

MEDIA RELEASE

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015

DEVALUING OF TEACHERS IS CAUSING LOOMING TEACHER CRISIS

Australia is heading for a teaching crisis unless we encourage more students to enter the teaching profession.

Both the Australian Council of Deans of Education and the Chair of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), Professor Greg Craven, are concerned by this year's 12.5% drop in applications to tertiary teacher education courses.

ACDE President, Professor Tania Aspland, said the drop in teacher education applications was at odds with the number of primary and secondary teachers required to meet the increases in future student numbers outlined in *The Teacher Workforce in Australia* Report released last week.

“The decrease in applications reflects the continued public devaluing of the teaching profession. However, ACDE believes the implementation of the TEMAG Report recommendations will improve public perceptions of teacher education courses and highlight the importance of quality teaching to Australia's future,” Professor Aspland said.

Addressing an ACDE Deans' Forum in Canberra last Friday, TEMAG Chair Professor Craven said: ‘It always surprises and distresses me that politicians can be berated for talking down the economy and yet consumer confidence in the teaching profession can be trashed without a whisper of protest. I think we've really got to think about the public narrative that's out there.

‘If you believe some commentators these days, you barely need an ATAR to enter teaching,’ Professor Craven, said.

‘Is it any wonder therefore that the number of students applying to take teacher education courses is going down? That, in fact, this year – contrary to things about teacher gluts so on and so forth – it's about 12.5% down across Australia. That's an enormous drop: 1 in 8 people.’

TEMAG IMPLEMENTATION

Last Friday's forum gave the Deans, who represent 43 of the 48 Australian teacher education institutions, an excellent insight into the steps necessary to achieve more nationally consistent initial teacher education, ongoing professional experience for teachers and better data collection to inform future teaching practice and student outcomes.

‘The ACDE looks forward to working with many collaborators, and to sitting on the working groups that will be established to assist in the implementation of the 37 recommendations in TEMAG's *Action Now, Classroom Ready Report*,’ Professor Aspland said.

For further information: Leslie Falkiner-Rose, ACDE Media and Strategy Email: media@acde.edu.au Mobile: 0418 995240