

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until 9pm, Sunday 25 August 2019

PROPOSALS TO ATTRACT HIGH ACHIEVERS INTO TEACHING ARE ONE PIECE OF A LARGER PUZZLE

Education Deans welcome recommendations to make teaching more attractive to students who achieve ATAR scores over 80, but say the proposed reforms address only one part of what is needed to arrest the large, continuing drop in applications to study teaching.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) President, Professor Tania Aspland, says the proposals in the Grattan Institute report¹ will help make teaching more attractive to higher academic achievers, who place particular emphasis on the pay, intellectual challenge and promotional paths of potential careers.

‘But there is also a vital need to also improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession to all cohorts to prevent a widening shortage of teachers,’ she says.

‘While we see clear value in inspiring many high achievers into the teaching profession, the report acknowledges the need for desirable personal attributes to accompany academic performance. It also points out that many great teachers may have had ATARs below 80.

Despite the focus on ATAR entry, only one in four students enters teacher education based on his or her ATAR alone. There are many non-ATAR pathways to becoming a teacher, as shown in a [stop-motion animation](#) released by the ACDE today.

The ACDE has also partnered with Swinburne University business, innovation, psychology and education researchers and is [currently encouraging](#) teacher education students to [join a national virtual roundtable](#), called *Future Teachers Talk*, to discuss ways to attract more secondary school leavers into teaching.

Professor Aspland says: ‘The Grattan Institute proposal of \$10000 cash scholarships, better career pathways with two new categories of teachers with adequate pay, and better marketing of the teaching profession certainly has merit.

‘There is clearly a need to address the fact that far fewer higher achievers choose teaching compared to 40 years ago when teacher salaries for women were above other female professionals and, for men, were on par with other professions.

‘Today teacher salaries are 8% less than the average of female professionals and 16% less average than other male professions. Pay scales also flatten within 10 years of graduation for teachers who choose to stay in classroom and then fall further and further behind other professions throughout a teacher’s career,’ she says.

The ACDE also expects the Federal Government’s House of Representatives Inquiry into Improving the Status of Teaching to address these and other issues as it continues its deliberations.

Professor Tania Aspland is available for interviews.

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¹ Peter Goss and Julie Sonnemann. 2019. Attracting high achievers to teaching. Grattan Institute.