

FROM THE HEAD MASTER

BACKGROUND TO THE POTT INITIATIVE

Milton Cujes | Head Master

I am not sure that I can clearly define all the various ingredients that contributed to the POTT (Practice of Teaching at Trinity) initiative at Trinity, which I first raised with staff back in Trinity Term 2007 at our traditional Professional Development Day. However, upon reflection, there is no doubt that the following factors certainly provoked my thoughts in the "POTT" direction.

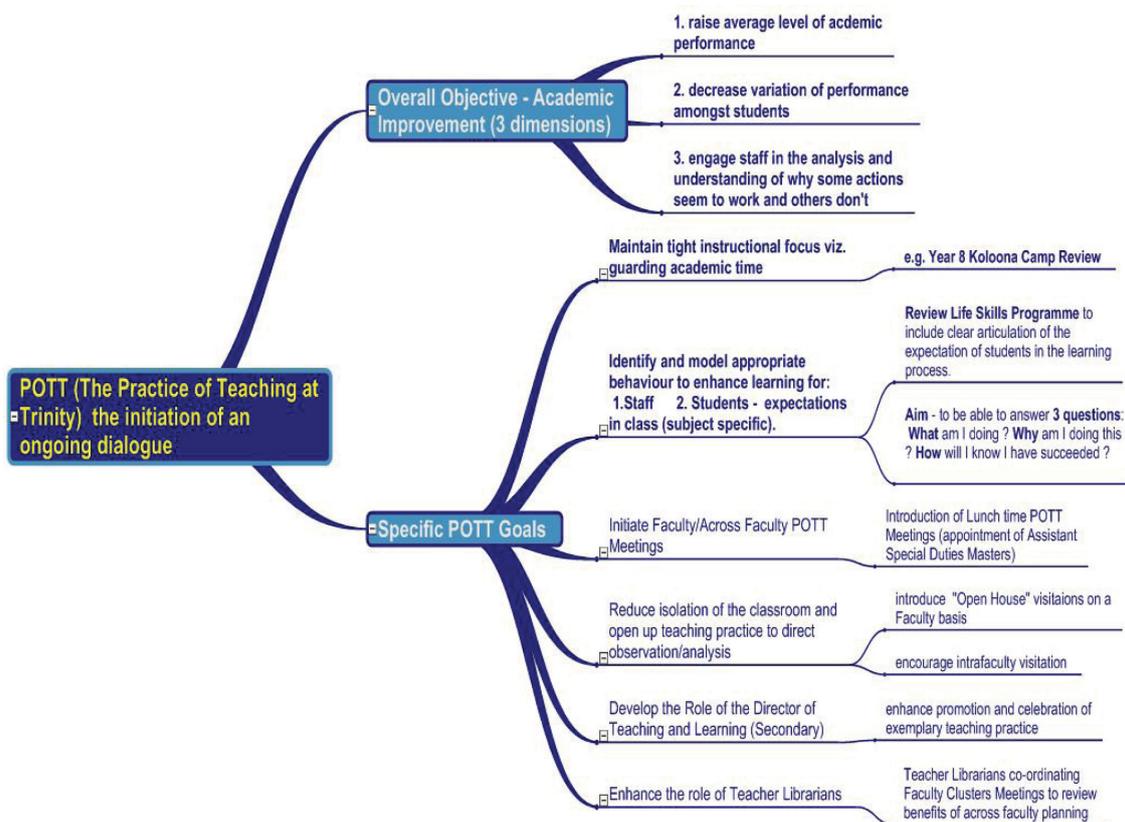
- The opportunity to be initially challenged, then subsequently stimulated and inspired, by Professor Richard Elmore when he spoke at the Harvard Principal's Centre, 25th Anniversary Institute, which I was privileged to attend in 2007. Professor Elmore's detailed research in respect of teaching practice, and his commonsense reflections on the evidence generated by that research, seemed to resonate with my experiences and observations as a Head Master over these past 29-plus years at three fine and distinctive Independent Schools in three different State systems.
- My personal opinion that Schools often spend a disproportionate amount of time, energy (and money!) seeking the advice of outside experts to deal with basic teaching/learning issues. More often than not, such efforts are at best only temporarily titillating in their impact and invariably prove not to be the much sought-after panacea for real or imaginary ills in the long term.

- My admiration for the talent, professionalism and skill of our staff at Trinity, whose work I am privileged to view from the unique position of Head Master, and
- The opportunity of some uninterrupted, extended time to think about some issues – during the long flight back from the United States to Sydney, post my Harvard experience.

I view POTT as essentially an ongoing dialogue and reflection regarding the Practice of Teaching at Trinity in terms of our unique School culture and Christian ethos, with a clear objective in mind and associated anticipated initiatives as detailed below, viz.

I am confident that the long-term potential benefit for our boys and our School community through our POTT initiative is incalculable and will prove to be more significant for us than any past or future investment we make in terms of mere "bricks and mortar", for it is my experience that any investment in people invariably yields a far greater return than any investment in material things.

"One of the beauties of teaching is that there is no limit to one's growth as a teacher, just as there is no knowing beforehand how much your students can learn". Herbert Kohl.



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