor that there is not a place for the PTC which offers "rules for those who don't work hard." He insists their goals be achievable: "because I will judge you according to what you have written down because it's yours, not mine. I didn't ask you to do that, you are doing it and then I'm evaluating you based on what you wanted to do. Whilst any form of judgement appears at odds with Kane's personal convictions, it is perhaps indicative of the pressure many of his staff feel to meet school academic targets: "The school measures a teacher's performance based on success although they don't say it, it's not in black and white but at the end of the day they are looking at how many students have passed."

Despite some fears that student understanding may be compromised by prescriptive demands, Karl insists that his staff are happy collecting evidence. Significantly, many of his teachers have struggled to locate the bicultural requirements of the PTC within their objective course content in a way that resonates with their multicultural staff and students. To alleviate these tensions, Kane regularly unpacks each criterion's expectation at staff meetings and again with teachers before any lesson observations.

Lani

"How can you measure professionalism using a piece of paper?" challenges Lani, a curriculum leader with over twenty years' service at Rua College. As it is for Kane, Lani sees accountability

and professionalism as qualities deriving from her own personal convictions and commitment to her students rather than from any imposed actions intended to satisfy external regulations.

> Accountability. Shouldn't it come from within us? Okay, I'm standing in front of Year 13, I'm accountable for their results … If I don't get those kids to pass when I know that they can pass, how will I feel? For me, it's that. So, Education Council, don't tell me that I've got to record everything that I'm doing because I know as a teacher.

Not surprisingly Lani finds the pursuit of evidence "insulting" and a far cry from the developmental focus that was placed on appraisal at the school a decade earlier when deep action plans were used to combine personal aspirations with school and departmental goals. However, she finds the current need to align a series of professional development inquiries with school, department and individual goals, Ministry supported school initiatives, cross-faculty learning groups, and recently added Board of Trustee directives as "cumbersome", restrictive and contributing to excessive teacher workload:

> The [appraisal] document is so long and so a lot of reflection has to be done and at the end you just question the value of it, are we filling those things for the heck of filling it or are we getting something out of it?

> It's like you're on your tippy-toes. You're teaching or doing something – "Oh my God! I've got to take a photograph! Oh my God, I've got to do a reflection. So it's become like that. I think it's extra work.

Lani is not only critical of the system that appears to reward teachers for simply collecting evidence – a practice she labels "sheer stupidity", she also questions the integrity of reported teacher claims: "This system allows teachers to manipulate evidence. Validity?" she asks. She is equally critical of the lack of professional trust that sees her having to prove not only her classroom practice but professional relationships as well. Unlike the practice of manufacturing opportunities for collegiality which Hargreaves (1994) refers to as contrived collegiality, Lani insists that collegiality is a naturally occurring, organic and everyday practice of collaboration and support: because "we talk in the toilets, we talk in the corridor." Lani is also critical of the multicultural cost of New Zealand's bicultural commitment "Māori and Pasifika are getting more of the goods than all other groups …. is that what inclusion means over here?"

Instead of the hierarchical model currently in place, Lani would like to see the PTC condensed into a more manageable package, the administrative expectations of leaders reduced and a more collegial team culture led by leader-coaches emerge. Simply explained as "helping and supporting and teaching them what they don't know," Lani sees coaching as the way to grow her already responsive, reflective staff. "Do away with the paper and formal stuff. Make it more collegial. Give more support. Give the HoDs more time to develop teachers." She is proud of the quality of critical practice her staff conducts each day, but resists the assertion that this

needs to be documented. And in case there's any doubt about her position Lani concludes our interview with an impassioned challenge to any who question her practice or right to hold a practising teacher certificate:

> I'm up for renewal in the next one or two years, they don't want to renew it? Tough luck, they'll just lose a good teacher. Screw you … You think I'm a bad teacher? Then I'm going. See you, bye. I'll do whatever I can do, but I'm not going over the top to please anyone. They don't like it? Tough.

Rua College findings

The integration of cross-curricular PLGs and department inquiries with performance management processes is a recent addition to the school's already established commitment to culturally responsive pedagogies, restorative pastoral relationships, literacy and e-learning. These inquiries weave goal setting and data-informed decision-making with relational pedagogies targeting priority learners, and are supported by a culture of reflection and evaluation as determined by the PTC. All four leaders share the belief that appraisal systems at Rua College are motivated by a commitment to supporting teachers to grow professionally but were less convinced about the role appraisal systems, and in particular the integration of appraisal with the PTC, had played in enhancing practice. Accountability to learners and the community informs participant understandings of professionalism which is at odds with the measurable discourses perpetuated by bureaucratic influences. Internal school pressures raised by BoT and SLT expectations of improved student outcomes are compounded by external requirements which some felt see teachers engaged in appraisal practices better suited to satisfying scrutineers than in improving teaching and learning practices.

The leaders are divided on whether the PTC are best positioned as a measure of attainment or annual improvement, meaningful reflections or manufactured evidence, bicultural equity or multicultural disadvantage. The PTC have been instrumental in promoting interrogation into aspects of neglected teaching and leadership practice but the leaders were unwilling to credit the system with improvements in practice, which in all but Imogen's department was believed to be because of a shared commitment to collegial relationships, a supportive environment and a culture of sharing 'good' practice.

Toru College

Over three-quarters of the approximate 1300 students enrolled at Toru College are of Pasifika culture: almost a third are Samoan and over a quarter are Tongan. Māori students make up the third largest ethnic majority, well ahead of Cook Island Māori, Fijian and Niuean numbers. Senior academic results for each year level are well below those of schools with similar decile ratings;

however, the prevalence of multi-level course design and a focus on NCEA Level 2 means that the number of students who see out Year 13 leave with similar NCEA Level 2 pass rates to those at comparable schools.

Appraisal documentation

Toru College's appraisal system, as with many of their management structures, is in a current state of flux. Recent years have seen the arrival of a new principal and DP with appraisal responsibilities; the introduction, removal and then re-establishment of spiral inquiries; compulsory visits to high-performing schools; and a greater commitment to tracking individual student progress. Despite these initiatives, it is departmental variance rather than schoolwide cohesion which typifies staff management processes at Toru College: a position that ERO in their most recent report believes greatly reduces the professional capabilities of the staff and one which a new team of professional middle leaders is trying to remedy.

Stated as a stipulation of the State Sector Act (1988) and Education Act (1989), the school's appraisal framework is outlined in two policy documents: Performance Management Policy and Personnel Policy. The need for a performance management policy is taken from page five of *PMS 1*: "the Government, through Boards of Trustees, requires assurance on behalf of taxpayers, that teachers are being supported by sound management systems and practices and in turn are providing high-quality learning opportunities for students." The purpose of appraisal is to improve the quality of care, and teaching and learning outcomes, students receive by providing teachers with support and development opportunities which align personal and professional goals. Eleven guidelines shape appraisal practice including joint appraiser and appraisee decision making of development objectives and forms of support, the need for observations and evaluations of performance achievements and collaboratively written reports. The guidelines emphasise confidentiality and privacy principles, offer the assurance that documentation will be destroyed once it has fulfilled its purpose, but remind teachers of ERO's legal entitlement to view all documentation. Should any disagreement between appraisers and appraisees arise mediation process steps are provided. Finally, staff are informed the BoT will be kept informed of any competency undertakings. The personnel policy states the quality and motivation of all staff is central to raising student achievement. Consequently, staff can expect their appraisals to maintain a professional and developmental focus, be rigorous and fair, and be assured that if performance issues arise that concerns will be addressed immediately, lawfully and with a respect for upholding the dignity of the teacher.

The opening sentence of Toru College's staff appraisal manual positions appraisal as a performance review process for a teacher that is cyclic and student focussed. The document,

however, excludes any mention of Term One in the planning stage requiring all paperwork be completed by Week Three of Term Four - effectively reducing a typical New Zealand school year of 40 weeks into 23 weeks of appraisal activity. The following ten pages provide spaces for mapping examples of evidence sources for synthesised and overlapping PTC as explained in 2c of Appendix Five. This is followed by a list of school appraisal expectations summarised as self-evaluation against PTC and Professional Standards, a review of goal performance, student feedback collected from a junior (Y9-10) and senior (Y11-13) class, evidence of e-learning strategies, lesson observations, a colleague's evaluation of department contribution, evidence of PLG contribution, and evaluation of inquiry. Templates for collecting student voice invite students on a one-to-five scale to offer a grade for the class's respect for the teacher, class behaviour and productivity, learning progress, student engagement, participation, and teacher encouragement, feedback and marking proficiency. The report summary page, a copy of which is submitted to the principal, records outstanding aspects of teacher performance and intended areas of focus for 2017.

Individual interviews

Individual interviews were held with Mark (Physical Education), Nadia (English), Owen (Mathematics), and Paul (Social Sciences). Three of the four leaders were first time heads of department, appointed within the previous six months from other schools. Their stories speak to the challenges of first-time middle leadership and difficulties negotiating departmental practices disconnected from schoolwide policy. In contrast, Mark, a teacher at the school for fourteen years who is currently leading his department whilst working in an acting senior leadership role, was able to contextualise how the focus on teaching and learning reforms had been disrupted by erratic student attendance, the resistance of previous curriculum leaders and staff fear of appraisal outcomes.

The re-structuring of Toru College's performance management programme recognises the benefit of aligning inquiries and appraisal, and cohesive school understandings and practices in raising student achievement. Yet for many staff, these changes belie a darker purpose of exposing personal and professional shortcomings which has created a culture of uncertainty and fear. Mark credits the new system as a vast improvement on the compliancy driven, summative old model, believing the competency concerns held by senior leaders to be justified and necessary. The focus on goal setting and alignment of school learning initiatives through inquiries and evidence gathering is a major driving force, a practice which the less-experienced members of staff have undertaken with greater willingness than their longer serving colleagues. The new approach also fosters collegial interactions to build stronger teaching and leadership at all levels through greater clarity of performance expectations. However, this, for the new

leaders, has proved a source of unease. Despite the espoused commitment to cohesive practices, the absence of a schoolwide commitment to providing professional development and performance management support has meant that it is the new curriculum leaders who, for many staff, are the face of the brave new accountability world.

Although many teaching staff allegedly resent the new requirements, the leaders themselves have a far more accommodating understanding of accountability shaped in part by the fragmented department cultures they first encountered in their new leadership roles. Whilst there is resistance to the performative elements of evidence collection required by the PTC and the EC's directing of school accountability systems from afar, and confusion about the multiple agencies teachers are now accountable to, the leaders embrace professional conceptions of accountability citing the importance of responding to learner and community needs. The absence of widespread professional accountability has necessitated the imposition of more bureaucratic models, especially as, for some staff, accountability has been synonymous with autonomy and their teacher union with protecting these self-interests. Seemingly paradoxically, the imposition of external accountability forces, which is a source of dissent for the leaders, is seen to greatly enhance teacher professionalism. Being accountable for learner performance is a mark of professional behaviour, but for the leaders professionalism itself is decided by those other than teachers.

Perhaps better suited to reassuring society about the professionalism of its teachers than in overseeing professional practice, the PTC, when viewed favourably, was seen as a useful higher authority to call upon, a provocative tool for aspects of neglected teaching and leadership, and an important catalyst for planning and goal setting. Criticisms, however, easily outweighed the stated benefits. The leaders were critical of their disconnection from the daily work of teachers, their role in promoting artificial retrospective evidence fabrication, appearing to privilege general competency over subject specificity, as well as time demands and an inability to support the changes they identified. Inheriting what she felt to be widespread incompetence, Nadia, saw the PTC as a burden, well beyond the current professional capacity of her staff. Teachers were reportedly resentful of having to prove already successful practices with artificial evidence better suited to satisfying scrutineers than improving teaching and learning. Paul conceded that for many staff the current political climate meant that any voiced criticism would be heard as the rumblings of unprofessionalism and that any apparent willingness to engage in the new process was better understood as a commitment to upholding an illusion. Other performative practices that have reportedly emerged include the rise of meetings for evidence purposes, daily capturing of evidence for portfolios, and despite assurances of the contrary to senior leaders - the continuation of end-of-year appraisal fabrication.

Participant vignettes

Mark

Unlike some of his peers, Mark has embraced the sweeping changes of the previous few years and credits the school's good practice charter and appraisal policy as integral to improving departmental practice and schoolwide relationships. Replacing an entrenched culture of departmental independence with a new interdependence, however, has not been without challenge for the school with many teachers fearing the consequences of greater transparency and accountability.

> There was a real fear here of 'Oh gosh I'm gonna [sic] lose my job' y'know? I'm not up to it' and the reality was that some weren't up to it … I'm not a PPTA member so I don't read the handbook and don't read all the clauses … but a lot of the people who were the most anti and negative were those sort of people who do, very much I know my rights, I'm calling my union, people.'

Mark acknowledges that greater accountability requires more "clipboardy kind of stuff" but is a check against those teachers in the school who "have been left to their own devices for too long and need a kick in the pants." Mark believes the introduction of the PTC and the discussions around evidence has facilitated greater clarity around what successful practice means, especially for his junior teachers. "In the past, people were unsure of what that minimum [standard] was, they maybe thought the minimum was just filling in this and going sweet, done." Now, however, there's a greater commitment to the appraisal process as a way of identifying measurable goals and stimulating meaningful reflection. Rather than encouraging straightjacket compliance with goals established by senior leadership, Mark sees the new appraisal system supporting teacher autonomy and helping responsive quality teaching and learning taking place. "So as long as your goal is to some extent, concerned with quality teaching and learning, then you can't be wrong." The appraisal manual is intended as an "individual personal growth kind of document. Yes, it is used for competency, but only if over a number of years there's been no improvement."

Mark sees the developmental focus as a personal and professional obligation that extends beyond external mandate or acts of school compliance.

> I've got two main responsibilities, one is to get you to be a good teacher for us here at school, but the other one is, this school might not be for you, but I've still got to ensure you're pretty competent so that when you try and get a job somewhere else … I can't just shake my head and say "no good" because that's reflecting badly on me because I haven't tried to make you better.

Although Mark prefers by his own admission to adopt an apolitical stance, he is by no means naïve to the dangers of assuming a causal relationship between quality of evidence and quality of teacher practice.

You'll get some teacher who'll do an amazing job with all those documents yet you walk around the school and they're probably not the greatest teacher... yet they've got the stuff there and you're like 'well done' and you've got someone who is the greatest teacher of all time and they're the ones who'll do it in November.

This insight continues when asked to comment on the likely outcome of reduced PTC, when he wonders whether such a move might unwittingly undermine the interests of the profession if the "more you dumb it [the PTC] down or condense it. Is that playing into the hands of people who don't want to pay us more money?"

Nadia

Having assumed the reigns of a department in turmoil, Nadia's experiences as a first time head of department highlight the personal as well as relational costs of school fragmentation. Unlike her previous school where performance management and professional development were entwined and appraisal involved a close working relationship with two or three colleagues, appraisal for Nadia at Toru College has been a fraught and frustrating experience. As far as she can tell neither appraisal, nor, for that matter, moderation of student work, happened in her department last year. Upon her arrival at the school, Nadia encountered a "really nervous atmosphere of people worried about losing their jobs" where "pre-competency slips were being handed out."

Taking over a department accustomed to working independently and fearful of how exposed weaknesses could be exploited by school leaders, Nadia's attempts to introduce accountability systems and collegial norms have been met with resistance. To help change the pervading reclusion that sees "everybody as an island in this department," Nadia's four departmental goals pay equal attention to teacher relationships as they do student learning experiences: clarity for students, clarity for teachers, improving external achievement and enhancing departmental collegiality. Compounding her difficulties has been a lack of "prescriptive professional development" within the school, noting how Teacher Only Days, a synonym for professional development days around the world, are seen as "gifts to teachers." This has meant that any directive she makes is viewed as being unfair as it is perceived as not being required by other teachers in the school.

Without the support of a cohesive school framework, Nadia feels compromised by her dual responsibility to provide teacher support and fulfil accountability requirements. In the past, she has found appraising the teachers she mentored to be a productive professional relationship for both parties. But when faced with a mentee at Toru College who was not meeting three criteria she was forced to have a difficult learning conversation that exposed the inherent development and accountability tension.

> I said to this teacher 'I need you to be able to ask for help, but I'm aware of this problem where you might not want to ask for help because you might think it would be proving that you don't understand the criteria.'

Implementing changes that challenge department cultures has been especially confronting for Nadia. She feels her staff resent their increased workloads which have accompanied her insistence on adhering to accountability mechanisms and suspects they wonder why when "we didn't have to do this last year, why do we suddenly have to?" Reflecting on her progress to date she admits "I can't say things have worked particularly well but I had good intentions," before concluding despondently that "it's really hard … it's not sustainable."

This is not to say that her previous school did not present appraisal challenges: in particular she found it difficult to critique more experienced teachers, felt more responsible for ensuring evidence was collected than the appraisee was for collecting it and recognised that most appraisal activity was a mad "scramble" at the end of the year. This need for evidence collection promoted by the EC and the PTC, Nadia sees as "a waste of time" and an insufficient measure of teacher ability, in part because of their lack of focus on subject knowledge and curriculum level familiarity.

> As a HoD, appraisal and the PTC are great when you encounter a lack of professionalism. When it comes to professional members of staff, the PTCs are a pain. It feels like the majority has to do a lot of paperwork so that the minority can be shown what professionalism looks like.

Nadia questions the verity of much of the evidence that has been presented to her highlighting the inherent dangers within high trust models and their ability to be exploited by carefully managing the illusion of performance.

> So I'm assuming that everyone will be signed off because I'm assuming that even if you don't quite meet it [the PTC standard] 100% you can tell me that you've done something towards it and I have to take your word for it.

Nadia does see the PTC as a useful, albeit "forced reflection tool" for professional practitioners to consider aspects of overlooked practice, but one that is compromised by an assumption about their universal applicability which ignores context and teacher capability. Even at their most basic level of assumed competency, the PTC is beyond the reach of some of Nadia's teachers. As a result, she has found herself focussing less on the PTC and more on the key competencies[8] as a way of fostering more collegial, inter-dependent, departmental relationships. Where teachers are meeting most of the criteria, the amount of required improvement is beyond that

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[8] The five key competencies: thinking; relating to others; using language, symbols, and texts; managing self; and participating and contributing, are the "capabilities for living and lifelong learning" required by students in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 12).

which can be achieved within the condensed appraisal timeline. Nadia likens the difficulty of enacting multiple changes in practice to that of sustaining multiple New Year's resolutions: her resolution to overcome her chilli aversion, for instance, has been a "keepable resolution because it's very narrow and you choose something relevant, you choose something that is doable, or else there's no chance right?"

Owen

Owen sees professionalism and accountability as interwoven, "integrated into daily classroom practice" and closely aligned with student learning and achievement. And appraisal as "the mechanism for holding teachers accountable for doing the job."

> Teachers have to create the environment that's conducive to learning and achievement … so some of the things you need to do as a teacher is to get to class on time, be prepared for your lessons and make sure your kids leave your class knowing they've learned one thing really well so over a day they learn five new things, 25 new things per week. Over five periods a day, five days a week, that's 25, multiplied by 40 weeks, that's one thousand new things the kids have learned that year.

Owen believes that the school's vision statement and learning goals dovetail nicely with the PTC, but would like to see a greater commitment from senior leaders to building a cohesive understanding of what evidence looks like in each criterion and creating time for staff to collect and process evidence. He sees a disconnection between his job as a curriculum leader with the accountability mechanism which focusses primarily on his teaching.

Owen believes that the professional standards and the PTC demand a "fair and reasonable amount" of work for his staff. His only difficulty with the standards has been in "trying to define what that criteria is and how we would best collect evidence to actually support our achievement of that criteria." Whereas some leaders in his subject area at previous schools have expressed unease with the bicultural requirements of the PTC, Owen embraces the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi which are protected in the PTC. A New Zealand resident for the past decade, Owen believes the PTC has helped challenge some of his teachers' reluctance to incorporate Māori values into their programmes.

> When I arrived in New Zealand I thought it should be about equality, but it's not about equality anymore: if you study the Treaty relationship and if you study the history of New Zealand then it is not just about equality, it's about accountability as well. It's now about equity and respecting the partnership with the Māori kids sitting in front of us.

Paul

Paul's previous two schools' approaches to appraisal couldn't have been further apart. Unlike his first school which closely linked appraisal with inter-departmental inquiry groups, appraisal

at his most recent school was "very corporate, less about teacher development and more about rating teachers against each other so senior leadership could find who the weakest were and move them on." Similarly, the PTC was "seen very much as a tick the box" exercise; instrumental in framing student feedback questionnaires, "they were used as a tool to weed out the bad teachers from the good." Appraisal at Toru College is positioned somewhere in between as there is a lingering fear of appraisal consequences, albeit less so in his department than in other sectors of the school, but with a stated focus on developing practice.

> One of the more challenging aspects is the lack of a cohesive schoolwide approach to things and … I think that's a really big issue in our appraisal here at the school. Boom here you go … it's up to you to sort it. I'm not chuffed about that.

Whilst he acknowledges that it was done "hastily" last year and can only assume that similar appraisal systems occur in other departments, Paul initially speaks very favourably about performance management at Toru College.

> The majority of teachers really value the PTCs and the importance of them and I think with our school being predominantly Pasifika with a core of Māori students, I think a few of the criteria are particularly relevant to our context.

However, as the interview progresses he reveals a deep frustration with the removed expectations of the EC, which Paul describes as a "mythical round table up in the clouds" and "just an extra layer of bureaucracy" that interferes with teacher understandings of their job. "I think the bulk of us who work in the practice are bloody professional and do want the best for our kids but I think you need a safeguard" which the PTC provide, but there's a lot of "resentment" about "the pressure that gets put on us when we're so bloody busy dragging these kids through and trying to achieve the best possible outcomes for the students." He was skeptical about trusting improvement to the PTC which he saw as the educational equivalent of business key performance indicators; itself a redundant practice as "many corporations are moving away from formal indicators and appraisal as a means of evaluating staff performance."

Paul sees teacher accountability as being contingent on development but one that is unrealistic in the current bureaucratic environment.

> I think at the end of the day we're accountable to the community, we're accountable to the students and their parents and to the greater good of our society and I think at times we forget that because we've got too much of this jargon and nonsense and bureaucracy.

Instead, Paul would like to see greater clarity from ERO, EC and the MoE about their respective roles and to recognise that the one-size-fits-all PTC appraisal emphasis is incongruent with what is needed in one of the "most culturally diverse education systems in the world." To better accommodate the needs of individual schools, Paul would like to see support from the EC

individualised for each school and the PTC "boiled down to four or five criteria ... because it's too hard to make gains in 12 and meaningful change."

Toru College findings

School documentation positions appraisal as a supportive mechanism entrusted with the improvement of teaching and learning at the college. Yet for many of Toru College's teachers, appraisal is better understood as an isolating accountability mechanism associated with fear and punishment. The lack of cohesion between professional learning and professional development at the school level has meant that it has been left to new leaders to assume responsibility for steering appraisal practices. Seen by their staff as the new faces of accountability, initiatives introduced by these leaders have been met with suspicion, and in one instance, open resistance. Out of sensitivity to the administration that had afforded them their first departmental leadership role, the leaders were initially reticent about sharing their challenges. However, the pervading culture of fear for two of the leaders they encountered in their new departments proved burdensome and a source of tension between their own preferences for promoting collegial practices and the shortcomings of imposed accountability structures removed from context and situation.

Whilst the PTC have proved beneficial in highlighting areas of neglected practice especially with regard to the importance of upholding New Zealand's bicultural commitment, they are seen by the leaders as a forced reflection tool for retrospective evidence manufacturing removed from the everyday work of teachers. Having a common accountability tool for the nation's teachers was seen to enhance teacher professionalism, but the leaders fear that the PTC's standardising assumptions are poorly placed to facilitate changes in schools such as theirs facing great challenges. The PTC were criticised for their lack of curriculum specificity, vagaries around what constituted sufficient evidence, an inability to accommodate significant and extensive changes, and potential for promoting competitive rivalries between teachers and schools. But perhaps most insidious of all was the PTC's reported role as an agent of compliancy which sees teachers who speak out against them labelled as unprofessional.

Conclusion

Appraisal at the three schools is a complex performance management mechanism charged with multifarious responsibilities. The need for the external demands of the EC, MoE, ERO and teacher collective contracts to be reconciled with internal expectations of senior leaders and trustees to improve student outcomes has proved an inevitable source of tension. In all three schools it has been trusted to the alignment of professional learning with performance management structures and melding of personal and school goals to negotiate these troubled

waters. Fusing teacher inquiry models with the PTC is the preferred method for reconciling the development and accountability appraisal tension which in the next chapter will be argued has entrenched a culture of self-management and seen appraisal reduced to a tool of compliancy and control.

Instead of the cohesion espoused in school documentation, it is variance which typifies leader understanding of appraisal expectations and has given rise to fragmented departmental practices. Many staff have been reportedly overwhelmed by the complex network of initiatives they are expected to enact in the classroom. Despite aligning on paper, the lived reality of these expectations is more of uncertainty, confusion, and in some instances, resentment. The necessity to document evidence as required by the PTC is a particular strain for most of the leaders which has fostered artificial practices removed from the daily work of teachers. For many leaders, the PTC enigmatically serve as a valuable addition to the professionalisation of teachers yet constrain teacher professionalism by limiting local responsivity. Moreover, they undermine the professional accountability which all of the leaders felt to their learning communities by subjecting teachers to subservient tasks better suited to proving their performance rather than improving their learners' outcomes, and seemingly promoting the rise of artificial, fabricated appraisal practices.

PART THREE – INTERPRETATIONS AND RECONCEPTUALISATIONS

The final part of this manuscript synthesises the experiences of appraisal at the three case schools before offering an alternative conception of an appraisal system that better reflects the voices of the participants and the needs of the teaching profession. Chapter Six explores the fragmented practices that belie cohesion testimonies paying close attention to the unwitting rise of performative, fabricated practices system alignment has fostered. The final chapter discusses these findings within the policy landscape and with regard to the research aims and questions that steered this study.

Chapter 6   Cross-case interpretations

This chapter examines the seductive appeal of aligned performance management systems with the likelihood of ensuing fragmentation at the department level and the fostering of individual fabrications when neoliberal understandings of effective practices become educational best practice. Opening with a discussion of the study's cross-case findings, this chapter initially explores the appearance and reality of system cohesion and fragmentation. The suppression and required surfacing of critical voice is then discussed before attention is given to the need to embrace more collegial, collaborative understandings of practice as an antidote to the individualising tendencies of hierarchical appraisal structures. The cross-case findings are then situated within the critical policy and appraisal context introduced in Chapter Three.

Cross-case findings

The fusion of case findings presented in Table 6.1 should not be seen as an attempt to replace the unique with a ubiquitous understanding of appraisal; the lived-reality of appraisal remains situationally and contextually dependent. But when considered as a collective, these realities highlight the incompatibility of imposed bureaucratic mechanisms as a measure of teacher professionalism and quality. Four key findings emerged from the study. Steered by a myriad of external accountability agencies, each of the schools has entrusted alignment of professional development and performance management systems with meeting the developmental and accountability requirements of appraisal. Inevitably, this alignment has privileged accountability mechanisms. Despite the assertion of school documentation and initial participant confirmation that school appraisal systems have benefited from this alignment, the day-to-day appraisal experience is a fragmented, disconnected practice. Lurking beneath the apparent commitment to school appraisal systems and external regulation of practice are deep misgivings about the suitability of externally imposed mechanisms to inform teacher understandings of good practice and teacher professionalism. Yet, there is a reluctance from teacher leaders to contest external positioning of the profession and the artificial, performative appraisal practices it generates. If the tide of bureaucratic professionalism is to be turned, and more professional conceptions embraced, then teachers must be freed to surface their concerns and criticisms. The final finding of the study recognises that although accountability is still required of teachers, improvements in practice stem from collegial cultures rather than through rigid adherence to the imposed criteria of external agencies.

Table 6.1 Synthesis of case findings

	Tahi High School Findings	Rua College Findings	Toru College Findings	Cross-case findings
Degree of alignment	Professional learning and performance management frameworks are closely aligned and managed through the integration of personal and school goals.	Professional learning, learning priorities, strategic goal setting and performance management practices are inter-dependent and aligned.	The cohesion of professional learning development and performance management espoused in school documentation is incongruent with the experience of department leaders.	The alignment of professional learning and performance management systems as steered by external agencies has privileged appraisal accountability mechanisms.
Degree of coherence	Rapid changes have seen a rise in staff uncertainty, departmental variance and, amongst more experienced staff, resistance.	The introduction of multiple initiatives has promoted departmental disconnections and fragmented practices. Teacher development for accountability is contingent on leader accountability for development.		The aligned interests and initiatives found in school policy are experienced as fragmented, disconnected practices.
Degree of engagement	Leaders are challenged by the difficulty of reconciling relational and mechanistic conceptions of appraisal.	Cohesive data-informed inquiries and appraiser verifications of collected evidence ensure teacher compliance.	The imposition of increased accountability has established a culture of fear and exacerbated performative fabrications. Beneath a veneer of compliant willingness to engage in evidence collecting practices, there is widespread discontent where a fear of consequence prevents surfacing.	Beneath the surface of espoused commitment to evidence curation is a reticence to challenge what is believed to be artificial and performative.
Sources for improvement	Appraisal practices have improved school accountability mechanisms but been less successful in initiating shifts in individual teacher practice. Collaborative, collegial exchanges and personal commitment to improvement are seen as catalysts for development.	Professional relationships and supportive learning cultures are better suited to improving teaching and learning than imposed accountability structures.	The PTC is experienced as an imposition, unable to facilitate changes in practice and poorly suited to meet the challenges of the school.	Improvements in practice stem from collegial, supportive cultures rather than adherence to externally imposed criteria.

Degree of alignment

Faced with a multiplicity of external agencies steering teacher practice and a network of internal initiatives to meet performance objectives, it makes sense to align school systems, including professional development and performance management mechanisms. Cohesion promises institutional understanding and standardising of practice, economic rationalising of material and symbolic resources, and a maximising of minimal input. But it is this same seductive pragmatism which threatens to legitimise other neoliberal assumptions concerning the ubiquitous applicability of rational performance management practices. At all three case-schools, whole-staff professional development delivery has been replaced by professional learning groups or partnership models which are better positioned to enable teachers to interrogate their own practice and respond to the unique classroom challenges they encounter. Having teachers take greater responsibility for their own professional development has not only sanctioned a shift in favour of self-managing cultures but also served the neoliberal agenda by reinforcing the need for monitoring and scrutinising managers. Although inquiry models promise collaborative, collegial opportunities, only one of the participants in the study had experienced an interdependent team appraisal; for the others, improvement-orientated collegial inquiries dissolved into individualising performance justifications once they arrived at the appraisal site.

Squeezing professional development practices between accountability mechanisms means the developmental aspects of appraisal are inevitably compromised by integrated alignment practices. At one end, preferred State interests are driven by goal-setting discourses with compliance ensured by the auditing accountability powers of the EC and ERO at the other end. Managerial steerage limits the responsive scope of inquiries to those that promote measurable outcomes, as outlined by internal targets and external performance criteria, and by doing so threatens to reposition potentially beneficial inquiries as mere conduits of compliance. Critically, alignment has forced teachers to operate within narrowed performance parameters which define success in market-managerial terms. Responsibility has been replaced by accountability, agency and responsivity with adherence, while the "high-quality learning opportunities for students" (p. 6) required for tax-payers in *PMS 1* has become a lexicon of performance managerialese (Green, 2011) featuring targets, goals and outcomes. Moreover, the same section of *PMS 1* required the newly established boards of trustees to be accountable for ensuring "teachers are being supported by sound management systems" (p. 6). It would appear that for the teachers in this study that 'being supported by' has been usurped by 'accountable to' sound management systems. Alignment may just as easily be understood as a euphemism for keeping teachers-in-line.

Contemporary understandings of school accountability were, after all, written in managerial discourses. *The Picot Report* explained that "effective management requires specific and detailed objectives, clear responsibility, and control of the resources available to meet those objectives. Individuals and groups can only be properly held accountable for achieving, or not achieving, specific objectives" (p. 31). The need for specific objectives has justified the commodification of learning as measurable gains and legitimised the need for managers to ensure performance targets are met. Connecting institutional and individual aims is an important aspect of appraisal (Cardno & Piggott-Irvine, 1997). When connection becomes alignment, however, school goals assume sovereignty over individual goals with individual interests ceding to the hierarchical chains of school command. Drawing upon Codd's (2007) critical reading of policy introduced in Chapter One, any action pertaining to the selection of goals, values and resources may be seen to restrict teacher agency. When teachers require managers to define learning goals and external agencies to control practice, the need for critical and reflexive practitioners is lessened. Leadership becomes less about developing learning and more about overseeing docile, compliant and complicit teacher subordinates.

Despite the different inquiry approaches taken by the three schools and assurances in policy documentation that appraisal processes will be tailored to individual needs with outcomes reached through collaborative negotiations, it is obedience to the PTC which controls understandings of successful practice and determines appraisal judgements. Regardless of situation or context, the PTC offers a standardised solution which has routinised evidence collection and self-assessment as professional norms for the teachers at the three schools. PTC compliance is ensured by external bureaucratic instruments of control, including EC audit, ERO review, and consistent with neoliberal technologies, internal surveillance through hierarchical structures. In order to prove their worth, teachers are required to develop their practice, but there is little expectation of reciprocity from school leaders to prove their accountability for the development of the teachers in their care. In a similar vein to how the *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms repositioned principals from their former roles as collaborative professional leaders to that of business executives, so too has the alignment seen the further transitioning of middle leaders from leaders of curriculum to managers overseeing workers. The leaders in this study saw the rise of self-managing practices in favourable terms as the pressure they had previously felt to collect evidence for their staff had now passed down the line to the teachers themselves. The compromise for this trade may well have been the reinforcement of their monitoring and disciplinary duties which they undertake as devolved representatives of school and State accountability.

Degree of coherence

Despite the pledged alignment between school structures and learning initiatives in school documentation, it is variance rather than cohesion which typifies departmental practice and teacher experiences of appraisal at the three case-schools. Increased performance requirements caused by mounting auditory and accountability drivers have been subsumed by existent school structures. Rather than the practice of incremental change embedded in schools with progressive learning cultures, change at the three schools has been rapid, extensive and overwhelming for both systems and personnel. The extent to which alignment is necessary, desirable or even possible is contentious yet the rational assumption that linear discourses can be entrusted to improve outcome regardless of product or context is not evident at any of the three schools. At the structural level, the tension of the professional development and appraisal alignment was further strained by attempts to absorb government learning initiatives and priorities, best practice recommendations from external professional development providers and the tinkering of additional improvements made by senior school leaders. Given that the appraisal systems at the three schools were, at the time of research, all under review, future changes seem likely. Minor cracks were evident in school documentation including inconsistencies in dates and versions which confused leader understanding of required school practice. More threatening to the illusion of school alignment were the fractures between paper cohesion and departmental variance invariably caused by leaders whose personal convictions were at odds with school values. This was especially evident at Rua College where the documented focus on Māori achievement collided with the professional challenges of teaching objective content, as shared by one leader, and the personal challenge of reconciling bi-cultural and multicultural tensions for another leader. Less contentious but political nonetheless was the inconsistency of a Rua College leader's understanding of the PTC as either a measure of attainment or improvement and the variances in departmental practice this caused.

The inability of school systems to carry the stress of accommodating change often meant the greatest burden was experienced at the personal level. The devolution of school accountability responsibilities to curriculum leaders has left some participants feeling stressed, unsupported, isolated and vulnerable. For the new Toru College leaders, their believed lack of school commitment to professional development meant that overseeing development whilst upholding accountability expectations was a source of frustration, whilst the universal requirements of the PTC was seen as daunting by one leader and futile by another. Other leaders in the study wrestled with the conflict between their own understanding of professionalism and the increasingly managerial understandings of their job with the

overwhelming frustration of the leaders being with the inability of imposed criteria to facilitate changes in practice.

Degree of engagement

A response to the mounting loss of public trust in teachers, The State Sector Act (1988), established conditions for "assessing the performance of teachers" in new public management terms. Current appraisal practices, however, threaten to cast the spotlight on more subversive understandings of performance including creative expression and playing-up. For Ball (2001, 2003, 2008), performativity is a regulatory technology that asserts control through target-setting, comparison and reward. Performance appraisals, as instruments of control, cultivate performative practices, including fabrication and the reconstruction of the self in productive terms. These fabrications are intended to avert the gaze of the managerial panopticon and advance one's position in the comparative and competitive appraisal market. Despite personal misgivings about the ability of appraisal mechanisms to initiate changes in practice, the leaders in this study initially reported a general willingness amongst the majority of their staff to engage in evidence collection and curation practices as required by the EC. For some teachers, the PTC acted as a convenient reflection tool for neglected areas of practice but for the vast majority, their reflections were also inclusive of some retrospective fabrications intended to satisfy higher authorities of their professionalism or more critically speaking, compliancy. Although inexperienced teachers were more likely to maintain a professional portfolio of collected evidence than their longer-serving colleagues, there was, with one notable exception, a refusal by the leaders to credit the PTC with instigating meaningful changes amongst their teachers. As the interviews progressed, the latent discontent with performative practices surfaced, albeit tentatively and somewhat reluctantly. Whilst the PTC was seen by some leaders to enhance teacher professionalism, only one of the leaders credited the PTC with initiating changes in either their or their colleagues' practice.

Busying teachers with performative tasks not only erodes the time and space needed for critical reflection, it has re-constituted teacher understanding of professionalism. Standardising professional behaviours condemns teachers to an endless carousel ride of goal setting, evidence collecting, auditing, and sanctioning. Insidiously, it threatens teacher complicity by advertising that this is what professionals do, what they should be doing, and, by association, comes to see those who don't engage with standardising practices as being unprofessional. Professional stasis, suspicion of school and government motives, and incompetency were amongst the reasons offered by the leaders to explain the reluctance of their experienced teachers to engage with appraisal practices. It is, however, worthwhile remembering O'Neill's (1997) caveat that "non-conformity is just as likely to represent healthy and necessary diversity in teaching and

learning as it is recalcitrance" (p. xi). Non-conformity may stem from any number of causes including anxiety (Connolly & James, 2006), frustration (Seashore, 2009), mourning for losses (A. Hargreaves, 1994), as well as dissatisfaction with the assumed connection between bureaucratic solutions and teaching challenges (Albright & Kramer-Dahl, 2009; Schmidt & Datnow, 2005). Rather than dismissing the resistance of experienced leaders as a refusal to engage with school practices whether it be to protect self-interest or preserve the status quo, resistance may be better understood as a moderating voice and a reminder of a way of practising that predates today's managerial prescription of targets and outcomes, which was built upon trusting, professional exchanges. This is not to be seen to excuse dissent or incompetence but recognise that because appraisal is intended for the already competent, the standardising of non-standard teachers is not necessarily conducive to improving student learning experiences, teacher learning opportunities, or the interests of the profession. Despite their espoused commitment to the embedding of evidence collection into everyday teaching and learning, the leaders saw little relationship between the quality of portfolio submission and their own observations of teacher proficiency. Troublingly, one leader saw an important aspect of his leadership practice as supporting his most able teachers through the administrative challenge of evidence curation. Not only were the PTC poorly equipped to facilitate the required changes of those deemed to be struggling in the classroom, they had little bearing on the improvements made by the exemplary who tended to be more reliant on reflexion and collegial interaction to inspire their progress.

Sources for improvement

Despite the promise of shared learning practices as presented by school professional inquiries whether as a pairing or group, the notion of collaborative exchange at the three schools was illusionary as the parameters of investigation were tightly controlled by pre-determined performance models. Both inquiry topics and pairings at Tahi High School require confirmation from senior leaders. At Rua College, inquiry groups follow prescribed data extraction models with teacher autonomy and responsivity restricted to the choice of priority learners from whom data may be collected, whilst Toru College's reliance on individual leaders to oversee accountability through strict adherence to the PTC has manifested as whisperings of discontent. Practices driven by evidence collection were viewed by many of the participants as counter to the organic everyday interdependence that marked collegial departmental interactions. The conditions of spontaneity, unpredictability and uncertainty, which Hargreaves (1994) insisted were necessary for collegiality are compromised by his notion of contrived collegiality which in the case-schools sees interactions managed as prescribed learning groups and regulated through manager scrutiny so that performance outcomes are controlled by those in power but

removed from the classroom. This fusing of collaboration with control is especially worrisome as it legitimises the cajoling of teachers into accepting external mandates (Smyth, 1991), limiting teacher involvement in meaningful evaluations of principles, practices and purpose (Little, 1990) and may well make teachers complicit in their own professional demise.

Critically, collegiality is not synonymous with congeniality (Barth, 2006). Whilst attention to the latter will certainly enrich the former, collegial practices in trusting cultures invite teachers to adopt a more professional stance on accountability than their peers reliant on bureaucratic models. Jarzabkowski (2009) emphasises the affective staff benefits collegiality offers citing better working relationships, increased professionalism and better emotional health; for Timperley and Robinson (1998a) collegiality establishes the diligence necessary for testing professional problems and the validity of assumptions and espoused solutions. The leaders who spoke favourably about their departments emphasised the importance of promoting learning climates built on trust, communication and support. These departments also appeared to embrace professional critique and benefited from the collective gains of mutual interdependence. These leaders were adamant that while imposed criteria may enhance the external perception of teacher professionalism, improved teaching practice and learning experiences were better served through collegial exchanges.

Situating the findings of this study

Neoliberal control of education has nurtured a system that devolves government responsibility whilst simultaneously justifying its necessary accountability role. Imposed standards offer the appearance of encouraging local responsivity whilst regulating through universal prescription. Similarly, the compartmentalising of schools as self-managing blocks encourages schools to respond to contextual needs all the while constraining autonomy through the marketing of neoliberal principles of choice, individualisation and competition. Skylar (1980), an early critic of neoliberal reform, described the illusionary autonomy institutions appeared to enjoy which legitimised competitive strategies to maximise profit for what was in the past a government responsibility as a type of piecemeal functionalism. The three case-schools may be seen in a similar light.   On the surface, the individual teacher experience of appraisal varies considerably and is dependent on individual agency, collegial exchanges, leader understandings and school cultures. Yet each school's adoption of preferred MoE inquiry practices, often in response to ERO recommendation, and their reliance on external criteria to inform professional judgements have created a standardised performance management culture at odds with the collaborative practices needed to activate meaningful learning experiences for staff and students.

The privileging of structural discourses which frame many effective appraisal charters is to use the managerial register, easily ticked off when applied to the three case-schools. Cohesive lines of management, alignment of school and individual goals, and documented policy and procedures are all present. Returning to the studies introduced in Chapter Three which marked indicators of effective practice as relational abstractions, however, reveals a number of tensions between espoused effective appraisal practices and the lived reality for the study's participants. The need for attention to be given to establishing trusting and respectful appraisal relationships is frequently cited in the literature (Diffey, 1987; Hopkins & Bollington, 1989; Middlewood, 2002; OECD, 2014; Piggot-Irvine, 2003; Tuytens & Devos, 2014). Trusting relationships at the micro-level of interpersonal collegial interactions were seen as the catalyst for improvement in the most successful departments but for the leaders who reported greater challenges, trust had been misconstrued by some of their teachers to justify the autonomy and isolation they had previously benefited from. When extrapolated to the macro-level, the alleged breakdown of trust between the nation's tax payers and its teachers has justified the imposition of appraisal, which has precipitated the introduction of external standards, and the subsequent erosion of teacher professionalism. This means that even trusting appraisal relationships take place within a system established under the premise of prevalent mistrust.

The lack of structural trust can be seen in the restriction of developmental opportunities appraisal permits the teachers. Compromised by the standardising dictate of the PTC, which understands development as evidenced proof, differentiated appraisal experiences focused on personal needs as recommended by Piggot-Irvine (2003), the PPTA (2012) and Tuytens and Devos (2014) did not materialise. Consistent with the findings of Down et al. (2000), appraisal in the three schools may be understood as a useful mechanism for promoting evidence collection but one which is removed from the authentic ways in which teachers learn and improve. Twenty years ago, Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1997) reported that there was little evidence to suggest that appraisal enhanced teacher learning, concluding that it was an ineffectual form of professional development. There is little evidence to suggest that this has changed. A shift in the appraisal literature highlights the redundancy of concentrating exclusive attention on the actions of teachers when student learning experiences should be a central concern of performance management mechanisms (OECD, 2014; Sinemma & Robinson, 2007). Noble as this sentiment may be, it also threatens to further undermine teacher opportunities for learning. As discussed in the previous section, the interest of *PMS 1* with student learning experiences has already been replaced with student outcomes. Similarly, teacher learning, which for the leaders in this study is nested within collegial, critical cultures, is threatened by

pre-determined inquiries disguised as models of professional development based on pre-packaged professional standards.

At the three schools, professionalism is decided by the Practising Teacher Criteria. Relying on external mechanisms to decide localised commitment draws attention to the general vocational traits assumed to be common to all teaching practice. This dilutes the potentially disruptive threat to State interests caused by critically reflective teachers. Competencies are by nature more interested in skill demonstration than with critical development; with individual performance than with building collaborative cultures of learning. Being reliant on a "muddled discourse of 'excellence'" (Connell, 2009, p. 217) borrowed from corporate spheres, educational competencies, like their managerial forbearers, assume that the best teaching models can be instituted, replicated and then scrutinised from above. Not only are the individualising and isolating practices they threaten a risk to professional collegiality and teacher professionalism, as examined in Chapter Three, they also compromise the responsivity of educational leaders. Carroll, Levy, and Richmond (2008) suggest that competency acquiescence is likely to promote a standardised leadership model that restricts diversity and partnership and reduces both personal and organisational capacity. Leaders at Tahi High School and Rua College are either closely involved with or oversee so called professional learning partnerships or groups. Responsible for facilitating the steered alignment of MoE best practice and professional development, these apparently collaborative, collegial groups may well be functioning at an ideological level as instruments of control. Rather than encouraging learning, these contrived groupings allot leaders the busying task of managing colleague compliancy.

The reduction of teaching to a series of tasks dilutes the moral responsibility inherent within the profession so that managerial regulation of practice subsumes professional praxis. Critically reflective practitioners recognise that practice is not merely the sum of experiential knowledge collected over an appraisal cycle but also concerned with care, compassion and critical consciousness which extends beyond the competency rules. However, the all-encompassing task commitment required to maintain performative illusions leaves few opportunities for critical reflection (Niesche, 2013) or philosophical and sociological inquiry (Beyer, 2002). All the leaders in this study were committed to the moral dimensions of their job, both as teachers responsible for their students and as leaders for the teachers in their care. But the mechanistic framing of appraisal structures built on rational alignment, quantitative data and evidenced criteria imposed upon them came at a personal cost. Fielding (2006) explains that one of the more insidious aspects of performativity is its capacity to exploit the personal for the functional. Feigning care, performativity reconstructs professional relationships as managed alliances intended to satisfy those further up the line. The leaders in this study were insistent that their

own line-managers offered invaluable support but experienced a number of personal challenges stemming from their devolved accountability roles. In the absence of cohesive school structures at Toru College, and variance in commitment to them at Rua College, leaders at these schools experienced down-the-line accountability as an unsettling component of their working lives. This manifested in a number of ways including resentment at the lack of trust the EC appeared to have in its teachers, dismay at having to prove themselves despite their expertise and experience, and frustration at not being able to facilitate the changes to colleagues' practices as demanded by accountability systems. More personal still was the ostracism and helplessness experienced by those who promoted practices which deviated from inherited departmental norms.

As explained in Chapter Three, the origins of professionalism may be found in values of service and altruism, which under market managerialism have, as Ball (2003) posits, been subjugated by "values schizophrenia" (p. 221). This has seen values of commitment and judgement compete for dominance with concerns of impression and performance. If more critical conceptions of professionalism are to be realised, teachers must be liberated from the constraining impact of managerial reform and be freed to surface, rather than suppress, professional doubts. Many of the tenets of critical professionalism inspire leader purpose at the three schools canvassed but they operate within the constraints of a bureaucratic culture which restricts their agency, autonomy and responsivity. The leaders certainly espoused the highly developed levels of knowledge, skill and care that Tschannen-Moran (2009) and Kristinsson (2014) believe are integral to the work of professionals. But when Hoyle's (1980) seminal professional traits are considered, which include decision-making autonomy, influence in shaping public policy, and control over understandings and execution of their work, a more restrained view of teacher professionalism at the three schools emerges. As it was for Sachs' (2000) activist professional whose critical autonomy is constrained by competing forces of managerial professionalism, the leaders in this study struggled to resolve tensions between relational and mechanistic understandings of their work. The complexity of negotiating the accountability and development appraisal divide was especially confronting when the professional constraints of a bureaucratic system took place within a culture of apprehension. Where this was evident, fear of consequence ensured any criticism was suppressed and replaced with espoused agreement to the alleged benefit of collecting evidence, all the while fostering a practice of subversive appraisal fabrications.

An inherent assumption within many studies reporting the benefits of teacher appraisal seems to be that it is appraisal mechanisms rather than collegial exchanges that facilitate teacher growth. Kyriacous' (1997) benefits of objective feedback and opportunity to affirm, reflect and

discuss current practice and Deneire et al's (2014) job satisfaction, for instance, speak to the relational rather than mechanistic benefits of teachers sharing collaborative appraisal spaces rather than dependence on rational structures to determine teacher accountability. Discussed in Chapter Three, accountability as a politically constructed practice may take many forms; as a managerial form, it has, however, usurped others and routinised the collection of evidence for line-manager scrutiny as not only effective but desirable practice. Fitzgerald (2008) explains that teachers as managed professionals have surrendered the former responsibility they felt to the community or public accountability to professional accountability. Whilst professionalising accountability appears to respect the status and moral responsibility of professionalism highlighted earlier in the chapter, professional accountability for Beck (2008) encompasses three components which have tightened government heteronomy: accountability to government, management and consumers; achievement standards and performative criteria; and empowered school management teams. Professional accountability clearly shapes the work of the leaders in this study but their own sense of accountability is more closely aligned with Codd's (1999) internal accountability or Upsall's (2001) peer accountability. Akin to a form of moral responsibility, accountability is not dependent on formal structures, but nested within everyday collaborative networks. Rather than relying on rational discourses to define the parameters of accountability, more diverse models of accountability would benefit the case-study leaders, such as Ransom's (2007) democratic conception which welcomes divergence, equality of voice and dissent, deliberation as well as judgement, and public voice. Managerial accountability models, both those informed by external competencies and internal targets, elicit compliancy procedures. But there is little indication from the leaders that these accountability mechanisms have solicited significant benefits to their teachers or improved student performance. Instead, the leaders' stories speak to the need for greater attention to be given to the inclusion of ethical principles when framing understandings of school accountability.

Conclusion

Appraisal at the three schools is an all-encompassing and, at times, compromised mechanism charged with reconciling tensions in policy and practice. To help mitigate these tensions, school leaders have aligned accountability systems with inquiry-driven practices with evidence for the former intended to fall naturally out of the latter. Despite this espoused commitment to professional growth through collaborative partnerships espoused in policy documentation, for many teachers the processes are disconnected and a source of confusion - and in some cases resistance. Adherence to a set of professional principles in the form of the PTC may enhance the public's view of teacher professionalism, but for the leaders in this study their own sense of accountability remains grounded in professional rather than bureaucratic roots. When appraisal

is viewed as a relational practice embedded in collaborative and collegial learning cultures, leadership enables professional growth. When viewed as an ideological construct intended to regulate the behaviour of teachers, leadership is reduced to the supervisory role of business management. Similarly, performance management systems embedded in a culture of learning will enhance student experiences. If, however, relational commitment is replaced by mechanistic compliance, then performance management will foster performative practices from teachers and continue to perpetuate a managerial view of students as potential outcomes.

Chapter 7   Reinterpreting appraisal

This thesis research has shown teacher appraisal in New Zealand to be a complex performance management mechanism. Intended to improve the performance of both the nation's teachers and their devolved school-units, appraisal serves ecopolitical interests under the guise of developing teacher practice. The rise of the seemingly innocuous noun phrase 'effective appraisal' has strengthened the hold of other neoliberal assumptions, including line management and scrutiny, to ensure it is the individual teacher's performance which remains the primary political focus. Shifting the attention to what those lower in the hierarchy are doing whilst retaining the right to assess the worth of their work, inevitably means that accountability outcomes must be privileged above the school's developmental responsibility to provide support and professional growth opportunities. When the lens is widened to include New Zealand's devolved education history, the accountability and development divide appears even further apart. Through the representative agencies of the MoE, ERO and the EC, the Government is able to impose the units of measurement by which teacher performance will be measured and commission school leaders to oversee teacher compliance, all the while distancing themselves from providing expensive developmental opportunities.

To counter this divergence, this chapter argues for a reconsideration of the accountability and development divide. Instead of explaining appraisal as a process requiring accountability *and* development, or accountability *or* development, if a reciprocal relationship between schools and teachers that focuses on realising that if mutual goals are to be realised, then a greater commitment must be made to promoting teacher *development for accountability* as well as leader *accountability for development* discourses. Taking as its starting point the policy reforms first introduced in Chapter Two, this chapter explains how the study's findings have been shaped by the multiple layers and manoeuvring of policy. The findings are then located within the research aims and questions which framed the study. Finally, the study's limitations and implications are provided along with several suggested areas for future study.

Policy as practice

Teacher appraisal meets at the intersection of policy and practice, between apparent intent and outcome. Policy, however, is far from neutral and likely to be representative of interests other than all those declared. Throughout this thesis, three conceptions of policy have buffeted teacher professionalism and practice: national policy, school policy and policy as an ideological construct. At the State level, under the cover of democratic obligation to tax payers, New Zealand's teachers have been subjected to and subjugated by market-liberal policies. The

accountability and development tension which shapes the present policy landscape can be traced back to the Scott Report's (1986) conclusion that the Inspectorate was compromised by its dual auditory and advisory roles which left it poorly placed to deal with poorly performing teachers. The Picot Report (1988) supported the work of individual teachers but was critical of structural shortcomings and the apologism within teacher collectives. The ensuing devolution of state schooling as precipitated by the State Sector Act (1988) and Education Act (1989) entrusted local stakeholders to provide the accountability at the school level that had hitherto been lacking nationally.

Importantly, the shift from appraisal as a recommended practice to a mandated one, as explained in *PMS 1*, paid close attention to the importance of professional development in teacher appraisal systems. As devolved management sites, schools were given the apparent autonomy to "design performance appraisal systems appropriate to their school and community, within a minimum quality assurance and accountability framework" (PMS 1, 1997, p.1). Over time, BoT community responsivity has been reframed by nationally imposed accountability mechanisms which have eroded the emphasis on developmental processes and ensured the accountability responsibility entrusted to local stakeholders has been passed further down the line to individual teachers. *PMS 1* (1997) concludes with the sentence that "the professional growth of every teacher is a vital component of effective personnel management and directly benefits all students" (p. 15). For the participants in this study, it would appear that a focus on professional growth has been replaced by the scrutiny of evidenced accountability, and their identity as personnel dehumanised by the management of their performance.

Evident in both national and local policy influences, as well as overtly in appraisal practices, are Ball's (2003) three policy technologies: the market, managerialism and performativity. These ideological constructs have infiltrated all levels of New Zealand's educational sector replacing the interests of traditional schooling in growing social capital with the stern commodification of economic capitalising so that rational decisions may be made about teaching and learning productivity. This collision of human and market values has seen the principles of the former replaced by the measurable worth of the latter. Maximising profit in the schooling market requires not only quality-assurance but quality-control throughout the entire manufacturing process: a responsibility in New Zealand's secondary schools which has been absorbed by appraisal systems and overseen by former curriculum leaders, now curriculum managers. Managerial structures not only safeguard preferred Government practice by assuring accountability expectations are met, they absolve those higher up the school hierarchy from the contractual requirement to provide developmental opportunities. Teachers are now 'trusted'

to take care of their own development by 'inquiring' into sanctioned areas of pedagogical practice before justifying their performance outcomes at appraisal accountability hearings.

Research objectives, limitations and implications

This section returns to the research aims and questions first introduced in Chapter One which framed the study's findings.

Research Objectives

Research aim: To critically examine the political forces informing contemporary understandings of effective teacher appraisal.

Research question: What policy and political manoeuvrings inform appraisal systems in New Zealand's secondary schools?

Inherited from the global reforms of the late twentieth century, the re-positioning of education as a market enterprise has seen the proliferation of neoliberal principles and New Public Management practices infiltrate all levels of New Zealand's education sector. Applying corporate profit measures based on maximum returns generated from minimal inputs to teachers threatens not only to stifle teacher agency by having outside agents determine teacher worth, but also to reconstitute what was hitherto seen as good teaching and learning as an effective practice. This reductionism permits a discourse of teacher responsivity to inform understandings of teacher work, but one controlled through the requirement to adhere to a universal set of MoE endorsed practices. Espoused as necessary to appease public sentiment about the state of education in New Zealand, devolution has privileged a top-down policy environment which outlines the contractual conditions of teaching, but which retracts the necessary supporting mechanisms required to develop teachers and to achieve imposed goals and targets. Positioning teachers at the bottom of the accountability hierarchy means those above them are entitled to inform, oversee and then assess their work regardless of situation or context. But denying teachers control of their working lives privileges a view of accountability as an oppressive force, whilst excusing those higher up the management line from being held accountable for the development opportunities they afford to those below them.

The leaders in this study had little awareness of the conditions of their employment as outlined in either government or local school policy, but were keenly aware of the consequences of being deemed unsatisfactory and being required to undertake competency proceedings. The Tahi High School teachers recognised the economic benefits to the government of controlling public perception of the teaching profession and the potential for external mechanisms such as the PTC to individualise teacher work and, in doing so, justify the implementation of individual rewards including performance pay. Whilst mention of the EC at Tahi High School solicited talk

of the dissociation between election and selection of representation, elsewhere it was an agency viewed with uncertainty and, in one instance, hostility. However, the overwhelming response from the leaders was that their staff were willing to collect evidence for EC scrutiny, even if it was a mechanism better served to reassuring others about the work of teachers than in improving practice.

Research aim: To understand how teacher appraisers have been able to accommodate shifting expectations of the appraisal process.

Research question: What approaches have three secondary schools taken in order to navigate the multiple expectations of appraisal?

The policy documentation of Tahi High School and Rua College positions appraisal, professional learning and adherence to culturally responsive pedagogies as interdependent components of performance management systems. Tahi High School has moved away from PLG structures in favour of professional partnerships, whereas Rua College has employed a split-stream approach which sees teachers either working collaboratively in inter-departmental learning groups focussed on Year 9 and Year 10 classes or, where this is not possible, in groups focused on e-learning or literacy initiatives. In both schools, appraisal is seen as part of an annual cycle which is partnered with TAI inquiry and the PTC; at Tahi High School the PTC have been synthesised into five criteria for final reports and at Rua College the five Tātaiako Competencies have been superimposed over the PTC. Although the legal requirements of appraisal are explained in Rua College documentation, only Tahi High School's policy outlines confidentiality commitments, including access entitlement to stored appraisal documents, opportunities for teacher review, and the part that appraisal will play alongside school goals and government policy in informing future professional development programmes. Despite the linear explanation provided in appraisal requirements, calendared at Tahi High School and diagrammatically at Rua College, variance rather than cohesion best typifies the leaders' understanding of school wide practices at the two schools. Some staff had reportedly struggled to cope with annual changes and were often unable to see how new connections were expected to be integrated into teaching and learning programmes. The greatest fragmentation, however, was evident at Toru College. In the absence of professional development and appraisal cohesion, responsibility for performance management has become the domain of the school's new and inexperienced curriculum leaders. The good practice charter and spiral inquiry model introduced by the new principal five years previously to bring about more consistent school practices seems to have been replaced by a departmental approach dependent on curriculum leader understandings to oversee appraisal expectations.

Research question: Have school leaders experienced a shift in their understandings of appraisal and what constitutes effective teaching practice as a result of school approaches?

The alignment of appraisal with teacher inquiry models as part of a wider school commitment to professional development and student responsive pedagogies is embraced by the leaders of Tahi High School and Rua College. Although the leaders were reluctant to credit accountability forces as responsible for shaping effective practices, reserving this accolade for collegial relationships, the alignment was acknowledged in helping to shift understandings of appraisal amongst their departments from being an annual exercise in compliance forced upon them as a final activity of the academic year, and primarily to satisfy the needs of those higher up the institutional chain of command, to an ongoing activity intended to provoke critical reflection.

This is not to suggest that appraisal was viewed idyllically or in universal terms as for many teachers in these schools it remains a forced tool of compliance but, for the leaders themselves, appraisal was seen as a mechanism for nurturing teacher development. They were especially complimentary of the new appraisal dynamic which eased the burden they had previously felt of having to provide evidence for their teachers and reported enjoying the opportunity to work alongside colleagues committed to improving their practice. More contentious was the frequent assertion that appraisal itself had little influence in either determining or changing effective practice. If intended to provoke critical reflection, then appraisal was seen by the vast majority of leaders as unnecessary as the leaders believed their effective teachers were inclined to do so anyway, and the less effective, less so. By contrast, strong departmental relationships which promoted the sharing of good, rather than effective practice, was celebrated as having a transformative effect on the quality of teaching and learning. In the departments where leaders acknowledged a reluctance of their staff to engage with appraisal processes, or where widespread incompetence reigned, appraisal and its veiled threat of competency consequences, were well positioned to identify teacher shortcomings.

Research question: How have leader conceptions of professionalism and accountability been affected by appraisal changes?

Rivalling internal and external views of accountability and professionalism contest the appraisal space. Accountability is experienced as bottom-up responsivity to student achievement and community trust, but also as a performative task inducing acts of compliancy required by top-down regulation; similarly, professionalism exists both as the actions reflective of internal accountability but also as a quality dependent on others to bestow, being informed by the status and positioning of teachers in the country. Where leaders had introduced appraisal expectations that challenged established practices, as well as being met with resistance, either from within the department or in some instances the wider school, they suspected their staff

now associated them more with accountability than any outsider agent as it was their approval that determined pass/fail decisions. The leaders acknowledged that inheriting greater responsibility for making accountability decisions about their staff wasn't without its challenges as limited time, a lack of support, and inconsistent school practices all threatened to undermine their efforts.

Whilst the change of the RTC to the PTC was seen as being insignificant, both the PTC and the EC have had a profound impact on the nature of appraisal practices at the three schools. Of all the topics discussed, mention of the EC solicited the most emotive responses, ranging from benign indifference to defiance. Generally seen as enhancing the professionalism of teachers, concern was raised about their inability to establish meaningful connections with schools at a local level, relying instead on a one-size-fits-all universal model which failed to consider local school context. The PTC was seen in a similar light. The leaders believed their staff were relatively well disposed toward the PTC, but were critical of their tendency to interfere with more naturally occurring collegial exchanges. Other than the overlap between some criteria and the potential conflict between bicultural and multicultural interests, the PTC were generally seen to integrate well with other performance management mechanisms. As their name suggests, however, the PTC are more interested in the work of practising teachers than in practising leaders. Whilst leadership is awarded its own criterion, the reliance on the PTC as the profession's accountability measure fails to recognise the dual role of teacher-leaders as the focus of assessment of leader ability continues to be on their work as teachers. The leaders in this study felt this responsibility keenly, evaluating their own success as leaders based on their ability to support and grow their teachers. Retaining the autonomy to determine the nature of these conditions was seen as integral to promoting inter-dependent team cultures, whilst the emergent practice of needing to record these exchanges as evidence for future auditing was viewed as both contrived and undermining of the trust required of professional relationships.

Research aim: To reconceptualise understandings of appraisal more consistent with developing the teaching profession.

Research question: Where appraisers feel a degree of compromise has been made - to what extent have they been able to find spaces that value more developmental approaches?

Appraisal, when embedded in a culture focussed on systemic development as evident at Tahi High School and Rua College, was likely to see leaders speaking agreeably about their role in improving departmental practices. The resistance to accountability encountered stemmed from frustration at outside agencies, whereas attitudes towards school accountability expectations were invariably closely aligned with the personal commitment they felt to working alongside their staff. Leaders of the seemingly more collaborative departments emphasised their role in

providing clarity and cultivating supportive environments. Clarity was often achieved by: observing colleagues and then working with them to develop goals; offering TAI exemplars; deconstructing the PTC and adapting school templates to better resonate with subject specific contexts; by clarifying and in some instances reassuring staff about the requirements of evidence curation. Collaborative cultures were promoted by: fostering flexible learning environments which shared departmental expertise with less experienced teachers, often through team teaching and 'open door' classroom policies; providing leadership opportunities for inexperienced staff through group presentation and by creating spaces for reflection in order to minimise the burden of the end of year appraisal scramble.

Research question: How can appraisal processes and understandings be modified to further enhance the interests of the teaching profession?

One of the marketed objectives of devolution was to elevate the importance of classroom responsivity in local decision making, yet this apparent independence continues to be undermined by the imposition of top-down regulation. For not only is hierarchy asserted as being necessary for assuring others of compliance, other neoliberal assumptions embedded in corporate discourse are also privileged. Countering this intrusive and potentially oppressive force requires a greater responsive commitment from school leaders to the needs of their teachers. Embracing coaching models that foster collaborative learning partnerships and supporting their implementation by supplying adequate time and training is integral to developing practices grounded in democratic conceptions of professionalism. Not only should an ethos of development drive school rhetoric and practices, greater attention should be given to understanding accountability as being answerability to those below rather than above. Currently, it is left to the Ministry of Education and their waning supportive role to determine appropriate practice, and their enforcement agencies to ensure conformity. Reversing the hierarchical accountability direction would see the EC working alongside school leaders to develop more contextual and responsive appraisal mechanisms.

Research limitations

Drawing conclusions from interpretive studies is a fraught activity as it recognises the negotiation of subjectivities and narratives of both participants and researchers as the means by which we make sense and communicate our understandings of the world. Central to this thesis is the recognition of the limitations of offered interpretations and welcoming of counter stories when new understandings emerge which will bring new light to the participant's experiences and stories. As outlined in Chapter Four, getting past school gatekeepers to access the experiences of middle leader appraisers proved challenging and it must be remembered that, in each case, a senior leader took responsibility for sourcing the participants, who in many

cases had themselves undertaken leadership studies and were hence inclined to look sympathetically upon the researcher's plight.

The ensuing interviews were isolated, one-off encounters which limited participant opportunity to ruminate upon discussed ideas and restricted any shifting viewpoints from being documented, although having nine of the vignettes verified provided some scope for this possibility. Many leaders acknowledged that they had not previously given much thought to matters of accountability or professionalism, a difficulty compounded for three participants by the need to articulate their initial ideas in their non-heritage language; other transcripts were resplendent with instances of anacoluthon, repetition, hesitation and contradiction.

Although individual participants invariably were able to voice latent misgivings about appraisal positioning, follow-up interviews would have provided the opportunity to cultivate a more trusting relationship which may well have alleviated the sense of unease experienced by four participants who admitted to feeling uncomfortable about 'telling tales' on their colleagues. Naturally, the research focussed on individual understandings, albeit in one instance via a group interview, which meant the research endeavoured to capture the espoused reality rather than any lived reality, or what was said was done rather than what was done: a limitation which may well have been reduced by triangulating participant views with those held by teachers in their departments or through a period of prolonged observation.

Research implications

Development for accountability

Improving teacher performance is integral to raising student learning outcomes but, without a supportive infrastructure focused on nurturing the conditions for professional growth, accountability mechanisms will continue to be viewed with suspicion and the performative tasks they demand as an act of compliance. Whilst the leaders in this study acknowledged the PTC did satisfy the democratic requirements of accountability by providing a set of principles which teachers were bound to uphold, they were poorly equipped to inform or facilitate changes in practice. Moreover, the reliance on an imposed mechanism which pays no attention to context or situation was often seen as being in opposition with the more intrinsic conceptions of professionalism held by the leaders and the accountability they felt to their students and community. Alongside of community responsibility, other traits associated with critical professionalism were advocated by the leaders as being instrumental in improving practice, with collegiality, collaboration and reflection the most frequently cited conduits of positive change.

Despite the stated importance that is given to professional relationships in improving teaching and learning relationships, appraisal remains hierarchical and more concerned with individual performance than with growing inter-dependent departmental or learning team practices. In each of the three case-schools, the accountability and development divide was mediated by aligning a multitude of institutional goals with MoE sanctioned teacher inquiry models - either in small professional partnerships as showcased at Tahi High School, cross-department learning teams at Rua College, or the more traditional departmental approach at Toru College. Notwithstanding this apparent commitment to fostering collegiality, summative appraisal judgements remained the domain of the appraiser and appraisee with little formal evaluation of the group provided, the structure itself charged with leading the school's professional development programme. All three schools actively employed the PTC in their appraisal systems with the more successful departments recognising that relevant and exemplary evidence for each criterion was to be sourced from everyday practice.

Throughout the study numerous instances of teacher resistance to appraisal was reported by the school leaders, which often came with a high personal cost for the leader responsible for overseeing the required change(s) in practice. Although a number of reasons were cited including longstanding professional apathy and a reluctance to engage with shifting school or department approaches, the overriding impression gained of the teachers at the three schools was of a hardworking, conscientious body of teachers committed to their learners and to their own professional learning. Even when leaders had reservations about the performative demands of evidence curation, they recognised evidence to be a necessary function of modern institutions and as relevant to the judicial service as to informing judgements in teaching, so were vocal in reporting the value of evidence for their teachers in stimulating reflection and promoting collegial discussions. Whilst evidence was seen as the catalyst for this engagement, what motivated the teachers to engage with their inquiries was their commitment to their learners rather than any adherence to the PTC. Despite these high levels of professionalism, the pervading nature of appraisal was felt by many to be less about promoting teacher development and more as a safeguard for the majority against the disengagement of a small minority.

Accountability for development

As schools move away from whole school professional development models in favour of teacher-led inquiry models, a greater commitment will be required from school leaders to walking beside teachers and facilitating the conditions necessary for professional growth. Teacher inquiry recognises teacher agency by empowering individual teachers to respond to their unique learning environments, but in devolving responsibility for professional development to the individual teacher, the potential exists for line management practices to be

reinforced if leadership roles are limited to overseeing and then checking inquiry completion. Instead, a greater understanding of the role of school leadership must be cultivated: one which sees leaders accountable for the opportunities they provide for those in their care. Already situated at the bottom of the policy chain of command, teachers are required to implement learning goals established by senior leaders, have their work directed by external criteria, and then verified by line managers. If responsive cultures are to be fully embraced, then the hierarchy which sees those increasingly removed from the classroom having the loudest say in shaping practice must be silenced. This has implications for leaders at all levels of school administration. Senior leaders, who often find themselves 'caught in the middle' between top down policy and upward practice pressures, must 'speak up' to external agencies and 'speak for' their teachers. White (2010) offers the sage advice that instead of 'speaking back' which brings with it connotations of impertinence and punishment, that leaders look to 'speak over' external expectations of teacher work by providing clarity of purpose and demonstrating qualities of respect and trust. Similarly, middle leaders must resist imposed and potentially competing initiatives which threaten to shift their teachers' focus away from their important classroom work.

Casting aside the inherent privileging of hierarchy and control associated with labelling of senior and middle leaders will go some way toward empowering teacher agency. A rejection of corporate discourses in favour of positions more closely resembling middle leader developmental roles, such as professional coaches, will provide greater clarity of purpose and encourage leaders to evaluate their own performance based upon the successes of those in their team. In turn, these middle leaders will require the support of senior leaders to facilitate coaching professional development opportunities, rather than training with its focus on discipline and pre-determined practices that have proved successful in other contexts, and make time available for leaders to work alongside teachers, a shortcoming of current school practices identified by several leaders in the study. Returning to James's recommendation that schools "devolve the hierarchy structure and evolve a more networking culture" could see the flourishing of more meaningful and diverse appraisal practices with teachers becoming more accountable to those in their professional partnerships. In addition to collegial appraisal, whether with peers or groups, James suggests trusting lesser experienced teachers to appraise their more experienced colleagues will be a natural extension of their already collegial tendencies and help erode the hierarchies which equate expertise with experience. Moreover, reversing the line of accountability will see the formation of school learning goals derived from the classroom and the professional development needs identified during the appraisal process. This will in turn hold middle and senior leaders accountable to the extent to which they have

been able to support the achievement of these learning goals: the inverse of current goal alignment understandings.

Recommended areas for further study

Whilst this thesis is under examination, New Zealand's secondary school appraisal practices will experience yet another shift as the policy landscape alters once more. Currently in draft form, July 1, 2017, will see a new integrated Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession (Education Council, 2017b) replace the Practising Teacher Criteria. Four code principles will ensure professional responsibility: Commitment to the teaching profession; Commitment to learners; Commitment to parents/caregivers and families/whanau; Commitment to society. These four principles when sub-divided produce a total of twenty key-performance indicators to help with the assessment of teacher values. Six standards will guide teaching practice. Presently, 33 indicators are listed as examples of effective practice. Research into the affective cost for teachers of yet another accountability mechanism should accompany the Code implementation, with particular attention given to surfacing the disquiet that is suppressed by rational business models when change is imposed. To employ Forrester's (2011) United Kingdom appraisal metaphor, it will be interesting to see whether the new Code will mark a milestone for the EC policy makers or become yet another millstone of tick-box compliancy for New Zealand's teachers.

Conclusion

2017 marks the 20th anniversary of regulated teacher appraisal in New Zealand. During these two decades, the reforms introduced as part of the deregulation of New Zealand's state sector have continued to see the reduction of state support for its teachers whilst simultaneously fostering an understanding of accountability, which reinforces the need for those removed from the classroom to define the parameters of professionalism and practice. Whether marketed as enhancing developmental practice, as in the case of teacher inquiry models, or assuring accountability compliance as evidenced by the PTC, dependence on external forces removed from local context threatens to tip the appraisal balance even further in favour of accountability. Relying on external agents to oversee teaching practice supports the illusion of teacher agency by masking required acts of conformity and compliance as normalised behaviours of professionals. Accountability to external agencies and their imposed criteria may well assure those outside the profession that its teachers are acting in the nation's best interests, but in a localised school context professional standards remain poorly positioned to capture the high standard of teacher professionalism encountered in this study or to improve classroom practice.

Equating effective practice as the following of others' rules reinforces the need for school resources, including human capital, to be invested in overseeing and scrutinising teacher performance. Under the guise of reflective, responsive practice, New Zealand's teachers are 'trusted' to undertake inquiries of their own volition, but remain reliant on the scrutiny and decision-making of those further up the ladder to deem the worth of their inquiries and decide their professionalism. Dressing performative tasks such as evidence curation as effective practice supports the neoliberal agenda by reassuring public accountability requirements that the nation's teachers are doing their job, but without having to invest hard earned tax payer dollars into their development. Instead, it is left to individual teachers to take responsibility for their own development, and their leaders to ensure they do. Reversing the top-down policy hierarchy in favour of bottom-up practice is essential if more professional conceptions of teacher accountability are to be realised. Rather than trusting student achievement to unproved managerial business models, school leaders would be well advised to listen to the stories of the leaders in this study. This would see a shift in the understanding of accountability: from the present-day concern with ensuring compliance to one based on a leader's ability to facilitate developmental opportunities for teachers in their care and cultivate collaborative, interdependent and democratic teaching practice.

As it was twenty years ago, New Zealand's teachers find themselves standing on a precipice staring out upon an uncertain future. Behind them lies a system in apparent ruin. Slowly coming into focus, however, is a new way, a better way, which promises to rebuild the nation's faith in its teachers. The neoliberal saviour of twenty years ago brought accountability demands to a profession which had lost its way by empowering local stakeholders to work alongside their teachers so that students might benefit from professionally developing teachers. The latest reincarnation, which is scheduled to hit our shores on July 1st 2017, threatens to further tighten the accountability hold on the teaching profession by 'entrusting' individual teachers to take even greater responsibility for their own developmental responsibilities. Continuing the neoliberal trend of presenting solutions to problems of its own creation, the new set of professional standards will be charged with overseeing the standardising of the profession. It remains to be seen whether the busying tasks of the new performance standards will be better equipped to inform the practice of New Zealand's teachers than those they replace. It may well be, unlike the fallen PTC, that the new Code will foster more collaborative, interdependent appraisal cultures, but as a mechanism of managerial control employed by an insatiable evidence-based system, it seems just as likely to further isolate, restrict, before ultimately silencing, New Zealand's teaching professionals.

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Appendices

Appendix One – Practising Teacher Criteria

Practising Teacher Criteria: Fully Certificated Teachers

Criterion	Key Indicators
1 establish and maintain effective professional relationships focused on the learning and well-being of ākonga	i. engage in ethical, respectful, positive and collaborative professional relationships with: • ākonga • teaching colleagues, support staff and other professionals • whānau and other carers of ākonga • agencies, groups and individuals in the community
2. demonstrate commitment to promoting the well-being of all ākonga	i. take all reasonable steps to provide and maintain a teaching and learning environment that is physically, socially, culturally and emotionally safe ii. acknowledge and respect the languages, heritages and cultures of all ākonga iii. comply with relevant regulatory and statutory requirements
3. demonstrate commitment to bicultural partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand	i. demonstrate respect for the heritages, languages and cultures of both partners to the Treaty of Waitangi
4. demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional learning and development of personal professional practice	i. identify professional learning goals in consultation with colleagues ii. participate responsively in professional learning opportunities within the learning community iii. initiate learning opportunities to advance personal professional knowledge and skills
5. show leadership that contributes to effective teaching and learning	i. actively contribute to the professional learning community ii. undertake areas of responsibility effectively
6. conceptualise, plan and implement an appropriate learning programme	i. articulate clearly the aims of their teaching, give sound professional reasons for adopting these aims, and implement them in their practice ii. through their planning and teaching, demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of relevant content, disciplines and curriculum documents
7. promote a collaborative, inclusive and supportive learning environment	i. demonstrate effective management of the learning setting that incorporates successful strategies to engage and motivate ākonga ii. foster trust, respect and cooperation with and among ākonga
8. demonstrate in practice their knowledge and understanding of how ākonga learn	i. enable ākonga to make connections between their prior experiences and learning and their current learning activities ii. provide opportunities and support for ākonga to engage with, practise and apply new learning to different contexts iii. encourage ākonga to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour iv. assist ākonga to think critically about information and ideas and to reflect on their learning
9. respond effectively to the diverse language and cultural experiences, and the varied strengths, interests and needs of individuals and groups of ākonga	i. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of social and cultural influences on learning, by working effectively in the bicultural and multi-cultural contexts of learning in Aotearoa New Zealand ii. select teaching approaches, resources, technologies and learning and assessment activities that are inclusive and effective for diverse ākonga iii. modify teaching approaches to address the needs of individuals and groups of ākonga
10. work effectively within the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand	i. practise and develop the relevant use of te reo Māori me ngā tikanga-a-iwi in context ii. specifically and effectively address the educational aspirations of ākonga Māori, displaying high expectations for their learning
11. analyse and appropriately use assessment information that has been gathered formally and informally	i. analyse assessment information to identify progress and ongoing learning needs of ākonga ii. use assessment information to give regular and ongoing feedback to guide and support further learning iii. analyse assessment information to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching iv. communicate assessment and achievement information to relevant members of the learning community v. foster involvement of whānau in the collection and use of information about the learning of ākonga
12. use critical inquiry and problem solving effectively in their professional practice	i. systematically and critically engage with evidence and professional literature to reflect on and refine practice ii. respond professionally to feedback from members of their learning community iii. critically examine their own beliefs, including cultural beliefs, and how they impact on their professional practice and the achievement of ākonga

(Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2015)

Appendix Two – Letter requesting principal permission

Date:

Dear XXXXX

Kia ora

My name is Gavin Morgan. I am currently the Head of English at Auckland Girls' Grammar School and I am writing to request permission to conduct my research thesis for my Master of Educational Leadership (MEdL) degree at your school.

Should you agree to permit your school to participate in the study, I would like the opportunity to critique your school's formal appraisal documentation and to be permitted to invite those middle leaders in your school with appraisal responsibilities to make themselves available for one face-to-face semi-structured interview which I anticipate will take no longer than 40 minutes during this month. I am interested in hearing from 4-6 of your middle leaders. At no stage of the research will I be looking at any completed staff appraisal forms.

I identified your school as a site of interest after reading your latest ERO Report, which noted the school's effective performance management systems or teaching and learning programmes. I understand that welcoming an outsider into your school to read school documentation and speak with your staff is a potentially fraught activity. Yet, I can assure you that every endeavour will be made to ensure that both your school and staff's identity remain anonymous. At no time will your school or staff's name be employed either when collecting data, in the thesis manuscript or in any subsequent publications; all staff participation will be entirely voluntary as will be their decision when choosing to answer any question.

Should you agree to allow your school to participate, in addition to my sincere appreciation, you have my assurance that your school and the middle leaders' privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be protected when I complete my thesis manuscript.

I would very much welcome the opportunity to discuss with you personally the nature of my research proposal and should you be open to the possibility of welcoming me into your school community I can be contacted at grimorgan@email.com

Alternatively, please feel free to contact my thesis supervisor Dr Howard Youngs to discuss any aspects of the study; he can be reached at howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you personally to discuss my proposal and your school's involvement in my study.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Morgan

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 14th April 2016, AUTEC Reference number 16/94

Appendix Three – Tahi High School document summary

Documents	Authenticity and Credibility	Representativeness	Meaning
- School Appraisal Policy - Performance Appraisal Procedures - Infographic showing relationship between pedagogy, professional learning and appraisal. - Teaching Gap Analysis - Summary Appraisal Report Template - ERO Report	- THS' Appraisal Policy is published on the school's website as a PDF file and therefore readily accessible. - Updated in 2015, the published version, whilst predating the PTC, establishes the integration of professional standards and outlines the principal's requirement to use collective appraisal outcomes rather than individual findings. - Not all documents were part of the school's current appraisal process .	- All documents were provided by the Acting DP. They were not part of a cohesive whole, but individual documents covering aspects of school performance management and professional development thought likely to be of interest to the researcher. - Both the Appraisal Policy and Appraisal Procedures documentation emphasise the importance of appraisal for informing positive teaching and learning. - Honest, fair and objective practices are required.	- The Appraisal Policy identifies annual evaluation of teaching, learning and management as an integral part of the school's commitment to improvement. - Appraisal and professional development are explained as interconnected and necessary for raising student outcomes. - The Policy requires professional development be tailored for individual staff needs as informed by the appraisal process and school goals as outlined in annual and strategic plans. - The Policy requires adherence to professional standards and the RTC alongside of agreed objectives outlined in job descriptions when making performance judgements. - The Policy explains the purpose of the appraisal process is: to confirm roles and responsibilities, improve classroom practice and skills, identify staff needs and facilitate improvement. - Attention is given in the Policy to matters of confidentiality, reassurance that ownership of documentation remains with the appraisee, and conditions of recourse. - The Appraisal Procedures document includes the purposes outlined in the Policy and the organisational structures involved in appraisal in the procedures section before explaining in the process section the list of tasks to be completed each term. - The Procedures documents offer a number of question prompts and possible sources of evidence which are to then be used for reflection and to interrogate and interrupt current practice. - The Procedures document also highlights the need for close integration of relational pedagogy, professional learning and appraisal with established school foci on relationships, priority learners and restorative practices. - The infographic shows that the interdependence of pedagogy professional development and appraisal takes place within a larger culture of interdependence grounded in relationships, restorative practices and learning with a particular focus on Priority Learners. - The Gap Analysis form exists as a comprehensive list of 18 reflective questions targeting: content and assessment knowledge; planning, pedagogical and behaviour management practices; communication skills; familiarity with Maori protocol; reflection and evaluation skills. Each question invites a ranked self-assessment against four levels of proficiency. Through self-reflection and negotiation with the appraiser an intended personal goal is decided. - The Appraisal Summary Report requires individual appraiser confirmation of sighted evidence including data records, lesson planning, resource sharing, meeting records, lesson observations and reflections, student voice and regular home contact. - The Summary Report condenses the 12 PTC into five categories and includes the subheadings "PTC not met" and "areas for future development."

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Appendix Four – Rua College document summary

Documents	Authenticity and Credibility	Representative	Meaning
1. Overview 1a) Diagram: Professional learning pathways and folder content. 1b) Diagram: Professional learning framework. 1c) Diagram: Professional learning connections. 2. Teaching as Inquiry documentation 2a) Diagram: Inquiry timeline flowchart. 2b) Diagram: knowledge-building flowchart. 2c) Diagram: SMART goals 2d) Diagram: TAI and GROWTH Coaching Model 3. Culturally responsive documentation 3a) Responsive pedagogy co-construction tool 3b) Synthesis of RTCs and Cultural competencies 3c) RTC and Cultural Competency Rubric 3d) Backward Evidence Mapping Rubric. 3e) Culturally Responsive, Relational Pedagogy Rubric	Documents supplied by DP with appraisal responsibility. Not all documents have been updated for 2016, but assurances were given that these documents were informing 2016 practice. 3c) is taken from *Tātaiako - Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners* (Ministry of Education, 2011) available on the EC website.	1a) Staff receive two professional learning folders: one for appraisal, the other to facilitate either their collaborative junior class PLG or curriculum cluster. The former was made available to the researcher along with a selection of documentation from the other two deemed likely to be of interest.	1b) Concentric circle diagram positions e-learning, literacy, responsive pedagogy and the school's PB4L programme as four quarters between learning communities and the school's learning framework. 1c) This diagram depicts the connection between learning communities and strategic goals, departmental goals, junior class collaboration, and teaching as inquiry and appraisal. 2a) Nine calendared steps: TAI relationships, negotiations; evidence, self-reflection expectations; observation periods. 2b) Adapted from the Teacher Professional Learning and Development BES, the flowchart offers a series of self-reflection questions intended to improve the learning outcomes of Priority and Maori Learners by encouraging reflection and interruption of practice, and connecting learning priorities with school goals. 2c) SMART questions are provided for teachers to consider when planning their inquiries. 2d) Goals, Reality, Options, Will, Tactics, Habits are married with questions and actions provoked by the inquiry cycle. Each step must include evidence of data and reflection. The document differentiates Priority Learners: those decided by the MoE (Maori, Pasifika and special needs students); Target Students, aligned with school targets whose outcomes are reported to the BoT; and Focus Students as learners in danger of not meeting learning goals at the classroom level. 3a) Template marrying four cultural competencies: Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Tangata Whenua and Ako with the corresponding PTC. A summary of the translations clarifies Whanaungatanga as respectful relationships valuing culture and high expectations; Manaakitanga as student inclusion, encouragement, engagement and well-being; Tangata Whenua as classroom inclusion of Maori language, protocols and world views; and Ako as: valuing Maori students' prior knowledge, use of co-construction in lesson planning; and the use of feedback, feedforward and effective teaching methods for Maori learners. Teachers must cite evidence for each competency. 3b) RTC divided Professional Relationships and Values (RTC 1-5) and Professional Knowledge in Practice (RTC 6-12). Each RTC has a colour code for one of five cultural competencies: Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Tangata Whenuatanga, Ako and Wānanga. 3d) Resourced from an external PLD course in 2015, this resource aligns cultural competencies with the RTC with an evidence focus for each criterion: RTC 1, Whanaungatanga, relationships; RTC 2, Manaakitanga, well-being; RTC 3, Tangata Whenuatanga, Treaty considerations; RTC 4, Ako, ongoing PLD; RTC 5, Wānanga, leadership; RTC 6, Ako, Learning plans; RTC 7, Manaakitanga, Engagement; RTC 8, Ako, learning; RTC 9, Tangata Whenuatanga, diversity; RTC 10, bicultural evidence; RTC 11, Wānanga, assessment; RTC 12 , Wānanga Ako, inquiry. 3e) A draft for 2017 this table has six culturally responsive practices in the left hand column: Mahitahi / kotahitanga (sharing of power), Ako (interactive and discursive learning), Whanaungatanga (relationships of care), Wānanga (data to enhance learning), kaupapa (vision for Maori to enjoy success as Maori), Whakapapa (culture integral to learning). The remaining three columns require evidence to self-assess practice as being either transactional (equating to 1/5), transformational (2 / 5 or 3 / 5) or transformative (4/5 or 5/5).

4. Appraisal documentation 4a) Legal requirements 4b) Appraisal Component 4c) Aligning appraisal with professional learning 4d) Appraisal Planner: setting goals 4e) Observation tool transcript 4f) RC Lesson Observation Sheet 4g) Appraisal Report Cover Sheet	4a) cites (MoE, 1996) without directly naming the prescription in The *New Zealand Gazette*. The document also offers a now seemingly inactive link as its source. 4b) Available online (Ministry of Education, 2017).	4b) An updated version of the Appraisal Components resource can be found on the Education Council Website (Education Council, 2017a).	4a) Explains the conditions outlined in *PMS 1* (Ministry of Education, 1997) as a prescription for schools to assess the performance of registered teachers by setting minimum standards of accountability and quality assurance. 4b) Appraisal is depicted as five sequential components: performance management, process, evidence collection, appraisal discussions and the appraisal report. 4c) Discussion of school ability to develop and manage high quality professional learning and development programmes and poor performance of secondary schools obtained from ERO. 4d) The first page of a six page template intended to facilitate the appraisal process, this page states the school's five learning targets: 80% of school leavers to do so with NCEA 2, 70% of Year 11 students to gain NCEA 1, Maori NCEA success to be comparable with cohort achievement, Year 9 attendance to be above 90% and for Year 9 and Year 10 reading, writing and numeracy results to increase by two sub-levels[9]. 4e) The document outlines the conditions for a lesson observation which sees the observer enter the classroom 15 minutes into the lesson and remain for 30 minutes. The observer is required to focus on five Maori students in the first instance, to document all interactions and actions of these students during five minute intervals before interviewing them. 4f) Includes sections for Registered Teacher goals plus appraiser comments, whilst a significant proportion of the template is reserved for student voice which requires three students to answer three prescribed questions on the focus of the day's learning. 4g) This table features a row for each of the 12 PTC. These in turn require appraisers to make a holistic judgement based on the evidence provided in the remaining six columns: student voice, teacher voice, cross curricular learning groups, PLG, observations and other sources. Beneath the table is space for comment on demonstrated strengths, areas for future focus and appraiser recommendations.
5. Meeting Templates 5a) Curriculum Cluster Template 5b) Cross-curricular Meeting Template		5a) Dated 22/4/2015 5b) Dated 20/4/2016 Both printed from google docs and so subject to subsequent edits.	5a) A four page document for those not in a junior cross-curriculum focus group. The cover page requires a facilitator signature that appropriate curriculum foci, data collection and methods. The second page has two grids; the first is a focus on four Maori, or other priority learners, with: high ability and high engagement, high ability and low engagement, low ability and high engagement, low ability and low engagement. For each student, four different data types are required. The second grid requires a learning goal for each student with two accompanying targets. Page three has two tables: the first is a table for recording intended pedagogical practices to lift academic progress for the students identified on the previous page. The final grid, explains that all grids are living documents which may inform appraisal evidence later in the year. The grid requires an evaluation of progress towards learning goals including a summary of actions, evaluations and reflections. 5b) This five page document is intended for teachers who share Year 9 and 10 classes. 5b follows a similar structure to the curriculum cluster equivalent, but the front page general analysis summary has been replaced with a planning grid with space for the cluster curriculum focus, focus aspect of learning and data to be employed. The equivalent Maori focus template includes the four required data types: curriculum levels for mathematics, reading and writing, and a listening stanine. The goal setting and pedagogical practice grids specify maths and language targets. All of grids are then repeated on pages 4 & 5 for the next term's use.

[9] The New Zealand Curriculum has students progress through 8 learning levels during their 13 years of schooling; up until Year 10 this generally means two school years per curriculum level. To better measure progress these curriculum levels are then often divided into the sub-levels of: above, proficient and below.

Appendix Five – Toru College document summary

Documents	Authenticity and Credibility	Representative	Meaning
1) Policy 1a) Performance Management Policy 1b) Personnel Policy 2) Appraisal Manual 2a) Overview page 2b) Meeting Plan 2c) PTC pages 2d) Expectations 2e) Coaching questions 2f) Department Inquiry 2g) Student voice 2h) Appraisal Summary	Both policy documents were obtained from the school website, school name and logo included. No dates, possible review dates or signatures. 2016 Staff Manual paper copy was provided by Mark. Absence of school name & logo. 2016, sourced from ERO website.	Leaders had not read the policies. Only long serving Mark was able to affirm the policy was representative of recent school practices but, other leaders challenged whole school approaches.	1a) Rationale PMS1 verbatim. State Sector Act 1988 and Education Act of 1989 cited. Purpose: improve the quality of care, and teaching and learning outcomes, achieved through support and development opportunities alongside personal and professional goals. 1b) Appraisal is professional and development orientated, required by legislation. Processes: rigorous, fair and documented; performance concerns will be addressed immediately, lawfully and with mana and dignity 2a) Appraisal is a cyclic, student focused, performance review process. Evidence includes observations, reflections and student voice, is collected throughout the year and matched with PTC and Professional Standards. Once agreement is reached, new goals focused on weaknesses are decided. Term 2 and 3 requirements: initial planning meeting, observations and evidence collecting. 2b) The planning template requires: an outcome goal, explained alignment with school goals, and intended approaches. 2c) The goals page (PTC 11) requires self-assessment of teaching strengths and weaknesses. Knowing your Learner (PTC 1, 7, 8) ethnicity, achievement and learning data, relationship orientated class activities. Student Voice (PTC 9, 10) focuses on feedback sources such as surveys, emails and interviews. The pastoral heading (PTC 2) recommends evidence from parent meetings and emails, as well as extra-curricular photographs or artefacts, are collected. The department contribution page (PTC 4, 5) suggests colleague feedback, meeting minutes, and assessment moderation evidence. Unit Review (PTC 6, 8, 9, 11) requires a unit of work with relevant objectives, tasks and assessment rationale included. The teaching (PTC 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) page presents reflective questions surrounding tensions and compromises, ideal alternatives, and intended changes. Learning (PTC 4) requires student work with feedback. 2d) Expectations: self-evaluation against PTC and Professional Standards, review of goal performance, student feedback, e-learning strategies, lesson observations, colleague evaluation, PLG contribution and evaluation of inquiry. 2e) For classroom observations. Questions prompt consideration of content, approach and clarity of learning intentions. Similar questions appear for the post-observation interview and questions on next steps and possible alternatives. 2f) Departmental inquiry template focuses on termly tracking of achievement data for five priority learners. 2g) This template for collecting student voice invites a 1-5 ranking for: class respect for teacher, class behaviour and productivity; learning frequency, awareness and progress; student engagement, participation; and teacher encouragement, feedback and marking proficiency. An accompanying template leaves space for teacher response to the collated findings. 2h) Evidence of outstanding aspects of teacher performance, intended PTC foci for 2017 and additional comments.

Appendix Six – Participant information sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Date: XXXX

Project Title

Tensions between policy and practice in New Zealand secondary school appraisal: A critical analysis.

An Invitation

Kia ora

My name is Gavin Morgan. I am currently the Head of English at Auckland Girls' Grammar School and I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study which hopes to explore the impact that appraisal reforms have had on middle leaders like yourself. Should you agree to participate in the study I ask only that you make yourself available for one face-to-face semi-structured interview which I anticipate will take approximately 40 minutes. Naturally, your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and at no time will your participation be reported to anyone either inside or outside of your school. Should you agree to participate, you have my assurance that your privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be protected when I complete my thesis manuscript as part of the requirements of the Master of Educational Leadership (MEdL) degree and in any subsequent research publications.

What is the purpose of this research?

Appraisal is an important part of school performance management systems, but it seems that meeting the increasing pressures of appraisal, including both external and internal demands, and the need to meet accountability and developmental requirements are falling more and more to middle leaders. I am interested in exploring the appraisal experiences of secondary schools including your own and in capturing the stories of the middle leaders entrusted with appraisal responsibilities in order to come to some understanding about the current state of school appraisal and its impact on appraisees, appraisers, and teaching and learning practices.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

The schools in which I am conducting this study have been identified in recent Education Review Office reports as offering either a meaningful performance management system or as employing effective teaching and learning programmes. I have received permission from your principal to analyse your school's formal appraisal systems and to invite all curriculum middle leaders with an appraisal responsibility to participate in an interview in order to help gain a better understanding of the personal experiences of your school's appraisers. I am hoping that you and up to 4 of your middle leader colleagues will be available to discuss with me your appraisal experiences. If more appraisers volunteer, I will look to meet with those who have experienced at least one full appraisal cycle at your school, meet with heads of faculties or departments rather than those who may have delegated responsibilities, and look to include a range of different subject voices.

What will happen in this research?

Should you choose to participate in the interview, I will invite you to answer questions about the nature of appraisal in your school. I am particularly interested in hearing whether the Practising Teacher Criteria are used in your appraisal practices, how your appraisal systems balance accountability and development demands, and how performance management systems can be used to better inform meaningful teaching and learning experiences. Before the interview I will send you a copy of the topics I hope to explore. The interview will be recorded (audio only) before being transcribed by me personally. I will then send a transcript of our conversation and invite you to make any amendments or additions. The interview will take approximately 40 minutes and will take place during a non-contact at your school or at time convenient to you. If you would prefer being interviewed off-site, we can arrange to meet in one of the bookable rooms located on any of the AUT Auckland campuses.

What are the discomforts and risks, and how will they be alleviated?

Should you find yourself uncomfortable about answering any of the questions put to you, your right to choose not to answer will be respected. Neither your name nor your school's name will be recorded other than on the initial consent form which I will show you at the beginning of our interview should you agree to participate in the study. This will then be stored in a locked cabinet in one of my supervisor's offices. Pseudonyms will be employed at all stages as will non-determining language to ensure your identity remains confidential.

What are the benefits?

At a personal level, your participation will provide me with rich qualitative data that will help gauge the personal effects of state and local school appraisal policies. I appreciate that there are very few direct benefits of sharing your experiences with someone outside of your school; however, it is my great hope that in choosing to tell your stories with me that a better conception of appraisal informed by professional understandings and experiences can be shared.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

I would appreciate receiving confirmation of your willingness to participate within two weeks from the date given on this information sheet.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Should you agree to participate in the research please make contact with me at grjmorgan@gmail.com

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Howard Youngs, howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz, (W) 09 921 9999 ext 9633

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

If you are willing to participate in the study or should you have any further questions about the nature of the research please contact me at grjmorgan@gmail.com.

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Alternatively, please feel free to contact my thesis supervisor Dr Howard Youngs to discuss any aspects of the study; he can be reached at howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 14th April 2006, AUTEC Reference number 16/94.

Appendix Seven – Participant consent form

Consent Form

Project title: **Tensions between policy and practice in New Zealand secondary school appraisal: A critical analysis.**

Project Supervisor: **Dr Howard Youngs**

Researcher: **Gavin Morgan**

O   I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy.

O   I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

O   I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

O   I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.

O   If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.

O   I agree to take part in this research.

O   I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): YesO NoO

Participant's signature: ....

Participant's name: ....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 14th April, 2016 AUTEC Reference number 16/94

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix Eight – Interview questions

Indicative research conversation starters:

Functional Questions:
1. How long have you been in this role?
2. How many people are you required to appraise?

Appraisal Conversation starters

- Thinking about your role as both an appraiser and appraisee, could you please describe for me your experiences of appraisal at this school?
    - What would you say is the purpose of appraisal here or what is it used for?
    - How is this communicated to the staff?
    - You've spoken about your role as an appraisee/appraiser, what about your experiences as an appraiser/appraisee?

- What documents or legal requirements of appraisal are you aware of?
    - What national or legal requirements are you aware of?
    - What is your understanding of the Education Council's role in appraisal?
    - What is your school's expectation of you as an appraiser and appraisee – perhaps as communicated by school documentation or the leader with responsibility for appraisal?

- How do the PTCs (practising teacher criteria) inform appraisal judgements at this school?
    - Do you experience any difficulty collecting evidence for any of the PTCs?
    - Have they changed the nature of appraisal in recent years here?
    - Do you think they have changed what effective teaching looks like in any way?
    - Can you think of any situations where they have either been used to either develop or against a staff member?
    - If they were removed how could you assure anyone who asked that your staff are professional teachers?

- What aspects of appraisal would you say are done well at this school?
    - How does appraisal inform future staff learning or professional development?
    - How does your school use appraisal to inform future teacher goals?
    - What training or support do you receive as an appraiser or appraisee?

- In your time at this school (or over the span of your career) have you noticed any changes in expectations or requirements of you for appraisal?
    - Has this in anyway impacted on your job as a middle leader?
    - How do you ensure that the appraisals you are responsible for meet both school accountability and individual developmental needs?

- We spoke earlier about some of the aspects of appraisal your school is doing well, what aspects of appraisal would people at this school be more reluctant to talk about?
    - What's missing from appraisal?
    - How would you like to see things done differently?
    - What advice would members of your department/faculty/team like passed on to senior leaders or Education Council?

- Are there any additional comments about appraisal that you would care to make?

Appendix Nine – Tahi High School transcript coding exemplar

Chris: In thinking about the situation with you guys with no one coming to be employed I can understand why because what other professional body has such an intricate level of analysis of what you do. [Perception: Expectation of teacher analysis disproportionate to other professionals]

Eloise: Nurses do.

Chris: And they actually meddle with people's lives, life and death situations. For me the sense I get from people coming in is that lawyers don't have to do this and they get paid a mega load, doctors don't have to do this, nurses do, well because no one trusts nurses – but you trust doctors and lawyers. Again we're not getting paid $95 000, but you're expected to reach this very high professional level of reflection and understanding. [Distrust of teachers. Sexist origins? Required levels of reflection and understanding disproportionate to status.]

Eloise: I might refute the first part of that, I completely agree with the second part that no one at our pay level is expected to interrogate their practice as much as probably we are and provide evidence that's happening, but there are other governing bodies for other areas. Builders for example have just gone through all of their licensing and they have to maintain criteria to maintain their licensing. Medical staff, doctors, I imagine have to meet some pretty strict regulations by medical boards; I know that nurses have to maintain a professional practice portfolio which is much more comprehensive than ours. [Evidence culture in society not limited to teaching but disproportionate to teacher salary and status]

Eloise: It's a bit of a catch-22. We're one of the most undermined professions in the world probably, especially in our country where we are not valued, across the board we're not valued as professionals and yet we … [Teachers: undermined and undervalued professionals]

Francis: Change in what is expected of an HoD and administrivia has increased twentyfold since I became an HoD and it's an accountability, and to the expense of creative teaching I feel. I can see the reasons for appraisal, I can see it's very important. When I think about art teachers, when I first started teaching, they were so desperate if you were primary trained and you'd done a little art you could be a HoD which happened here years and years ago. I just wonder if we've gone so far, I'm not saying we pull back and go in the reverse, we've got to such a depth of accountability with appraisal. I think there has to be that balance, creative teaching and development of the curriculum which this has been to the expense of… [Accountability and creativity tension; curriculum expense, rise of administrivia and workload issues]

Gavin: Appraisal often sits at the meeting point of appraisal and accountability. Where would it be on that spectrum here do you think?

Francis: I think it would depend on the individual staff member that you're talking to because as we've identified when you have a range from incompetent to exemplary. [Staff variance]

Chris: It's a very important process in our school, but I don't know if anyone's had professional development on how to appraise effectively. And you get to the point I think we talked about it how some middle managers will make it about development versus the other side of the spectrum and others won't know what to do other than to say you've ticked the box. That's great, carry on. You've fulfilled that function rather than perhaps I want to help you build your career. Here's an area that might be good for you and use those as stepping stones for conversations to develop the staff member. [Lack of appraisal PLD for leaders. Tick-box understandings. Functional attitudes of leaders to appraisal detrimental to staff development]

Elinor: And a lot of it's about positioning too in terms of where that teacher is positioning themselves as teacher or learner. [Attitudes to appraisal influenced by teacher/learner positioning]

Francis: Many years I did that certificate of middle management with Carol Cardno; a huge chunk of that was on appraisal and I have all of that at the back of my head, but now it's so much more than that. That was all about the relationships you build up with your department, how you go about that, to look at how appraisal is valid and reasonable but now it's mechanistic. A lot of the things we're asking our people to do, collect this and this and this, it's sort of mechanistic, because people who have been teaching a long time they're going to have all that sort of stuff, they'd have read all that, so you wonder about the rationale for spending all that time collecting it. [Relational costs of mechanistic focus. Perception evidence gathering for experienced teachers is unproductive and performative?]

Appendix Ten – Rua College interview summary code exemplar

Imogen	James	Kane	Lani
1. School appraisal system perceived as hierarchical yet a cyclic, responsive process.	1. Old system tick box compliancy end of year exercise.	1. Personal experience of appraisal as tick box compliancy with graded criteria.	1. Inequality of capital distribution between Maori and Pasifika students with other multicultural groups.
2. Observations to inform practice.	2. External exercise intended for SLT disconnected from collaborative, collegial departmental culture.	2. Early experiences espoused as developmental but experienced as threatening surveillance with punitive consequences.	2. Shift in school appraisal culture initiated by increased use of action plans and goal orientated approaches.
3. Collaborative, supportive conversations integral part of negotiated appraisal process.	3. 'Real time' evidence necessary to reflect work of professionals.	3. Appraisal today is better understood as having a focus on improvement.	3. Focus of appraisal on the developmental priorities rather than fulfilling accountability requirements.
4. Annual graded development of PTC to counter professional stasis.	4. New organic culture introduced by new DP.	4. Personal understanding of job purpose is as a facilitator of development.	4. Time constraints meant appraisal process was rushed.
5. Hierarchical goal setting to hit targets.	5. The new approach enables a body of evidence to be matched with PTC rather than previous RTC driven encouragement to find evidence.	5. Need for central positioning of learner in appraisal processes to remain in focus.	5. Complex, overlapping PTC restrict clarity.
6. Departmental requirement for evidenced development.	6. Need to change self-justifying culture of appraisal.	6. Blending of teacher choice for areas of focus for PTC with school requirements.	6. Authenticity questions surrounding manufactured reflections.
7. Close alignment with targets and practice to inform significant change.	7. Range of portfolios vast especially from younger teachers.	7. Separation of grouped criteria into term focus.	7. Competing school initiatives seen as cumbersome and compounding workload pressures.
8. Collaborative departmental focus on proving development.	8. Perception of departmental staff positivity and willingness towards portfolio approach.	8. Hierarchical alignment of school, department and personal goals but collaborative through negotiation of PTC focus.	8. Need for curriculum leaders to streamline senior leader expectations to help teachers negotiate multiple expectations of different professional learning groups.
9. External Professional Development initiates shifts in practice of leading appraisal.	9. Unpacking of PTC has provoked beneficial self-reflection of practice.	9. Numerous sources of data collected to inform personal goal setting.	9. Disconnection between degree of reflection required and worthiness of outcomes.
10. Showing evidence of development offers a counterpoint to tick-box compliancy.	10. Open, critical conversations within a supportive, sharing departmental fundamental in informing shifts in practice.	10. Necessity for leaders to model inquiries and appraisal documentation.	10. Shortcomings of tracking which prioritise those already privileged at expense of others.
11. Intent or process of development rather than a narrow outcome orientation.	11. PTC and inquiry focus have helped with promoting a learning culture.	11. Need for collaborative, departmental sharing of resources and ideas in meetings.	11. Tension between autonomy and individual areas of professional interest and imposed or required school goals.
12. Need for leaders to modify and model PLD.	12. Examples of capturing naturally occurring real time evidence from leadership opportunities of inexperienced teachers presenting to more experienced teachers.	12. Goal setting invites accountability outcomes for students and teachers as teachers have defined their own parameters of inquiry.	12. Shift from hierarchical accountability to supportive coaching of teachers.
13. Unpacking PTC and inquiry in departmental time using SOLO.		13. Strategies and methods for facilitating changes left to teachers.	13. Time constraints, limited shared non-contact time makes it difficult to support colleagues in their practice.
14. Leader responsible for sharing of inquiry and modelling practice.			
15. Meaningful change needs meaningful reflections with colleagues.			

Appendix Eleven – Rua College interview cluster exemplar

L2: Shift in school appraisal culture initiated by increased use of action plans and goal orientated approaches

K5: Student centred process

I5: Hierarchical goal setting for targets

L34: Formal and unannounced visits make up observation requirements

J28: Motivational tool

I18: Autonomy versus cohesion & restriction of imposed PLG goals

J39: Checkpoint for teachers

I28: Tick-box

J1&2: Old system- disconnected, tick box compliancy, annual exercise for SLT

K3: Improvement orientation

Appraisal structure, purpose and process

J8: Hierarchical alignment of goals but collaborative through PTC negotiation

J3: Organic, integrated, everyday practice

J13: Appraisal is a supportive tool. Shortcomings require leader support to facilitate desired changes.

L28: appraisal perceived as aligned with competency

L3: Focus on the developmental priorities rather than fulfilling accountability requirements

L19: Competing initiatives confusing

J18: Purpose of appraisal is to self-reflect and identify areas for improvement

K36: Ethical considerations critical

J20: Term 1 to Term 1

I37: Close alignment with targets and practice to inform significant change

I11: Intent is to value process of development rather than outcome orientation

I15: Sustainable change requires meaningful collegial reflections

K11: Collaborative sharing of resources and ideas

I6: Evidence part of department commitment

J29: Alternatives: devolve hierarchy and promote a networking culture

I3: Collaborative, supportive conversations integral

Collegial practices

I31: SLT support

I8 &13: Collaborative, supportive conversations integral part of negotiated appraisal process

J17: SLT resourcing & communication

J31: Collegial departmental developmental process

L21, 23: SLT support

J34: Department goals: mediation of school & personal goals not an imposition

J35: Need for goals & area to be of personal volition and developed alongside colleagues

J10: Open, critical conversations within a supportive, sharing department fundamental for informing shifts in practice

I30: Respond to individual needs

I14: Share inquiries & model practice

K17: Buffer external pressures

K4: Facilitate staff development

K10: Model inquiries & appraisal

J14: Reflect-in-action alongside teachers

Responsibilities of leaders

I12: Modify & model PLD

J16: Reassurance and clarity

L16, 19, 35, 27, 37: Model evidence; provide classroom support and clarity

L30: Coaching support expectations for staff

L8: Streamline initiatives & negotiate multiple expectations for staff

Appendix Twelve - Tahi High School case findings exemplar

Conclusions drawn from document analysis	Case findings	Conclusions drawn from interview analysis
Appraisal Practice Appraisal is an annual component of the school's commitment to annual improvement across all areas of the school; closely connected to professional development and relational pedagogies, and takes place within the existent culture focused on relationships, priority learners and restorative practices. **Appraisal Purpose** Appraisal is intended to respond to individual staff needs, but also serves as a mechanism for aligning identified areas of teacher improvement with school goals and priorities as outlined in annual and strategic plans. **Accountability** Accountability stems from teachers using data analysis to inform reflections and interrogate practice. Self-reflection and interrogation of practice is negotiated with an appraiser to form a personal goal and by the senior leaders to establish professional partners. **Evidence** A diverse understanding of types of evidence to be collected for the action phase of inquiries is embraced, with the expectation that a portfolio curating collected evidence will be maintained. **Professionalism** ERO credits the collaborative, collegial nature of school practices and relationships for improved levels of learner engagement and achievement. Improvements in teacher evidence collection, data analysis skills and inquiry practices have also benefited student achievement.	Professional learning and performance management frameworks are closely aligned and managed through the integration of personal and school goals. Rapid changes have seen a rise in staff uncertainty, departmental variance and, amongst more experienced staff, resistance. Leaders are challenged by the difficulty of reconciling relational and mechanistic conceptions of appraisal. Appraisal practices have improved school accountability mechanisms but been less successful in initiating shifts in individual teacher practice. Collaborative, collegial exchanges and personal commitment to improvement are seen as catalysts for development.	**Appraisal Practices** The leaders collectively speak favourably of recent school changes in appraisal practices. The leaders believe the expectation that teachers complete their own analysis of student results and take greater responsibility for collecting evidence has seen the emergence of a positive show and tell appraisal culture. However, the leaders also recognise that the rapid changes to the school's appraisal structures have led to considerable variance in practice across the school. **Leader experiences and tensions** The leaders reported difficulties with shifting job expectations over their careers including increased workload pressures and administrivia, reconciling mechanistic and relational understandings of appraisal, and difficulties overseeing required changes in practice which often lacked the structures needed to support required changes. **Accountability** Professional conceptions of accountability stem from a sense of personal responsibility and service to the local community. **Resistance and performative practices** A small pocket of disengagement and resistance can be found amongst more experienced members of staff. The leaders suspect reluctance may stem from the period of teacher training which often predated student responsivity movements and the lack of consequence for those who choose not to engage with school expectations. **Education Council** The selection rather than election of EC members is a source of unease for several leaders; however, for most leaders, the EC is seen as an agency greatly enhancing others' perception of teacher professionalism. **Professionalism** Professionalism is the reconciliation of one's responsivity to learner needs with the requirement to prove oneself within a performative environment which stresses the need to interrogate one's practice. For some of the leaders this degree of interrogation is at odds with the salary and status of teachers in the community.