Teacher education continues to be in a state of almost continual reform, even crisis. Traditional programmes of professional preparation in which universities are in leading roles are positioned as ineffective, unresponsive and incapable of producing the human capital required for national economies to be globally competitive. Alternative programmes of professional preparation have arisen and have become favourites of reform movements and national governments alike - the Urban Teacher Residencies in the US and School Direct and Teach First in the UK - as routes of teacher training that reduce further (at least rhetorically) the role of higher education.

Given this context, the need for a book like this one is pressing. First, the pace and urgency of reform often means that the scope and scale of the arguments gets lost; current reforms in the UK and the US, for example, do not seek to modify the existing means of production of new teachers but attempt to reconceive teachers and teaching and to establish new regimes of governance on entirely different terms to former understandings of professionalism. Second, while some researchers and teacher educators might critique these reforms and reformers, the grounds for their arguments are sometimes conservative and can be seen as defending the status quo.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Provides a rationale for the book as a whole by offering an overview of the current situation of teacher education in industrialised nations around the world with particular attention to the US, the UK and Finland. We also explain the conceptual framework underpinning much of the research and analysis reported - cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) - with a particularly social and materialist orientation.

Chapter 2: Teacher education – in transition?
Builds on the work of Furlong et al (2000) to examine the current situation of teacher education policy and practice in the UK. Paying particular attention to the US and Finland we discuss the developments in the teacher education systems in these countries, as with the UK, is organised around the issue of neoliberalism and the new political economy of education.

Chapter 3: Teacher education in the universities
Opens with an historical analysis of the emergence of teacher education as a field of higher education and charts the increasing insecurity of teacher education within higher education. The chapter will then bring together the research on teacher education as a form of academic work and will report on our study of teacher education as academic work from the institutional perspective.

Chapter 4: Teacher educators at work: The division of labour
Begins with a definition of the teacher educator in terms of both school- and university-based roles and shows how institutional demands influence the day-to-day activities of university-based teacher educators and the material conditions of their work. We argue that the underlying problem is one of understanding collaboration between schools and universities on the education of teachers as the crossing of boundaries between separate organisations that have evolved different and sometimes contradictory objects of activity and related divisions of labour.

Chapter 5: Teacher educators at work: Critical cases
Presents five case studies of higher education-based teacher educators in England, all women as narrative accounts of teacher education practice that reveal ‘thick descriptions’ of these. The purpose is to surface the contradictions and tensions in these teacher educators’ practices so as to reveal the ways in which they have been institutionally and culturally shaped.

Chapter 6: Teacher educators, public universities and the profession of teaching
Draws out the larger consequences of the regulation and segregation of teacher educators and teacher education within higher education, such as those leading to the capacity of teacher educators to engage in research reduced and the setting up of training organisations outside of the university system, with very different expectations of their staff. We see this as a profound challenge to the role and mission of the public university as a democratic and democratising institution and develop this argument as a synthesis of the previous chapters and as the ground for our agenda for transformation presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Teacher education transformed
Draws on recent studies of teacher learning and development, educational leadership, adult and workplace learning, organisational theory, the sociology of science, studies of expertise and distributed cognition - as well as the international evidence from innovation and experimentation in programme design – to propose an agenda for the transformation of teacher education that will have relevance internationally.