Re-thinking accountability measures for secondary school arts in England: lessons we could learn from New Zealand.

Journal:	*Arts Education Policy Review*
Manuscript ID	VAEP-2020-0020.R1
Manuscript Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	Policy, Arts Education, Secondary, Accountability, Hegemony

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This paper, a critical examination of educational concepts, policies and practices, presents findings from research into the impact of accountability agendas on teacher professionalism and pedagogic practices. The study, theoretically framed through Halstead's (1994) notions of contractual and responsive accountability, and Gramsci's (1971) hegemonic practices, examined secondary arts teachers' pedagogical autonomy and professionalism in England and New Zealand. We provide an overview of current education policy contexts in both countries, and their impact upon secondary school arts education (years 11-16). Drawing from interview data from 15 England and New Zealand teachers we offer a critique and innovative counter-narrative for the accountability measures currently dominating English schooling. Drawing together perspectives from both jurisdictions, we suggest more inclusive, democratic and responsive assessment and performative measures for the English context.

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Introduction.

This study arose from a discussion between education researchers, from England and New Zealand, about the extent to which secondary school music and art and design teachers were professionally autonomous. We noticed that while secondary school arts teachers were often teaching similar curriculum content in both countries, teachers' levels of practice autonomy seemed very different. We were interested in the degree of practice standardisation required within each national context and how this impacted arts teachers' professional autonomy.

Typically, international comparative research employs large-scale survey methods to justify changes in education policy (Osborn 2004). However, through a large scale survey, understanding the perspectives and practices of teachers within specific cultural contexts can often be overlooked. An investigation into the challenges of policy to practice requires a critique of the relationships between structure and agency, the self and context (Broadfoot 2000). This research therefore employed a qualitative approach to 'unravel further the complex interplay of policies, structures, culture, values and pedagogy' (Alexander 2000: 362).

The comparative nature of this research is underpinned by a relative similarity between the educational systems of the two countries. New Zealand, a former British colony, has it schooling roots in British systems. However, as shall be highlighted in this paper, both countries have undergone several cycles of major educational reform over the past twenty years, leading to significant divergence in the two professional contexts.

In this paper, we present data from semi-structured interviews with 15 England and New Zealand secondary arts teachers. Though in-depth interviews we hoped to uncover the policy-to-practice implications of professionalism and autonomy. We also

aimed to compare the experiences of the teachers in each context and consider the implications for future practice.

As the data consist of teachers' reporting their subjective perceptions, we selected a social constructivist frame, working inductively to drive analysis. This was a recursive approach that involved going back and forth within each data set, making meaning from the emerging themes so that 'although the findings are influenced by the questions, the findings arise directly from the analysis of the raw data, not from a priori expectations' (Thomas 2006:239).

Through the theoretical lens of Halstead (1994) and Gramsci (1971) we then interrogated the two data sets, debating and comparing findings across the two jurisdictions. Halstead's (1994) delineation between contractual accountability, concerned with the measurement of outcomes linked to external bodies, and responsive accountability, a process-driven and student focused approach, framed our analysis. This led onto further discussions and critiques of accountability, through the impact of hegemony (Gramsci 1971). Tensions between explicit and implicit control are central to this debate. We consider how accountability practices are accepted and normalised, rather than questioned.

Our aim in this paper is to shed light on teacher voice, and through theory, offer critique and counter-narrative for the accountability measures currently dominating English schooling.

The English context.

In England, music and art and design are compulsory National Curriculum (NC) subjects. However, the NC offers no pedagogical guidance, nor specify how content should be organised. This could be perceived as offering teacher autonomy however, as

shall be explored in this paper, performative and accountable mechanisms weigh heavily on teacher choice and pedagogy. This has led to the education system becoming increasingly fractured and undemocratic, especially in the arts where ideologies and social justice problems sustain inequalities. Furthermore, in the past 10 years a majority of schools in England have been restructured as *academies* or *free schools*, where regulation, finance and curriculum are devolved to the schools themselves. This means that the music and art and design curriculum is not necessarily taught in schools, with a plethora of curriculum models across diverse school contexts and structures, furthering divisions of arts education offer.

Alongside devolved curricula, school league tables are publicly published and play an important role in the English education system. League tables summarise the average performance of pupils in state funded secondary schools and document examination results of students aged 14-16 from the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). The tables inform inspections carried out by the school inspectorate (Ofsted) through a risk-assessment process which monitors changes in performance.

In 2010, the conservative-liberal coalition government released the Schools White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE 2010). A number of key indicators, aimed at documenting the growth of pupils' learning across the five years of compulsory secondary schooling (11-16) were introduced:

- Progress across 8 qualifications (Progress 8)
- Percentage of pupils taking a suite of subjects defined as the English Baccalaureate (EBacc entry)
- Percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above in English and maths
- Attainment across the same 8 qualifications as Progress 8 (Attainment 8)

Progress 8 is a value-added approach measured across 8 subjects, including English and Mathematics. Attainment 8 outlines a pupil's total point score measured across GCSE English, Mathematics and six further subjects. This score is further compared against the average Attainment 8 of all pupils nationally with the same prior attainment at key stage two (aged 7-11 years). The impact of these performance tables weighs heavily on teacher professional pedagogy and identity, often dominating and structuring classroom practices (Adams 2013, Neumann et al 2020, Lamote and Engels 2010, Beijaard et al 2004). For arts teachers, this is further compounded by the introduction of the EBacc, significantly impacting arts GCSE take-up by students, as well as the time afforded to the arts in school timetables. The EBacc quantifies whether a learner has secured good GCSE passes in English, Mathematics, the sciences, a modern foreign language and a humanities subject, such as history or geography. According to Adams (2013, 2) the coalition government's 'philistinism' in excluding arts education from the English Baccalaureate has had negative consequences, devaluing their position as academic subjects. Indeed, concerns outlined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (GCQ), note that from 2010 to 2019 there has been a decline of 38% in the number of GCSE entries in arts subjects (Art and Design, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, Media/Film/TV studies, Music and performing and expressive arts) (Cultural Learning Alliance 2019). The EBacc reveals the neoconservative policy and highlights the government's position on what counts as knowledge, what should be taught and examined.

A further policy driver affecting school music and art and design education is the way in which assessment backwash can influence teaching and learning. Teaching to the test at KS4 (the examination years 14-16) has a backward-facing effect on what is

taught and learned in the earlier years KS3 (11-14). As Fautley and Colwell (2012) note:

> "This can result in a narrowing of the curriculum, and of learning opportunities, as teaching becomes focused solely on final assessment." (488).

We also know that backwash from what would be studied at GCSE affects curriculum construction back in KS3 (11-14). For music, this means that western classical music often exerts undue influence upon curriculum content, frequently accompanied by tacit assumptions of value and hegemony. Spruce (2013) observes that whilst the national curriculum discussed an inclusive approach to music education, it is underpinned by a neoliberal view of education which promotes specific pedagogies, models and forms of musical knowledge that downplay pedagogies that seek individuality, diversity and agency. Namely, through exam specifications and curriculum content, western art music is considered high status knowledge. This can sideline many other forms of musical knowledge, directing teaching and learning. Not only does this 'alienate many pupils' (Spruce and Matthews 2012:119) but also teachers where professional autonomy, specialist teacher knowledge and pedagogic decision making processes are inconsequential.

Akin to music, the central pedagogic function for art and design in many schools often emphasises acquisition and development of technical skills such as the formal elements of line, space, tone, colour, texture, along with the development of observational skills. This positions art and design within a modernist conception of practice, where there is a separation between school art and contemporary practice. In particular, Atkinson (2006, 18) notes that KS3 lacks the ability to 'mourn the past' because it remains focused on traditional hegemonic forms of art expression. Art and design in the classroom can therefore be conservatively static, formulated through

traditional skills leading to teachers becoming de-professionalised due to the lack of contemporary engagement. As far back as1998 Hughes observed that:

> "…we are still delivering art curricula in our schools predicated largely upon procedures and practices which reach back to the 19th century … as a result secondary art education … is, in general, static, safe and predictable." (41)

However, in 2019, the National Curriculum (NC), which has the stated aim of stimulating teachers' and learners' creativity, continues to lead to teachers and students producing work subservient to examination expectations. It fails to recognise the scope and complexity of art and design, offering only an arbitrary set of practices that are "the antithesis of creativity" (Steers 2009, 127). The current professional environment therefore forces teachers to focus on content that can be easily and reliably assessed, thus disrupting their ability to develop authentic arts practices in the classroom.

All of these issues impact how music, and art and design are conceptualized, how curriculum is constructed, and how student success is measured. The notion of 'high status' knowledge dominates the discourse, potentially alienating students who may self-identify with a whole raft of other styles and genres of music, and art and design forms. It also pedagogically constrains teachers' practice who, are obliged to accept reduced educational outcomes leading to "a tick-box culture." (Mansell, James and Assessment Reform Group 2009, 22). This can present a real problem for both music, and art and design, not only in relation to knowledge construction, but also for teacher and learner agency.

As we have shown, there is a rapidly increasing rate of education policy change in England. Teachers and schools have had to adapt quickly and are required to constantly alter their approaches to meet the demands of the performance tables and curriculum expectations. This ever-increasing transformation of policy to practice raises

important questions about the role of progress measures and curriculum, to whom it is serving and who actually benefits. Teacher professionalism, their knowledge and judgment are questioned, thus breaching trust and compromising teacher autonomy and curriculum development.

The New Zealand Context.

New Zealand's education systems, founded on colonisation, have their roots in those of 19th and 20th century Britain (Thwaites 2018; Braatvedt 2002). There are historically close similarities to England in terms of curriculum and qualification systems for secondary arts education. For example, to this day, secondary music education in New Zealand bears a much closer structural similarity to British systems than those of North American high school music education. In the 1990s, New Zealand "fell under the sway of neoliberal thought" and a "bi-polarity" has ensued where pedagogical and curricular progressivism has continued in the classroom amid what has been, until recently, a national climate of radical neo-liberal performativity (Thwaites 2018, 13). Paradoxically, New Zealand secondary teachers have, from time to time, wielded considerable industrial power. For example, in the late 1980s, New Zealand music teachers were highly influenced by radical reforms in secondary school music education in England (McPhail, Thorpe and Wise 2018). Teachers led a revolt against the entirely written examination system of the day, leading to a radical restructure of the ways in which music was assessed at senior secondary level (McPhail, Thorpe and Wise 2018; Thorpe 2008). The inclusion of performing, composing and studying popular musics for the national secondary school qualification, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) remains to this day (McPhail, Thorpe and Wise 2018). Recently, combined nationwide industrial action by the majority of New Zealand

primary and secondary teachers resulted in significant pay increases for teachers, although the Post Primary Teachers' Association (the secondary teachers' union) noted that concerns regarding class sizes and a current teacher shortage had not yet been addressed (PPTA 2019).

New Zealand secondary teachers currently experience a very high level of curriculum autonomy and are free to select content (McPhail 2018; Sinnema 2015), although, as in many countries, the external qualification, the NCEA, acts as a highly defined, modularised, proxy curriculum for senior programmes (Hipkins, Sheehan and Johnson 2016). Unlike in England where students may study *Music* and *Art and Design*, the New Zealand curriculum learning area "The Arts" is made up of four separate arts disciplines: *Dance*, *Drama, Music-Sound Arts* and *Visual Art.* The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education 2007) states:

> "It is a framework rather than a detailed plan. This means that while every school curriculum must be clearly aligned with the intent of this document, schools have considerable flexibility when determining detail" (37).

The curriculum, which supports the NCEA, is considered open-ended and non-prescriptive. It sets out some guiding principles for schools but remains open to translation into a specific and personally designed curricula by teachers. Arising from two decades of neoliberal reform in education, the NCEA is considered to offer flexibility and choice to both teacher and pupil. Walkey, McClure, Meyer and Weir (2013) note that through the NCEA, students can make valid contributions to these decisions, giving them learner agency. Teachers are free to design NCEA programmes of study that are entirely internally assessed or specifically designed to best suit the needs and interests of the pupils. Secondary music teachers frequently design individual programmes for students in their final two years of school (Thorpe, McPhail, Wise et al.

2018). For the NCEA, skills and knowledge are assessed through achievement standards which each have written criteria and measured through a graded system of *Achieved*, *Merit* and *Excellence*. A proportion of standards are externally evaluated: as written examinations for music, and mainly by portfolio for visual art. A large portion of student work is internally assessed by the class teacher, a small portion of which is nationally moderated once a year.

McPhail (2018) asserts that the neoliberal notion of the centrality of the individual has led to the establishment of highly non-prescriptive assessment and curriculum measures, considered to be more inclusive, democratic, where learning is based on students' individual interests. Furthermore, McPhail, Thorpe and Wise (2018), suggest that the neo-liberal reforms in New Zealand have created a highly devolved educational system and consequently have the potential to undermine educational progression, which has become largely the domain of the teacher. New Zealand secondary arts teachers have the freedom to design entirely student-centred curricula that closely align with students' interests and preferences. Teaching requires a pedagogy that is engaging alongside a curriculum that is designed with a 'clear conceptual map' (Winch 2017, 138) and as McPhail (2012, 11) also notes, a ''combination of content selection, pacing of learning, evaluation, and pedagogic communication, combined with competent specialist teacher knowledge, is most likely to engender high levels of student engagement and success for students''. However, McPhail (2019, 258) furthers this, claiming:

> "the school system has moved too far in the direction of epistemological relativism. This often results in knowledge equivalence and 'de-differentiation' of knowledge where well-intentioned moral and political agendas render all types of knowledge as equal".

Central to his argument is an assertion that that an ethically inclusive education system should offer students the opportunity to not only access procedural knowledge 'knowing how', but also theoretical 'knowing that' (Winch 2017, 129). When curriculum has a goal to be democratic it can often limit students and affect their progression to access wider or further study. The curriculum is therefore 'unintentionally restrictive' (McPhail 2019, 258).

Ironically, the devolution of curriculum and assessment responsibility to teachers has meant that they may, if they wish, design courses that are not at all responsive to student contexts and interests. For example, in NCEA visual art, students must produce bodies of work that require them to 'demonstrate understanding of artwork in cultural contexts, generating ideas, and producing work informed by practice in one or more fields of painting, design, sculpture, printmaking and photography' (Smith 2017, 44). However, Nieto (2004) notes that subject content dominates the pedagogical practices of visual art teachers and that teaching from the point of view of the students is 'uncommon… and many teachers attempt to treat all students in the same way, reflecting the unchallenging assumption that equal means the same' (Nieto 2004,106).

Quality assurance in secondary education is maintained by three government bodies: New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA, responsible for NCEA assessment), the Teaching Council (responsible for teacher registration and the maintenance of professional standards), and the Education Review Office (ERO, responsible for school inspection). Since the election of a centre-left coalition government, there has been a turn in New Zealand policy, reorienting external accountability even more towards local contexts and placing greater emphasis upon school leadership and the professionalism of individual teachers. For example, new

professional standards for teachers developed by the Teaching Council (formerly "Education Council") are more holistic and less atomised than previously, requiring teachers, school management and teacher educating bodies to engage in deeper and broader professional reflection and review (Education Council 2017). Recently, the council has cautioned school management, asking leaders to "have another look at your organisation's appraisal process to see if it has become overly compliance focused." (Teaching Council 2019). The New Zealand secondary school system is highly devolved, high-trust model, and unlike in England appears to offer opportunity for democratic teaching and learning, in an environment where teachers' professionalism is strongly emphasised. How teachers experience working in these two very different professional environments is explored in the present study.

Methodology

This paper reports on the experiences of nine teachers from England and six from New Zealand who were asked to take part in an in-depth semi-structured interview. We used a semi-structured approach, aiming to elicit teacher perceptions and depictions of the performative practices and policies within their schools. The interview further explored curriculum goals concepts, and schools structures and practices. Finally, the interviews explored the perceived impact on learning.

We sought to not only identify similarities and differences between England and New Zealand, but also pay attention to the underlying context of the commonalities and differences between the two jurisdictions, and to their causal relevance to the examined educational phenomena (Manzon 2007). Our research questions centred on three facets of exploration:

- The differences and similarities between New Zealand and English systems of professional accountability for secondary teachers
- The ways in which external bodies impact professional autonomy
- The differences or similarities between New Zealand and English secondary school arts teachers' experiences of professional autonomy

As educational researchers and teacher educators we are familiar with the secondary schools in our respective regions. The sampling was purposive and reputational, and to some extent, convenient. We deliberately invited teachers whom we knew by reputation as being confident, established practitioners. While this is arguably a limitation, there were reasons for doing so. We did not interview beginning teachers who are subject to registration, whose practice is still forming and who have had minimal experience of professional accountability. For ethical reasons, we avoided interviewing teachers who might have weak or failing practice and possibly subject to different forms of professional accountability. Selection criteria was aimed at participants who were experienced secondary school teachers, had been teaching for at least five years, and were recognised in their local communities as confident and able arts teachers . School context in both countries was highly diverse from urban to rural, from religious to state funded and independent schools. All participant names are pseudonyms.

Table 1: Participant Information.

Participants were asked the same questions in the same order with the aim to encourage teachers to explain and elaborate. The interviews, between 30 and 60 minutes long, were audio recorded and carried out in a place of the teachers' convenience, usually at school.

1. Do you have free reign in what and how you decide to teach?
2. Could you describe your personalised pedagogy?
3. Do you ever take risks?
4. Do you feel trusted by your school and community?
5. Teacher's personalised pedagogy can be challenged by the 'terrors of performativity'. What are your views on this statement?
6. Jeffery and Woods (1998) have stated that the amount of time teachers spend on preparing for inspection (such as ERO/OfSTED visits) disrupts real innovative teaching. In your experience, does this happen for you when, for example, ERO/OfSTED reviews/inspects your school?
7. Have you ever changed what you are teaching, or how you are teaching in response to an external evaluation? In your view, did this lead to improved student achievement or engagement?
8. To what extent are you influenced by education policies when planning your programmes of teaching and learning?
9. Thinking about your practice as a secondary arts teacher, what is your interpretation of the words *effectiveness*, *improvement*, *evaluation*?

We recognised that teaching is embedded within the complexity of socio-cultural-political structures, where different identities, modes of learning and pedagogical processes need to be considered and accounted for. Teachers were therefore encouraged to elaborate and explain. The project was scrutinised and passed by the Ethics Committees of both researchers' institutions. We adhered closely to the BERA ethical guidelines (2018) throughout the project, offering all informed consent and anonymisation at recruitment and during the research.

We utilised a thematic approach to the data analysis as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). As educators we recognised that teaching and learning activity is embedded within the complexity of a socio-cultural-political structure, where different identities, modes of learning and pedagogical processes need to be considered and accounted for. Therefore, our analysis not only examined performative and assessment impacts but also the teachers' dispositions, values and use of discourse. Comparative analysis revealed strong alignment with the first three questions, including *passion for*

the subject; *selecting student-centred, authentic curriculum content;* and *summative assessment of creative work.* The England data set also revealed teachers' largely negative preoccupation with summative assessment measures, in particular the miss-match between arts practices and so-called mainstream subjects such as Mathematics and English. Themes such as *reporting linear progress*; *teachers standing up for the subject*; *conflict with management*; *assessment driving curriculum;* and *personal despair* contrasted markedly with the New Zealand themes of *freedom, professional connection, disciplinary community*, and *defiance*.

Theoretical framing

The research employed two key theoretical concepts to assist the analysis and discussion of the experience of the teachers. Firstly, the paper draws on Halstead's (1994) notions of accountability where he differentiates between contractual and responsive. Contractual accountability relates to explicit and implicit controlling mechanisms that aim to identify whether teachers and schools are meeting the requirements of standards, outcomes and the result set out by government. Responsive accountability differs in that its focus is on process, where educators make decisions based on needs and preferences. This form of accountability requires interaction between those involved in the learning activity and relies on 'self-regulation' (Sachs 2016, 416). Within the findings of the paper, we therefore explored contractual and responsive accountability and consider their influence on the English and New Zealand system.

Secondly, we employ Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony. This refers to the ways in which dominant classes uphold their power by convincing those oppressed, that established order is in their interest. This means that governance is maintained without

those, who are being controlled, being fully aware that it is happening. Wetherell and Edley (1999) argue that:

> "Hegemonic ideologies preserve, legitimate and naturalize the interests of the powerful, which marginalises and subordinates other groups. Hegemony is not automatic, however, but involves contest and constant struggle." (336).

In relation to the teachers' practices and pedagogic processes in the classroom, we shall explore and analyse whether teachers describe any impact on their hegemonic assumptions in their jurisdictions and if so, influence teaching and learning.

Findings

The English assessment and performative policy system plays a pivotal role in the teaching and learning of music and art and design in the secondary classroom. It impacts not only the assessment of teachers as professionals, but also the assessment of student achievement. The relationship between the explicit and implicit control and the extent, to which governmental and structural power is exerted, was expressed clearly in the data collected from the English teachers.

The assessment of student achievement: playing the game

With the introduction of EBacc and progress 8, the English teachers expressed the direct link between their introduction and simultaneous fall in take up of their subjects. This created an environment that devalues the arts, and inequality of opportunity. Many of the teachers also discussed how curriculum and the associated assessment processes governed the learning experience in the classroom. To take back control within the classroom, the teachers played the game of the system. They revised, manipulated and fabricated assessments to meet the demands of school expectations:

> **Richard:** If I was being pressured, because of results, I have the ability to change the results. The way I'm saying it sounds fraudulent, and scandalous, but that is the set-up here, and I think probably with every music teacher. And that's wrong!

This example shows the pedagogical dilemmas teachers face and raises the issue of the purpose for which assessment exist. As one teacher noted 'Our argument has always been: 'Well who are we doing this assessment for?''. Indeed, assessment can often come at the cost of real learning, and this raises questions regarding the reliability of such processes. It was also clear from the teachers' responses that examination practices had an impact on the teaching and learning within the classroom. Contractual accountability weighed heavily on practice, often evoking ethical dilemmas between what knowledge teachers considered valuable for the learners to know, versus exam focused teaching and learning. The teachers explained how they exclusively focused on hegemonic practices which rate highly on the exam criteria in favour of other untested skills and activities:

> **Sian:** … you know what's expected of the exam board, so you play towards that.

The transmission of examination-based knowledge diverted attention away from other forms of understanding and creation. This highlights the terrors of accountability, where the teachers form allegiances to particular media or genres, relying on examination safe pedagogies.

The New Zealand teachers seemed more responsively accountable to their students, and to their local community in terms of assessment and curriculum autonomy. As might be expected in a highly "devolved" school environment (Ministry

of Education 2017, 17), all the New Zealand participants responded positively when asked if they ever took risks when choosing content or making assessment judgements.

> **Peter:** My conscience is clear. I'm always taking risks because I really want the kids to enjoy what they are doing, for their music learning to be enriched. I've got complete freedom to do that. Love it!

Teachers reported that they often designed courses based on culturally relevant content:

> **Kate:** My content choices are not about what I'm interested in. It's entirely about what I think will motivate and engage them and make them develop their potential as much as possible.

A strong New Zealand theme was *responsive accountability to the disciplinary community* of teachers from nearby schools when checking their NCEA assessment judgements. Teachers seemed to regard their disciplinary community as a legitimate authority for NCEA assessment judgements:

> **Samuel:** It's really nerve-wracking [to do NCEA assessment] as a solo teacher which is why I need moderation from teachers in other schools.

NZQA moderation of internal assessment judgements was viewed by some as a firm guide, implying that teachers felt more responsively accountable to their students than contractually accountable to NZQA.

> **Zane:** I might get slapped on the wrist a little bit, but in terms of the way I assess things, I'm not going to allow assessment to limit creativity and passion. I might overlook things that are technically not exactly what's written in the [NCEA] standard. I might get a grumpy moderation letter, but I'd hate that to crush some kid's enthusiasm by saying 'you didn't achieve because you didn't tick this box' when they've clearly done something creative and interesting that they believed in.

There is a stark contrast between the English and New Zealand teacher-translations of policy. On one hand, the English teachers felt compelled to forgo autonomy and curriculum relevance. Policy held disciplinary sway so much so, that to break the contract was viewed as professionally risky. In contrast, the New Zealand teachers reported that while they did not necessarily ignore policy, they felt able to prioritise student interests, aspirations and creativity if they deemed it necessary. An important aspect of this process is the consensual assessment (Amabile 1982) between expert judges, namely other teachers, who serve as expert moderators. There are ethical, collaborative and democratic dimensions to the New Zealand teachers' practice, which offers an alternative narrative to the English context.

Fake practice and hegemony

Performative and assessment regimes can define teacher and learner behaviour, dominate practice and shape how activities are planned (Kinsella 2014). Often rules are explicitly defined through examination board criteria and curricula, but they can also be implicit, such as common cultural practices that become so embedded that they are no longer questioned (Gramsci 1971). Bourdieu (1984) compared this to the field of a game, in which implicit and explicit rules must be learned in order to play, remain, and succeed. This leads to dispositions and actions that become the natural order of things (Burnard 2012, 116) as described by these English teachers:

> **Laura:** I think I used to take a lot of risks and just try out different things. I think I've fallen into the trap of thinking, this works and I'm going to get the result.
>
> **Sarah:** I feel pressure. Especially when I am being hounded for data.

These assessment and accountability discourses created knowledge's that gained status and currency of truth, dominating how the teachers define and organise teaching and learning. As Courtney (2016) argues 'compliance is woven so tightly', the teachers manufactured practices that followed the rules of the assessment and attainment game.

In comparison, the notion of *fake practice* appeared within the New Zealand data set, particularly in relation to professional appraisal. One participant reported that she had to "fake" practice and teach in conventional ways that aligned with more mainstream subjects, so that her appraiser (not an art teacher) could understand what she was doing.

> **Shelly:** I would completely disregard everything I was doing for curriculum and assessment and just do a lesson that would tick the box for that observation. The 'go-to' one was always 'workshop on learning different painting techniques'. *[Adopts a loud, authoritative tone]* You'd split the class up into six groups and they'd work round the workshops, stop the class, talk to them as a whole, move around some more, stop the class. [*Back to normal voice]* That was always "Perfect! Big tick!" for the observation, but nothing to do with what I was actually doing.

With regard to professional appraisal, the New Zealand teachers largely reported that they did not feel particularly contractually accountable to the Education Review Office (New Zealand's equivalent of Ofsted), viewing ERO inspections as tiresome intrusions into their professional lives.

There were important issues raised by the New Zealand teachers, applicable for all observations and assessments of professional practice. In order to be an effective judge of teaching and learning, the observer must have an understanding of the subject domain, the knowledge developed and pedagogies appropriate for that subject. Some

New Zealand teachers expressed frustration and even contempt about being observed by ERO inspectors or senior teachers with no expertise in arts pedagogies:

> **Kate:** I've never ever had an ERO visit from anybody that has any background in visual arts and I think that it's just a joke. I get frustrated that the people who come and watch me teach have absolutely no idea about what I'm teaching, why I'm teaching it, who I am.

Without appropriate observers, the teachers were left with no choice but to fake practice to align with policy regulations. This was an ineffective judgement of both professional practice and learning. However, although they performed for inspection and faked practice, they resumed real pedagogies.

Trust and Contractual accountabilities.

The intensification of work and government policies that promote a managerialism approach, has caused a low-trust schooling methodology in England, affected negatively on teachers' notions of professionalism, assessment purpose and role in shaping pedagogy:

> **Karen:** Where I feel the trust was lacking was with senior leadership teams because there was a lack of understanding of the subject.

> **Louise:** It is a battle to get to the point where you feel like you are trusted and that is only done through getting good results.

The discourses surrounding assessment and accountability served as unquestioned 'truths'. Official and explicit policy discourses disciplined the English teachers, requiring them to manufacture the practices deemed appropriate or that produced

desired outcomes, often contractually linked to examination procedures and assessments. For some, these discourses were internalised, becoming implicit behaviours that governed practice. This not only constrained student agency, but the lack of trust also denied teachers the ability to exercise professional judgment. This ethical dilemma pervaded the teachers' discourse where, as Perryman et al (2017: 755) observe, teachers struggled to 'resolve a set of displaced tensions…between care and calculation, intrinsic value and extrinsic worth'. Furthermore, greater focus on attainment in core subjects reduced and, in some cases even removed, opportunities for students to study arts subjects. Undoubtedly, performative measures have led to the decline of music, and art and design in English secondary schools (Daubney and Mackrill 2018). Consequently, while performative measures and the current hegemonic discourses prevail in the classroom, the arts will continue to be devalued and controlled.

Richard: Progress 8 is the death of music.

In the case of the New Zealand teachers, two worked at a 'low decile' schools where large proportion of students were from low socio-economic households. There is a high proportion of Māori and Pasifika students on the roll, identified by the Ministry of Education (and by association ERO) as priority learners because they are underserved by the educational system (Ministry of Education 2017). Principals of schools in poorer areas are under greater pressure to be contractually accountable to ERO because they generally have a higher proportion of priority learners. While this is a small study, we suggest that this might be why the Head of Arts experienced a much higher degree of contractual accountability to school management, and thus to ERO, than counterparts in schools located in wealthier communities.

> **Samuel:** The freedom we feel has a measuring stick behind it. I feel trusted by school management, but that trust takes years to earn, and they still crunch the numbers. They say 'You've got to do something about [NZQA moderation of NCEA assessment] and we're watching you. We're going to scrutinise you until we see that this approach you say you are going to try is in play'. It does kind of crush your passion. It's bruising.

In contrast to the experience of the English teachers, it is important to observe that the teacher quoted above, despite reporting a high level of contractual accountability, seem to regard himself as being primarily accountable to his school leaders, rather than regulatory bodies. Interestingly, he frequently referred to two Ministry of Education teacher professional development initiatives arising from government policy, were frequently referred to himas influencing his practice. These are *Te Kotāhitanga*, a now-defunct national project aimed at culturally responsive pedagogies for Māori students, and *Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L)*, a nationwide programme for improving student behaviour and engagement.

> **Samuel:** TK [*Te Kotahitanga*] was very influential for me when I first started teaching. It influenced my practice in a big way to not deficit theorise Māori students.

Teachers reported that they tended to choose pick and choose from school wide professional development initiatives, revealing a high level of professional autonomy with regard to their professional learning. It is clear, the New Zealand teachers felt they had a high level of professional autonomy

Discussion: impact of policy on teaching and learning.

Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989) states that "children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest." All children and young people should therefore be offered arts education that is not only diverse, but culturally relevant, developing their abilities to the fullest. In England, during these periods of increased accountability and regulation, different discourses of professionalism have circulated and gained legitimacy. This has affected how teacher professionalism is conceived and enacted (Sachs 201, Gramsci 1971). The purposes of policy measures were to improve young people's levels of achievement and increase international economic competitiveness. However, whilst trying to raise standards, the English government has established benchmarks towards operational forms of practice, increasing accountability for both teachers and learners (Craft, Cremin and Burnard 2008). The values and professionalism of teachers is displaced, instead focusing on technical approaches where the meaning of education is lost for both teacher and learner. Instead, replaced by performance and accountability delivery, which has coerced them into adopting a series of examination-safe procedures that have culminated into a set of reproductive practices. Their personalised pedagogies are challenged by the 'terrors of performativity' (Ball 2003, 1). This is due to the amount of time they spend on preparing for inspection or testing, which disrupts innovative teaching and learning. Turner and Bisset (2007) argue that:

> "…teachers compromise on the kinds of teaching in which they believe in, and the kinds of teaching demanded by performativity." (195)

Stronach et al. further explore this notion, (2002) relating this performative practice to a Foucauldian view of 'economies of performance', which views:

> "… the triumph of 'governmentality' and the emergence, as we have seen, of a punitive, suspicious regime of surveillance or self-surveillance. Professionals, in such accounts, are reduced to the petrified selves of audit." (129)

It is essential then, that for the future of our education systems that there is flexibly, openness and inclusive approaches to measurement of progress and success that link directly back to young people and reflect good personalised teaching approaches. Halstead (1994, 174) argues that any 'adequate account of educational accountability must … steer a middle ground between control and autonomy'. In documenting, the perspectives of teachers from both England and New Zealand, the research evidence points towards ethically harmful practices in English schools' interpretations of policy. Change is needed and there is much that we could learn from the New Zealand educational context.

Moving beyond contractual accountability: what can we learn from New Zealand?

In England, hegemonic governmental practices and hidden curricula are driven by ideological discourses framed by government and policy. The findings in this paper highlight clear differences between the English and New Zealand teacher experiences of the extent to which they are in control of professional practice. Out study suggests that the English system aligns with Halstead's notion of contractual assessment. Findings show that teachers felt strongly accountable to external bodies and policies, and that they hold sway over and control their practice. When an educator detaches their own experiences, or artistic practices, from the act of teaching (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972) then there is a hidden curriculum at play. Our study strongly suggests that this is prevalent in the English system.

Teachers working in the New Zealand system seem to be much more responsively accountable to their local contexts than their English counterparts. Their professional lives are predicated on teaching and learning approaches that are more aligned with and respectful of learner needs. Transmission of knowledge is central to the system but is best realised through a reciprocal process between teacher and learner. New Zealand teacher discourse strongly frames local teacher practice, where teachers claim expertise and the right to determine the rules for realising classroom practices. Students are encouraged to develop identities as artists and are offered pedagogic agency by their teachers

This is not to say that the New Zealand system is ideal! Indeed, McPhail (2018) warns that the devolved and permissive nature of the New Zealand secondary school curriculum and an increasing emphasis upon student-centred learning is no guarantee of epistemic access (Rata 2012). Nevertheless, this system affords teachers and learners opportunities for pedagogical agency. Contractual accountability is largely in relation to the local context such as their disciplinary community and school leaders, with little emphasis placed on them by external bodies such as ERO. As such, teachers may design curricula and assessments suited to learners' interests and their local context. However, a high trust, locally devolved professional model assumes that all teachers are knowledgeable and skilful, and that national structures such as assessment moderation ensure reliability and validity across diverse school contexts (McPhail 2018). A corollary is that where there is an assumption of a highly skilled workforce, teachers who are less skilled or knowledgeable may not necessarily receive the support they need, nor are they necessarily accountable for poor practice. Therefore, we argue for more opportunities for subject knowledge development for arts teachers in New Zealand.

Sinnema (2015) cautions researchers such as ourselves about drawing too many conclusions about the differences between international contexts, and assuming cause and effect between curricular autonomy and better student performance. While we acknowledge that this is a small study, the contrasts in the discourses of these two groups of teachers are striking. We therefore concur with Sinnema when she states that that there is a need to support a curriculum that is 'implemented in accordance with its intentions' (2015, 980). Despite the limitations the New Zealand system, it does offer ways forward for the future of arts teaching in secondary schools internationally. Firstly, the evidence from the New Zealand findings enables us to explore the purpose of education and the nature of teacher professionalism. One teacher from England asked, 'who is the assessment for?' and it is this exact question that requires critique. We suggest that teachers need to resist pre-determined learning goals generated by standardised testing and redefine programmes of study that meet the needs and interests of the learners socially, artistically and culturally. A culturally relevant curriculum that aims to meet the needs of diverse learners should be paramount, not, as it is for secondary teachers in England, a backward facing curriculum that focuses on preparation for examinations. Second, that teachers need local and professional support from a community of teachers so that they can continue to develop their identities as teachers and artists. And finally, that assessment measures should not define practice but instead should be used as a guide. This needs to be supported by school leaders who place trust in teachers to make valid and reliable judgements on student work and progress.

By comparing and analysing the experiences of teachers from England and New Zealand, we have identified new and distinct approaches for accountability that make a significant contribution to the future of teaching and learning. Although this

research has focused on arts educators, these approaches are also applicable to other marginalised subjects and international contexts around the world. We hope that through shedding light on the New Zealand approach and offering clear suggestions for the future of assessment and accountability measures, other jurisdictions will consider the potential that these ideas offer for the agency of teachers and learners.

Acknowledgements

The authors which to acknowledge the collegiality and generosity of the teachers who agreed to be interviewed for this study.

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Teacher	Subject	Position	Type Of School	Years Teaching
England Teachers				
Karen	Visual Art	Head Of Arts Faculty	Urban Technical College	20 Years
Laura	Visual Art	Teacher	Urban Technical College Teaching	8 Years
Sian	Visual Art	Teacher	Urban Secondary Academy Teaching	7 Years
Richard	Music	Head Of Music	Semi-Rural State Secondary Teaching	10 Years
Paul	Music	Head Of Music	Urban Academy Teaching	10 Years
Sarah	Music	Head Of Music	Urban Academy Secondary School Teaching	12 Years
Ellie	Music	Teacher	Urban Catholic State School Teaching	11 Years
Louise	Music	Teacher	Urban Academy Secondary School Teaching	5 Years
Alison	Music	Teacher	Urban Academy Secondary School Teaching	6 Years
New Zealand Teachers				
Kate	Visual Art	Head Of Arts Faculty	Semi-Rural, Co-Ed State School	28 Years
Shelly	Visual Art	Head Of Arts Faculty	Urban Catholic Boys' School	7 Years
Samuel	Drama	Head Of Arts Faculty	Suburban, Co-Ed State School	10 Years
Peter	Music	Head Of Music	Urban Catholic Boys' School	27 Years
Zane	Music	Head Of Music	Semi-Rural, Co-Ed State School	13 Years
Dave	Music	Teacher	Suburban, Co-Ed State School	8 Years