

MEDIA RELEASE

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DATA PAINTS DISTORTED PICTURE AND DAMAGES TEACHING PROFESSION

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) is disturbed by weekend media reports that focus on extreme low ATAR entrance scores for teacher education and, in doing so, paint a highly-distorted picture.

Unfortunately, the use of the data paid no heed to whether the low ATAR of the students concerned was even relevant to them being offered teacher education places.

Students may have been selected because:

- They had gained further experience and qualifications that superseded their ATAR as their ATAR may have been acquired years before than their university entry;
- They were given special consideration due to personal circumstances, like the death of a parent, as their low ATAR did not reflect prior academic performance;
- As a member of a disadvantaged group, they were granted access to a pathway course during which they would have to prove they were capable of undertaking teacher education.

‘It is easy to take extreme figures, which apply to only a few of the thousands of teacher education students that enter courses each year, without regard to the detrimental impact of such skewed reports,’ ACDE President, Professor Tania Aspland, says.

‘Selective use of data and unfortunate comments made by those who wish to advance their own agendas continues to detract from our ability to attract quality candidates into teacher education. It also further demoralises those already in the profession or those undertaking demanding courses to become future teachers,’ she says.

‘The singular emphasis on ATAR entry into teaching makes it easy to forget that less than one-third of teacher education students are selected based on their Year 12 ATAR alone. Most are chosen because they have the personal and academic traits, and life experiences, needed to create great teachers,’ Professor Aspland says.

Further information:

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