

REPORT REFUTES MYTHS ABOUT TEACHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The [*Initial Teacher Education Data Report 2014*](#) released today provides clear evidence that retention rates for teacher education students and the employment of teacher graduates equal or exceed those in all other fields of education.

Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) President, Professor Tania Aspland, says: “The outcomes for our teacher education graduates is consistent with, and exceeds, other professions”.

The ITE report says more than 80% of teaching graduates find full- or part-time employment within four months of graduation. Teaching graduates are as successful as bachelor graduates from other fields of education.

ATAR IS NOT ALL

The report refutes common myths about entry to teacher education programs by finding:

- **Almost three-quarters of students enter initial teacher education programs through non-ATAR means** including relevant professional experience, full-time employment, completion of a preparatory program, or other higher education qualifications.
- **ONLY 19.5% OF STUDENTS ARE ACCEPTED ON ATAR SCORES**
- 56% of ATAR admissions have ATARS between 61 and 80 points
- There is a much higher uptake of teaching students in the 71 to 80 point range than in all other fields of education (30% compared to 21%)
- Only 914 (3%) of the 30457 undertaking an ITE program in 2012 had an ATAR below 50 – a **figure in line with other fields of education.**

“Teacher education entrants with low ATAR scores are monitored closely and receive significant additional support to ensure they are engaged in their teacher education program”, Professor Aspland says.

“These students usually receive special consideration because of personal or family illness or the impact of natural disasters such as bushfires or floods. Others are from groups underrepresented in the teaching profession like those with disabilities, Indigenous Australians and students from low socioeconomic, regional or remote areas.”

HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY TARGETS

Teacher education punches well above its weight in higher education equity targets compared with other fields of education. It attracts a greater proportion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds (20% compared to 16%) and regional areas (27% compared to 21%).

“However at a time when the Federal Government is promoting the take up of languages in schools, there is a concerning lack of teacher education students from non-English speaking backgrounds (1%) compared to students in other fields of study (4%)”, Professor Aspland says.

IMPROVING GRADUATE READINESS

The ITE Report highlights the challenges new teacher graduates face in managing difficult student behaviour and interacting with parents.

Professor Aspland says “Moving from supervised practice to independent practice is a challenge for all graduates. This is a high priority for the profession of teaching and consistent with formalised mentoring and support practices in other professions such as medicine, nursing, dentistry engineering and law.”

The ACDE has proposed ways to achieve this in its [submission](#) to the current review by the Teacher Education Administration Advisory Group (TEMAG) of teacher education.

COMPARABLE RETENTION RATES

First year retention rates for Australian teaching undergraduate students (80.9%) are comparable to other education areas, but retention rates of Indigenous students and those from remote locations are markedly lower.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers currently comprise only 1.2% of the teaching workforce when 4.9% of school students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.¹

The ACDE is part of an ongoing [project](#) that has identified the need to address ‘walking points’ at which Indigenous students leave study. These include exploring their professional experiences, financial issues, aspects of online learning and the need for students to feel culturally safe.

INCREASE IN SECONDARY TEACHERS

“On a positive note, the ITE report says the numbers of those studying to be secondary teachers have increased to levels close to the numbers studying to be primary teachers”, Professor Aspland says.

“We welcome the increase as a sign of the impact of a supply-driven education market that identifies the persistent shortage of secondary teachers. Of course the future challenge is to attract and grow a workforce able to teach science, technology, engineering, mathematics and languages” Professor Aspland concluded.

For more information or media comment

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¹ MATSITI Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teacher Workforce Analysis. September 2014

KEY STATISTICS INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION DATA REPORT 2014

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION (ITE) COMMENCEMENTS 2012

Total ITE commencements (domestic and international) 30,457

- 39% are undergraduate commencements – first higher education degree
- 43% are postgraduate commencements - second higher education degree
- Secondary education commencements are increasing so are now almost at primary education levels
- Most ITE students are aged under 24, full time, undergraduate and studying on campus

Commencements between 2005 and 2012

- Undergraduates up 14%
- Postgraduates up 63%
- Early childhood commencements have more than doubled. This was expected as qualification requirements increased

ITE COMPARED TO ALL FIELDS OF EDUCATION (FOE)

- **More from lower socio-economic background** (ITE 20% compared to FOE 16%)
- **More from regional areas** (ITE 27% compared to FOE 21%)
- **Less entrants from non-English speaking backgrounds** (ITE 1% compared to FOE 4%)

COMPLETION RATES 2012

16,650 students completed an ITE program

- 59% undergraduate
- 41% post graduate
- 43% in primary education
- 45% in secondary education

BASIS OF ADMISSION

Pathways: Secondary education, tertiary education, Vocational Education and Training (VET), mature entry, professional qualification and other

Mechanisms at the discretion of provider: ATAR scores, prior academic performance, interviews and written applications.

- Prior academic achievement most common mechanism for selection of primary and secondary early career teachers

- **Most common activity prior to entering** early career primary and secondary teacher education **full-time employment** at 29.2 per cent and 33.4 per cent respectively, **followed by higher education** with 24.5 per cent and 25.9 per cent respectively

ATAR

Important to note: all commencing students with a recorded ATAR are captured in the Higher Education Student Data collection even though their ATAR may not have been the basis of their admission.

- **ATAR- based entry accounts for only one in five (19.5%) of the total 30,457 commencements** of secondary education domestic undergraduate entrants
- **Close to three quarters of entrants** to initial teacher education programs **enter without a recorded ATAR**
- ITEs have a greater percentage of ATARs of 80 or below than all other fields of education (FOEs)
- 56% ITEs are in the ATAR 61-80 range with almost one third (31%) above and 13% below.

RETENTION RATES

First year ITE retention rates (80.9%) parallel domestic undergraduates in all FOEs (79.95%)

- **Entrants admitted on the basis of their secondary education had higher retention rates (79.7 per cent) than entrants admitted on any other basis,**

LOWER RETENTION RATES:

- **Indigenous entrants markedly lower** (67.2% Indigenous compared to an average of 77%)
- **Entrants from remote locations lower** (68.4% remote compared to average of 77%).

EMPLOYMENT

Generally teacher education graduates seeking full-time employment have been as successful as bachelor graduates from other fields of education.

RESPONSES TO THE 2012 GRADUATE DESTINATIONS SURVEY:

Most primary (87%), secondary (86%) and early childhood (82%) graduates were employed within four months of graduation

Found full- and/or part-time employment (in schools and not in schools) within four months of graduation.

- 87% primary graduates
- 86% secondary graduates
- 82% early childhood graduates