

A satellite view of Australia, showing the continent's terrain and surrounding oceans. The text is overlaid on the image.

Australian 2021 National Summit on Teaching Out-of-field, Online

What is out-of-field teaching?

Why is defining out-of-field teaching so complex?

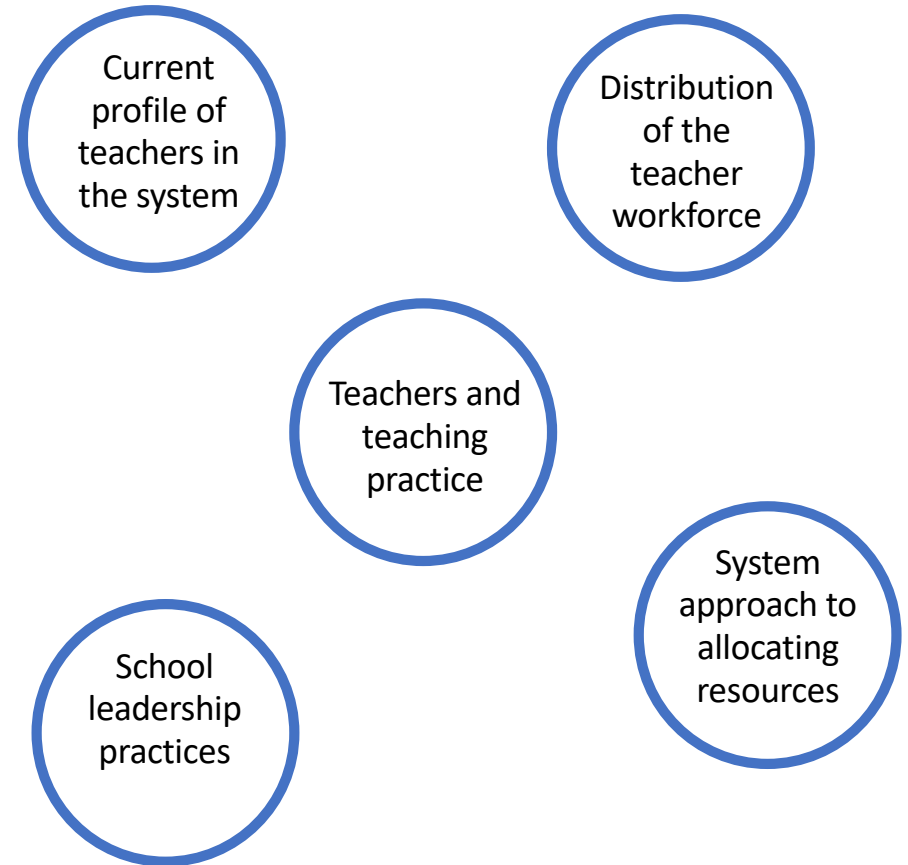
Associate Professor Linda Hobbs

Deakin University

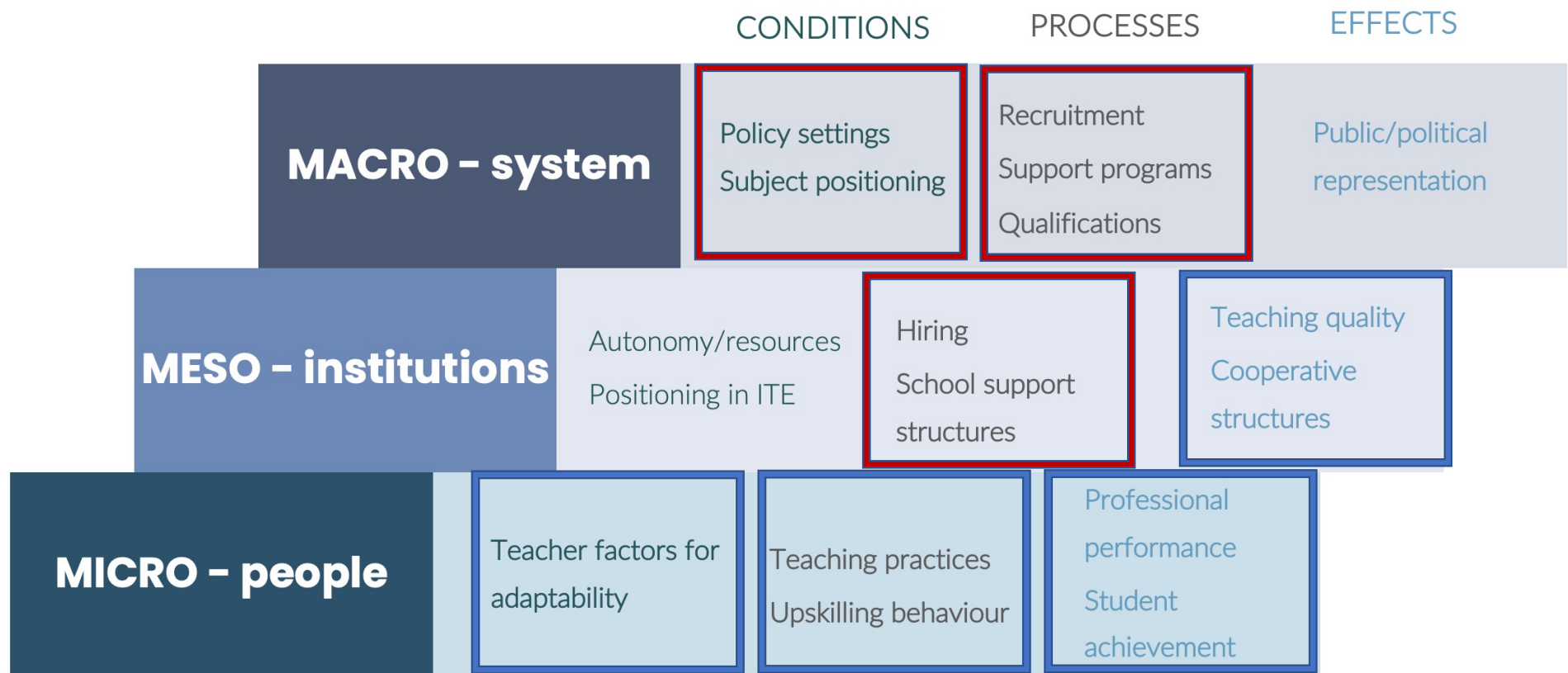
l.hobbs@deakin.edu.au

What is out-of-field teaching and why is it so complex?

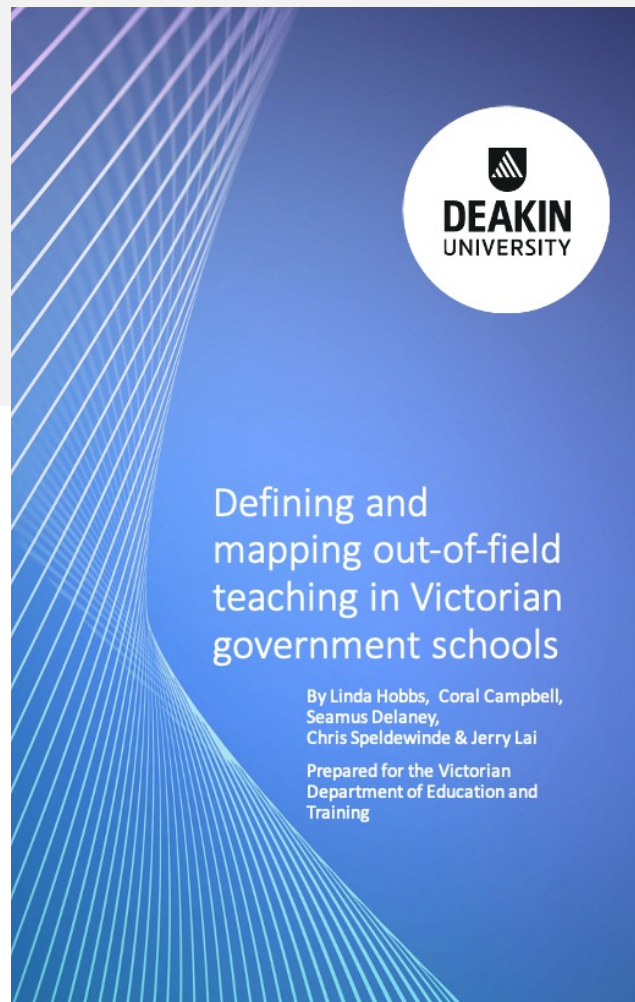
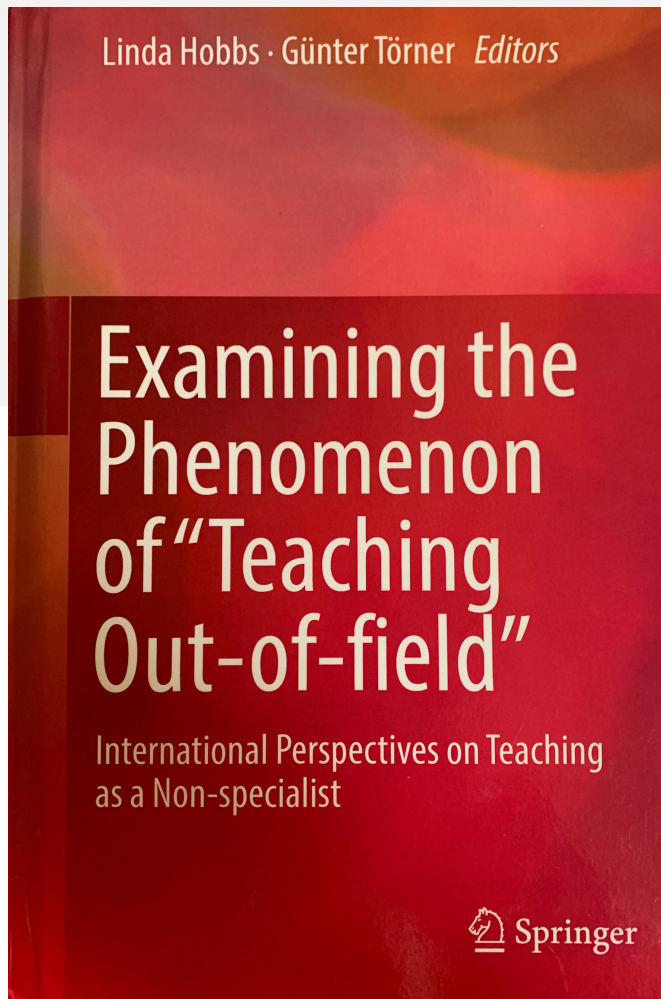
- There is no single definition of what makes a teacher out-of-field
- Need to understand it as a phenomenon, not just an experience of teachers.
- Our understanding should represent the **complexity** of the phenomenon, and that as a problem it is represented in different ways



Phenomenon



Hobbs & Porsch (in press), modified from Porsch, 2017



*...this being the age of specializing...
I seen a need of a specialist in my line,
so I studied her. I got her, she's mine.*

*Folks are right when they say that next
to my eight holer that's the finest piece
of construction work I ever done.*

I know I done right in specializing...

Charles Sale, 1929

Criteria	Questions	Dimensions	Criteria Clusters
1. Qualification Policy context	What is a teacher qualified to teach?	1.1 Technical alignment 1.2 Specialism alignment 1.3 Phase alignment	Measurable Criteria
2. Workload Conditions	What allocation maximises teacher effectiveness?	2.1 Current proportion 2.2 Longitudinal proportion 2.3 Stability	
3. Capability Practice context	What is at teacher capable of teaching?	3.1 Expertise 3.2 Career stage	
4. Identity Personal context	What does a teacher identify as?	4.1 Commitment 4.2 Self-concept 4.3 Confidence	Self-report Criteria
5. Structures Mediators	How do structures mediate out-of-field-ness?	5.2 School context 5.3 School support culture	
6. Pathways Mechanisms	How can an out-of-field teacher become in-field?	6.1 Trajectories 6.2 Role expansion	Longitudinal Criterion

Criteria map 1. Measurable criteria

	Standard	Dimension	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	
1. Qualification	<p>Specialist Area Guidelines</p> <p>Suitability of qualifications for entry to ITE programs and specialist areas</p>	1.1 Technical alignment (broad subject)	TECHNICALLY IN-FIELD Full alignment (Discipline and methodology)	Technically IN, Partially OUT Partial alignment (Discipline or methodology)		TECHNICALLY OUT-OF-FIELD Misalignment (Neither Discipline nor methodology)
		1.2 Specialism alignment (narrow sub discipline)		Full alignment	Near misalignment	
		Teaching qualification	1.3 Phase alignment	Full alignment		
2. Workload	<p>Teachers have a teaching workload where a proportion matches their qualifications at any one time and across the year.</p>	2.1 Current proportion	Whole	High partial	Low partial	None
		2.2 Longitudinal proportion	Whole	High partial	Low partial	None
	<p>Teachers have some stability in their workload that includes subjects at certain year levels or which cycles depending on circumstances.</p>	2.3 Stability	Stable	Cyclical		Temporary
3. Capability	<p>Teachers have the expertise needed to teach a subject. Increased expertise is related to engagement with professional learning.</p>	3.1 Expertise	Capable (Substantial experience and development)	Practiced (Repeated experiences without development)		Beginning (No experience)
	<p>Teachers have the capacity appropriate for their career stage to adapt to teaching new subjects.</p>	3.2 Career stage	Experienced teacher (>6 years)	Early career teacher (1-5 years)		Graduate (<1 year)

Stakeholder information

Policies:

- Specialist area guidelines
- Teaching qualifications
- Accreditation and registration processes
- Specialisms and how aligns with school curriculum
- Teacher recruitment practices and policies

Initial Teacher Education:

- Phase in terms of preparation

School leaders & Teachers:

- Workload proportions
- Capability and suitability, effects of relationship to career stage on risks associated with misalignment

Criteria map 2. Self-report criteria

	Standard	Dimension	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
4. Identity	Teachers are committed and motivated to seek better ways to engage students, devote time and effort to planning and show an interest in the subject.	4.1 Commitment	Personal and professional commitment	Professional commitment	Compliance
	Teachers identify with the subject they are teaching and feel they belong.	4.2 Self-concept	Close	Peripheral	Distant
	Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the content, teaching approaches and how to support students in the subject, and to collaborate with peers.	4.3 Confidence	High	Medium	Low
5. Structures	Teachers work in school contexts that provides adequate access to opportunities despite geographical region, school size and type, and other system factors.	5.1 School context	Opportunities created	Some opportunities	Stifled opportunities
	Teachers have access to resources and support from colleagues, leaders, and mentors that suits their subject-specific needs.	5.2 School support culture	Fully supported	Some support	No support

Stakeholder information

Policies:

- Policies for supporting new teachers
- School autonomy and funding arrangements determining access to support

School:

- School context and support structures determining opportunities and support

Teacher:

- Identity factors, including commitment, self-concept and confidence

Criteria map 3. Longitudinal criteria



Stakeholder information

Policy and PL Providers:

- Availability of pathway opportunities – formal qualifications, professional learning
- Mechanism for recognition as approval or certification

School:

- Expectations for what is considered 'in-field', i.e., suitable, fit

System:

- Cultural expectations for 'being qualified' in the subject/school phase

Teacher:

- Acceptance of role and identity expansion

Definitions

In-field

Out-of-field as determined by:

- A. Qualifications
- B. Specialism
- C. Workload
- D. Capability

Primary
Secondary

In-field

1



2



But this differs from the specialist areas guidelines

3



Maybe closer to being IF?

Preferably with some experience of teaching the subject

Out-of-field according to

Qualification

- Alignment – TECHNICALLY OUT-OF-FIELD
- Specialist area Guidelines
- Teaching qualification
- Pathways

Ian

Qualifications misaligned:

- Science and ICT teacher
- Qualification upgrade for ICT
- Teaching mathematics out-of-field



Betty

Phase misaligned:

- Primary mathematics specialist
- Teaching secondary mathematics out-of-field



Out-of-field according to

Specialism

- Alignment – TECHNICALLY OUT-OF-FIELD & OUT-OF-SPECIALISM
- Near and Far, such as, Science disciplines, Humanities
- Pathways



Eliza

Physics and IT teacher teaching Junior chemistry

Specialisation near misaligned

- ‘Feels’ out-of-field teaching chemistry because feels it is ‘near’ misaligned to physics

Hobbs, 2020



Seral

Psychology teacher teaching maths

Specialisation far misaligned

- ‘Feels’ in-field teaching mathematics but it is ‘far’ misaligned to psychology

Hobbs, 2013

Out-of-field according to

Workload

- Alignment – PARTIALLY OUT-OF-FIELD
- Proportionality, Stability, type of load
- Levels of risk and manageability



Kate

Visual arts teacher teaching everything

Out-of-field with Medium risk to High risk, then In-field

- Year 1 teaching (60% in-field, Medium risk): out-of-field in VCAL, Photography, Integrated arts/science subject out-of-field; Studio Arts and Art in-field
- Year 2 teaching (0% in-field, High risk): out-of-field in Integrated English/History/Maths/Science subject and Visual Communication and Design
- Year 3 teaching (100% in field)
- Moved school to get in-field load

Hobbs, 2020

Out-of-field according to

Capability

- Alignment – TECHNICALLY OUT-OF-FIELD **OR** IN-FIELD but OUT-OF-SPECIALISM, OUT-OF-CAPABILITY
- Capability – expertise, confidence, re-novicing, role expansion
- Cumulative risk – structures, career stage, workload
- Pathways



Donald

D&T teacher teaching Art, Literacy Support and Work Studies

Low capability, High risk

- No in-field classes and unmanageable workload, temporary allocation
- Small school, rural or remote, stifling opportunities and no support from in-field supportive teachers
- A desire for professional commitment to the subjects, but thwarted by unmanageable workload and no support.

Sharplin, 2014

Language about out-of-field teaching that is more than a statement of IN or OUT

- Technically out-of-field, Out-of-specialism, Out-of-field as determined by workload and capability
- Alignment, risk, capability
- Cumulative risk
- Building capacity by increasing capability
- Pathways from out-of-field to in-field
- Supportive milieu
- Language to translate into policies and frameworks enacted in schools

