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## Submission to Senate Select Committee Inquiry on Teaching and Learning

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Committee Chair  
Senate Employment Education and Training Senate Committee  
Inquiry on Teaching and Learning  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

7 February 2013

Dear Colleagues,

The Australian Council of Deans of Education welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry. Specifically, the Council will respond to the fifth term of reference: *factors influencing the selection, training, professional development, career progression and retention of teachers in the Australian education system.*

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) represents Deans of Faculties and Heads of Schools of Education in universities across Australia. Faculty and School coursework graduates work in a wide range of workplaces and occupations, not only in formal and informal education settings, but also in the public and private sector more generally.

The Council works to

- inform national issues in education, especially teacher education, vocational and higher education;
- enhance public perception of the education Profession and the preparation and professional learning of educators;
- promote the appropriate funding, recognition and conduct of research and research training in education; and
- partner with national stakeholders with interests in education to influence policy and practice in education.

ACDE thanks Trevor McCandless for his research associated with the submission. A special acknowledgement also goes to Barbara Preston for her contribution to this work. ACDE holds Barbara's skills, knowledge and capacity in high regard.

My colleagues and I are happy to provide any additional information or comment that you might require in support of your consideration.

Yours sincerely

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## Executive Summary

1. Education as a discipline is essentially involved with the study of learning and teaching. It centres on the generation, acquisition, social construction and interchange of knowledge in all its theoretical and practical detail and complexity<sup>1</sup>.
2. Teaching is not alone in being substantially recast by the knowledge economy, but its particular relation to knowledge makes the Profession pivotal to economic prosperity and social cohesion. Today, in a competitive and globalised world where knowledge and advanced skills are increasingly valued, education has taken on a new level of importance. It has become central to personal, social, cultural and economic success and has become a high policy priority for governments. Educated citizens are the foundation of strong, inclusive and democratic societies.
3. Since 1988, when the current education funding model was first conceived, much has changed in the Profession and in the preparation of graduates for the Profession. During this time important things have been learnt along the way. We have learnt that some things work, some things don't and that we need to continue to both draw on our experiences and evolve to meet the challenges of today.
4. It is important to acknowledge that significant progress has been made recently in some areas, including the introduction of National Graduate Teacher Standards and the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs Professional Standards in 2011. Significant government inquiries have identified many areas for improvement and made specific recommendations to address issues within the education field.
5. One of the challenges faced by people within education is the level of criticism about the work they do and the improvements they are trying to make. The lack of empirical evidence, qualitative data and workforce planning strategies at the national level leaves education an easy target for critics and commentators. Over time it becomes more and more difficult to debunk myths and 'theories' in the absence of this information.
6. Teacher education is a highly scrutinised field. "In Australia there has been, on average, one major state or national inquiry into teacher education every year for 30 years"<sup>2</sup>. Yet each 'new' inquiry into teaching and education provide the impression of working from a blank piece of paper. Few recommendations are implemented and there is still so much we don't know or understand.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Council of Deans of Education, September 2011, 'Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project, Masters Degrees in Education, Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Statement' September 2011. Available online: <http://www.acde.edu.au/pages/images/Masters%20in%20Education%20Booklet.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Lomas Scott and Stephen Dinham, 8 August 2012, Why We're Never Satisfied With Teachers. The Conversation. Available online: <http://theconversation.edu.au/why-were-never-satisfied-with-teachers-8654>

7. We recognise the need to understand the dynamics of the teaching labour force, including why so many young teachers leave the Profession in the first five years. As well, the impact of the increasing casualization of the teaching workforce on our teachers and our children is not known. Further it is critical to know why the Profession cannot attract and retain more maths and science qualified teachers. Finally, we need to know whether we will be able to meet the demand for teachers at the end of the next decade (given attrition rates and the number of teachers reaching retirement age). We can only speculate and extrapolate based on anecdotal information and incomplete data.
8. We do know that teachers are paid less than their professional counterparts within the first five years of employment. We do know that this gap is even larger for males than females. We know that the starting salary for qualified teachers in the Profession, unlike other Professions, does not distinguish between the base level qualified teacher and that of the experienced late starter with an armful of relevant qualifications, and/or higher degrees in the field. First employment opportunities are likely to be casual or a 12 month contract at best. We know that the casualization of available work is increasing more and more.
9. ACDE strongly encourages the Committee to revisit some of the inquiry reports, in particular *A Class Act*, (Senate 1998) <sup>3</sup> and *Top of the Class*, House of Representative Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training Report into Teacher Education, 2007<sup>4</sup>.
10. *A Class Act* recommended a reversal of the trend to casualization of the teaching workforce. Since the report, casualization of the teaching workforce has only continued to grow.
11. Another recommendation was for State and Territory governments to provide information on teacher supply and demand in schools to inform workforce planning. The lack of comprehensive workforce data and planning strategies continues to be a challenge in managing the school teacher labour force. The availability of this data is

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<sup>3</sup> Senate 1998, 'A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession', Canberra. Available online: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate\\_Committees?url=eet\\_ctte/completed\\_inquiries/1996-99/teachers/report/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate_Committees?url=eet_ctte/completed_inquiries/1996-99/teachers/report/index.htm)

<sup>4</sup> House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training 2007, 'Top of the Class', Canberra' Available online: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_Committees?url=evt/teachereduc/report.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=evt/teachereduc/report.htm)

also important to students to enable them to make an informed choice about their end specialisation.

12. *Top of the Class* identified principles for effective and sustainable teacher professional education, including opportunities for pre-service teacher education students to take responsibility for the learning of school students, working alongside and being mentored by practicing teachers. This has been implemented and works. Ongoing mentoring and support is an effective part of the early teacher's learning experience. Despite increasing casualization, the casual teaching workforce cannot access these opportunities.
13. Another key recommendation was to have a closer relationship between the enrolments in teacher education with areas of teacher shortages. This will require better workforce planning data and for government to work collaboratively with teacher education providers.
14. There seems to be strong agreement across the Profession that there are significant issues that need to be addressed. It is clear that a sustained national effort is necessary to address these issues, not a stop start approach. ACDE advocates that the experience of graduates and Higher Education Institutions need to be part of the process in identifying and addressing the issues, and in implementing long term solutions.

## SETTING THE SCENE

15. We draw the Committee's attention to the experience of three recent graduates (between 2009 and 2010) from three different institutions. These graduates represent the range of concerns being expressed by graduates in the workplace. The recurring themes across surveyed graduates is the limited prospect of gaining permanent employment, lack of access to developmental opportunity (including mentoring) and limited opportunities for career progression.

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***Graduate A:** I received a University Admissions Index (UAI)<sup>5</sup>, of 99.70 and graduated with first class honours in 2010. After 17 applications I was so relieved to get a 12 month contract – within weeks of arriving at my school I understood why there was an average 30% staff turnover each year. Even though I had the opportunity to stay this year I am going to do a Masters in Special Education. I am hoping that this will make me more employable and provide me with opportunities for career advancement and specialization. There aren't that many opportunities for permanent employment and career progression in public schools other than this, aside from getting my annual increment or going into administration positions;*

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<sup>5</sup> The University Admission Index (UAI) was replaced by the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) in 2009.

**Graduate B:** *I received an UAI of 91.05. After three years of casual contracts in two large regional communities – I am throwing in the towel. I have taught everything including my subject area, Physical Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). Shame no one told me there is an oversupply of PDHPE teachers. The mines have offered to train me up in Occupational Health & Safety – they offer good pay and conditions, and think my skills in understanding different learning styles will be an advantage to their organisation;*

**Graduate C:** *I received an UAI of 87.00 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Diploma of Education (Primary). As a newly graduated primary school teacher who lives on Sydney's North Shore I knew the chance of a permanent position would be difficult. So being a traveller in search of adventure, I took myself off to a small rural town. I was never without work because I am hardworking and embrace change and opportunity. Even the local (and not so local high schools) had me on their casual relief list. I suddenly found a great enjoyment in teaching maths - supposedly a subject area where there is a shortage of teachers. I would love to do a Masters so that I could specialise in Maths, but Postgraduate Commonwealth Supported Places are limited and I cannot afford the fees. There are no chances of permanent employment out here. I hope I am not a casual for the rest of my life because I love teaching. The most annoying aspect of this is that as a casual I cannot access the professional development and mentoring available to permanent staff.*

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16. This submission is focused on factors that influence the selection, training, professional development, career progression and retention of teachers in the Australian education system. These factors include:

- a) Workforce planning issues.
- b) The increasing casualization of the teaching workforce – especially for new graduates.
- c) Entry requirements and exit standards.
- d) Professional experience.

17. Prior to discussing these factors, a good understanding of the nature and extent of the discipline of education in Australia is needed.

## **NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE DISCIPLINE OF EDUCATION**

18 The field of education represents the largest professional group in Australia, with 726,400 educators, constituting 6.3 per cent of the total workforce<sup>6</sup> (DEEWR 2012).

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<sup>6</sup> Data derived from:

DEEWR, 2012, Employment Outlook for Education and Training and  
DEEWR, 2012, Employment Outlook to 2016-17.

The calculation excluded employees from the Adult, Community and Other Education sector (114,000) from the total number of employees as it is not relevant to this submission.

- Education produced annual growth of 2.9 per cent over the last ten years, and contributed \$18.6 billion in export income to the Australian economy in 2009<sup>7</sup>; and
- In 2011, 113,583 full and part time university students (67,416 effective full time students) were enrolled in Education degrees at the undergraduate and post graduate levels, 28,203 students enrolled in initial teacher education, and there were 16,533 initial teacher education completions.

19. New and emerging challenges continue to shape the education field including :

- The drive to increase student retention rates in senior secondary schooling.
- The increasing diversity of cultural and language backgrounds of communities in early childhood and school populations.
- The increased emphasis on benchmarking educational outcomes of children through national testing and international comparisons.
- The comparisons of individual schools' students' performances in literacy and numeracy through the My Schools Website.
- The Federal Government's national agendas on social inclusion.
- 'Closing the Gap' for Indigenous Communities.

20. Both undergraduate and postgraduate professional-entry programs are designed to produce very highly skilled beginning teachers who can draw on theory and research evidence to continually improve their practices and respond to the new challenges that emerge in the workplace.

21. With such an extensive professional network and influence, and charged with the responsibility of educating Australians for today and the future, the education Profession must be agile, diverse, continuously working towards high professional standards and be well-educated. In this context, professional learning and standards are career long goals and endeavours to support teachers to lead and deliver on Australia's innovation agenda.

## **WORKFORCE PLANNING ISSUES**

22. The lack of comprehensive workforce planning strategies (including reliable supply and demand information) has been a feature of the school teacher labour force for decades. Recommendations to address this have fallen on deaf ears and this has actually undermined some of the significant teaching, learning and curriculum initiatives of recent years. We are hopeful that the outcomes of the Longitudinal Teacher Education

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<sup>7</sup> Australian Education International, 2010, 'Research Snapshot: Export Income to Australia from Education Services in 2009', Australia. Available online: <https://www.aei.gov.au/research/Research-Snapshots/Documents/Export%20Income%202010-11.pdf>

Workforce Study will deliver important outcomes<sup>8</sup>.

23. ACDE argues that this lack of collaborative planning limits the capacity of the education sector to be agile and respond to current shortages including mathematics, science and engineering specialists. These skills underpin a technologically advanced economy and are an integral part of our ability to respond to emerging government priorities such as 'Australia in the Asian Century' White Paper, 2012<sup>9</sup>.

### **A snapshot of the current school teaching labour market**

24. Between 80% and 90% of initial teacher education graduates take up teaching positions (casual, contract or on-going), according to data from Graduate Careers Australia and other sources. However many do not stay long in teaching. The 2011 census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that more than one third of young teachers leave the Profession in the first five years. Between the ages of 30 to 55 years, only around half of the teachers remain in the Profession.
25. Of the teachers leaving the Profession, 66% were working in other occupations and 33% were not working. Figure 1 graphs these relationships.
26. The current school teaching labour market is **both elastic and segmented**.
- It is elastic because the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in teacher education courses (and in the practice of teaching) are widely applicable and valued by other employer groups. Teachers are highly marketable commodities.
  - It is segmented in that teaching positions are located in dispersed geographic areas and vacancies require specified teaching specialisations (including generalist primary teaching). This means gaps in different parts of the market will appear when the demand for specific teaching qualifications does not match the supply of teachers willing to work in a geographic area.
27. The age demographic of qualified teachers and whether they are employed in teaching, employed in other occupations or not working is illustrated in Figure 1 on the next page.

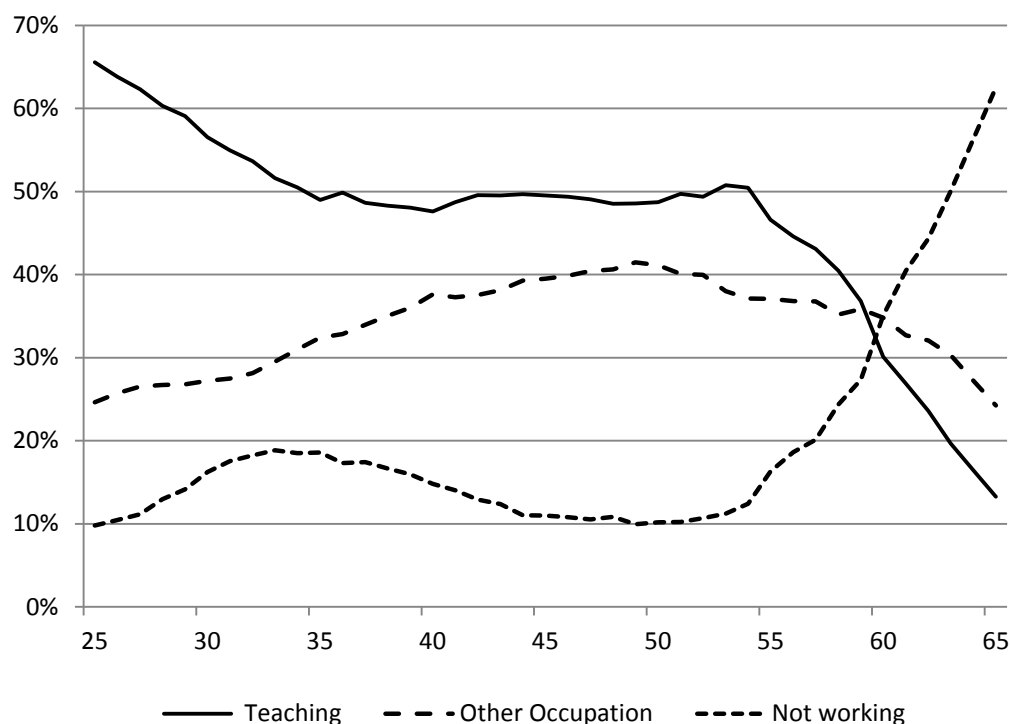
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<sup>8</sup> The Longitudinal Teacher Education Workforce Study is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations under the Teacher Quality National Partnership. Further information can be found at: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/cppe/ltews/index.php>

<sup>9</sup> 'Australia in the Asian Century' White Paper, 2012, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Further information can be found at: <http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/white-paper/australia-in-the-asian-century-white-paper.pdf>



**Figure 1: Percentage of Australian population with school teaching qualifications at each age, 25 to 65, employed as school teachers, employed in other occupations, or not working.**



28. The reasons why qualified teachers are in occupations other than school teaching are not well understood. Some workforce data studies are currently being undertaken to address this knowledge gap. The national Longitudinal Teacher Education Workforce Study<sup>10</sup> will collect and analyse information across Australia in relation to:

- career progression from teacher education into, and possible exit from, teaching employment; and
- views of graduates over time on the relevance and effectiveness of their teacher education for their teaching employment.

29 Until this study is completed, we can only speculate on the reasons why qualified teachers are employed in occupations outside of the Profession. The reasons could be a result of one or more of the following:

- A positive choice by graduates for employment in other occupations where the capabilities developed in the teacher education course can also be well utilised.

<sup>10</sup> The Longitudinal Teacher Education Workforce Study is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations under the Teacher Quality National Partnership. Further information can be found at: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/cppe/ltews/index.php>

- A negative choice by graduates who would prefer teaching but find that the conditions of employment such as a lack of on-going, secure position) and other aspects of the work less satisfactory than those associated with alternative occupations.
- A mismatch between supply and demand according to location and/or specialisation in the segmented teaching labour market (for example, positions may be available in certain locations for mathematics and special education teachers, but the only potential recruits available for positions in those locations do not have those specialist qualifications).
- A general oversupply of those seeking teaching positions relative to vacancies (as notably occurred in the early to mid 1990s, and which occur to a lesser extent from time to time in some jurisdictions).

30 An understanding of the current workforce demographic for the teaching labour market is important in understanding emerging trends and predicting future pressures within the market.

31 Figure 2 illustrates the large volume of teachers employed in the 1970s likely to be either retired or close to retirement in the next ten years.

**Figure 2: Age profile of employed school teachers in Australia, in 2011, source ABS 2012**



- 32 These teachers will need to be replaced. The Global Financial Crisis has to some extent delayed this particular crisis with many teachers delaying retirement or returning to part time and casual teaching after retirement. The delay in retirement is best seen by comparing the difference between the 2006 and 2011 data lines at ages 55 onwards.
- 33 Despite more older teachers delaying their retirement, a minimum of 9,000 new teachers will be needed to replace teachers each year as the peak in the 55 age plus age cohort moves into retirement. This situation will be exacerbated by the current trend of increasing numbers of teachers leaving the Profession early as well the expected increase in demand for teachers due to predicted increases in school enrolments and smaller teacher to student ratios.
- 34 Even though there have been some recent increases in intakes into education courses, the teaching labour market is likely to become tight. Effective strategies will need to be in place to attract and retain sufficient numbers of teachers with the necessary specialisations and locality preferences to avoid damaging shortages.

## **CASUALIZATION OF THE TEACHING WORKFORCE**

- 35 The high degree of casualization of the teaching workforce is an emerging and difficult workforce challenge.
- 36 The attractiveness of teaching as a career is often limited by increasing casualization of employment opportunities offered to new graduates and/or the financial opportunities beyond the first few years of teaching. Additionally, a common concern of the casualized workforce is that they do not have access to professional development opportunities and mentoring from experienced teachers. It is important that casuals have the same opportunities as permanent and contract staff to keep their skills current.

## **Remuneration**

- 37 Early career teachers generally earn more than those with teaching qualifications who choose other career paths. However, they earn less than those with a bachelor's degree (or higher) in any other field. The difference is higher for males than females, and more so for teachers aged 45 than teachers aged 30. Within 5 years in the classroom, teachers are paid less than their peers who chose careers other than teaching. At this time, one quarter of teachers are leaving the Profession.
- 38 Through the development of a National Teaching Workforce Dataset the teaching labour market (the incentives, the disincentives and the walking points) will be better understood. In isolation this is not enough. This understanding needs to be complemented with a comprehensive workforce strategy to ensure Australia's teaching

workforce has the balance of skills, specialisation and diversity to respond the current and emerging priorities of our nation.

## ENTRY TO STUDY AND GRADUATION TO THE PROFESSION

39 Teaching is a large Profession, and initial teacher education enrolls a very large number of students relative to other professional preparations courses.

40 To illustrate the high numbers of initial enrolments relative to other professions, three comparisons have been drawn using 2011 data.

- initial teacher education 28,203
- pre-registration nursing 16,338
- pre-registration medical studies 3,821

41 Current debate focusses on increasing the quality of teachers by ensuring that students are drawn from the top 30% of the population in literacy in numeracy. While no-one at this stage is clear about what this means or how it can be measured, the easy interpretation is that education needs to draw from the top 30% of ATAR scores. This approach is interesting given the reality is that nearly 70 per cent of students enter into teacher education programs after completing another degree or through another pathway. Those entering on the basis of their ATAR scores are less than a third of all initial teacher education commencements. Another interesting aspect of this approach is that the focus is on the standard on entry and NOT the standard on exit (that is, graduation).

42 The larger the number enrolled, the greater the tendency to a spread of ATAR scores, a larger concentration in lower ATAR bands, and lower 'cut-offs' for some courses. While wide publicity has been given to some low cut-offs for initial teacher education courses, it must be noted that while a few may be low, the rest are all higher than the cut-off. In 2012 a larger *number* of students with ATAR scores above 80.00 commenced initial teacher education than commenced pre-registration medical studies. Initial teacher education would have students entering with ATARs in the top bands if only a few thousand commenced and ATAR scores were the main selection criteria.

43 The very large number of students commencing initial teacher education points to the critical importance of attracting into teaching a sufficient number of individuals with the capacity and commitment to become highly effective teacher professionals. The focus should be on the *self-selection* of the very best into teacher education courses and the Profession, rather than a focus only on selection after initial application has been made.

- 44 The complexity of the role teachers must perform is summarised in the outline of the *National Graduate Teacher Standards*<sup>11</sup>(AITSL 2011):
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*On successful completion of their initial teacher education, graduate teachers possess the requisite knowledge and skills to plan for and manage learning programs for students.*

*They demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the implications for learning of students' physical, cultural, social, linguistic and intellectual characteristics.*

*They understand principles of inclusion and strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.*

*Graduate teachers have an understanding of their subject/s, curriculum content, and teaching strategies. They are able to design lessons that meet the requirements of curriculum, assessment and reporting. They demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice. They know how to select and apply timely and appropriate types of feedback to improve students' learning.*

*Graduate teachers demonstrate knowledge on practical strategies for creating rapport with students and managing student behaviour. They know how to support students' wellbeing and safety working within school and system curriculum and legislative requirements.*

*They understand the importance of working ethically, collaboratively with colleagues, external professional and community representatives, and contributing to the life of the school. Teachers understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers and recognising their role in their children's education.*

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- 45 ACDE is concerned by the tension between a tightly controlled input model ie the entry requirements to a teacher education program and the demand for strong graduate outcomes ie demonstration of student capability at the point of graduation and eligibility for entry to the Profession and supports a focus on the improvement of graduates and their equally important transition to the Profession.
- 46 ACDE member institutions take collective responsibility for ensuring that all those permitted to teach are well prepared, that they have and use all available knowledge to inform professional practice.

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<sup>11</sup> Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2011, 'Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia', Carlton South, Australia, page 5.

47 Current requirements<sup>12</sup> for entry to a teacher education program are:

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*3.1 All entrants to initial teacher education will successfully demonstrate their capacity to engage effectively with a rigorous higher education program and to carry out the intellectual demands of teaching itself. To achieve this, it is expected that applicants' levels of personal literacy and numeracy should be broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population.*

*3.2 Providers who select students who do not meet the requirements in 3.1 above must establish satisfactory additional arrangements to ensure that all students are supported to achieve the required standards prior to graduation.*

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48 Universities are primarily concerned with the work they do that adds educational value to students who are enrolled and so the quality of the graduate. While ACDE understands this focus on entry requirements, the logic over simplifies a complex range of relationships, standards and interactions.

49 **First:** The underlying assumption that universities do nothing to improve outcomes for students over the course of their degree is misconception. Universities create human and social capital that enhances the financial security of graduates, who then contribute to a better educated, more productive nation.

50 **Second:** The argument that those who are not ranked in the top 30 per cent of students are not worthy of learning to become teachers of a new generation of young Australians. The ATAR at best is an indicator of performance over the final hurdle of schooling and should, of course, be part of what we value. But often an ATAR score is a better indicator of the suburb you live in, the school you attended and/or the capacity of community and family support.

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*Strong performance in the final year of secondary schooling (particularly that found in the top ATAR quintile) is a good predictor of success at university, as reflected in first year grade averages, degree program grade average and degree completion rates and times. However, middle band results are a less reliable predictor of university success, as many students with average or comparatively low senior secondary results also do well once at university. When equity and increased participation are goals, it is important to identify the capacity for success at university among students who do not appear in the upper ranges of ranked final year secondary school results<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup> Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2011, 'Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia', Carlton South, Australia, page 12.

<sup>13</sup> Palmer, Bexley, James Selection Group of Eight Participation in Higher Education University selection in support of student success and diversity of participation Pg. iii

- 51 **Third:** An ATAR cut-off limits entry to the teaching training and thus the opportunity to become highly effective teachers for a diverse cohort of students and graduates, including but not restricted to: the carer of a chronically ill single mother, the Indigenous student from a rural area, the recently settled refugee, and the child who has grown up in a family where parents have been more unemployed than employed.
- 52 **Fourth:** Nearly 70 per cent of students in teacher education programs enter after completing another degree or come through other pathways. Those entering on the basis of their ATAR scores are less than a third of all initial teacher education commencements.
- 53 **Fifth** The assumption that the best learners automatically make the best teachers. In addition to professional skills and knowledge, at the heart of good teaching and learning is the need for appropriate communication and engagement with the student, the student's family and the student's community.
- 54 The issue of what **"the exact levels of personal literacy and numeracy broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population"** means in practice remains undetermined. It is indeed different to an ATAR score which is a number between 0 and 99.95 with increments of 0.05 that measures an individual student's performance in year 12 exams relative to the total cohort of students that started year 7.
- 55 AITSL is working with Curriculum Authorities to understand benchmarks for 3.1 (levels of personal literacy and numeracy broadly equivalent to the top 30 per cent of the population) for school leavers as outlined in the National Standards.
- 56 Once the 3.1 benchmark is settled, ACDE will proceed to develop exemplars and guidelines to assess 3.2 students work against 3.1 requirements (personal literacy and numeracy broadly equivalent to the top 30% of the population).
- 57 ACDE, as a professional organisation recommends the development of strong partnership between stakeholders to maintain consultation processes. ACDE is committed to working collaboratively with AITSL, State Registration Authorities, Jurisdictions and other stakeholders to demonstrate the **standards of our students at the point of graduation AND on entry to the Profession.**

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 58 A reciprocal and authoritative partnership between higher education providers and the Profession is fundamental to teacher preparation and supporting graduates in their first year(s) of teaching. *A Class Act* identified the principles for effective and sustainable teacher professional education and this has long been endorsed by

renowned educators such as Andy Hargreaves and Linda Darling-Hammond. These principles include opportunities for pre-service teacher education students to take responsibility for the learning of school students, working alongside and being mentored by practising teachers. This praxis drives graduate readiness and employer confidence as well as supporting enhanced learning opportunities for young people.

- 59 Such partnerships will never prepare every graduate for every situation or classroom, but it will prepare them to enter the Profession as a graduate, and as a professional, committed to their own learning. Nurturing and building on effective and sustainable partnerships for quality graduate teacher professional readiness is a key goal of the ACDE. Such an approach will work to address the many complex barriers facing teacher education at present.
- 60 There are a number of barriers to professional practice placements for pre-service teachers. These include the current arrangements for financial remuneration for supervision of pre-service teachers made via the Education Cluster funding arrangements and paid via the university to schools. The amount is small and the cost of managing these payments is relatively high when considering the reward to teachers. As well, these arrangements link working to develop new professionals to a payment system rather than a professional career development structure that rewards experienced teachers in career terms.
- 61 Many pre-service teacher placements are focussed on achieving the required number of days in schools to meet registration requirements, rather than achieving quality beginning teacher standards and improving school student learning. When re-constructed to centre on improved learning for school students, the capacity of pre-service teachers to add value to the school curriculum can counter the often-felt sense of adding to teacher's work as they have to look after pre-service teachers.
- 62 ACDE notes that too many graduate teachers do not have the benefit of strong induction to the Profession and their schools through access to many of our most exceptional teachers. ACDE strongly supports a professional development framework that rewards development and excellence through remuneration, expectation, leadership and recognition of the importance of working with pre-service teachers and new graduates.
- 63 When a graduate teacher enters their first classroom they have a wealth of subject content knowledge, they have knowledge of a variety of pedagogical theories and strong initial professional practice to help them reflect on their teaching practice. However, they still need to develop as competent practitioners and establish strong pedagogical content knowledge: that is, knowing the best ways to teach their students the hardest concepts in their subject areas. This knowledge comes with experience



and strong mentoring. Time, and a framework for this development, is needed for these early career professionals to develop their potential. Unfortunately, the current system denies these developmental opportunities to teachers employed as casuals.

- 64 The best education systems in the world have one thing in common – trust in their teachers to exercise professional judgement. While public quantitative indicators are accessible and inform our work they support an approach which serves also to restrict curricula, standards and regulations which force us to focus too heavily on minimum standards. Innovation and excellence rarely come from such a downward focus.
- 65 Everybody agrees, even psychologists and economists - people respond to incentives. We need to look very carefully at the incentives we have loaded into our education system and how these relate to our stated aim in improving the quality of education in Australia. If the intrinsic and extrinsic incentives of our policy settings are undermining education then those policy settings need to be changed.

## WHAT WORKS

- 66 ACDE has watched with interest the approach taken by Health Workforce Australia (HWA) to understand the demands and needs of the health workforce. HWA now appears to be able to forecast future demands for its workforce, analysing Australia's supply and demand for doctors, nurses and midwives projected to 2025<sup>14</sup>.
- 67 ACDE welcomes the opportunity to work closely with the Profession and government, systems and employers to develop a Framework for Teacher Professionalism which identifies, values, recognises and rewards high quality graduates, beginning teachers, and professional teachers and leaders.
- 68 ACDE has established ways of working within and across institutions and other stakeholders to respond to emerging policy priorities in teacher education and support systemic institutional change. Projects of significant note are<sup>15</sup>:
- The Teaching Teachers for the Future Project established a support network across 39 Australian higher education institutions that provide teacher education, with a framework to assist pre-service teachers to map their proficiency against the graduate career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, and develop and share rich professional resources to encourage effective integration of ICT in the classroom.

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<sup>14</sup> Health Workforce Australia, 'The Health Workforce Australia 2012-13 Work Plan' date viewed: 5/02/2013, <https://www.hwa.gov.au/work-programs/work-plan>

<sup>15</sup> Australian Council of Deans of Education. Copies of these reports and supporting information are available online: <http://www.acde.edu.au/pages/page47.asp>

- The development of a framework for achieving Program Standards 3.1 and 3.2 (which refer to teacher literacy and numeracy), and collection of supporting data, including a comprehensive survey of current and emerging practices across member institutions.
- An ongoing project with the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teacher Initiative (MATSI) to improve retention and graduation of Indigenous students in Initial Teacher Education Programs.

69 Each of these projects have been significant in their reach and resulted in changed and sustainable practices within the Faculties and Schools of Education. ACDE advocates that the experience of graduates and education institutions need to be part of the process in terms of identifying and addressing issues within education, and in implementing long term solutions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 70 The development of a National Teaching Workforce Dataset and the outcome of the Longitudinal Teacher Education Workforce Study will need to be complemented with a comprehensive workforce strategy to ensure Australia's teaching workforce has the balance of skills, specialisation and diversity to respond the current and emerging priorities of our nation.
- 71 ACDE recommends that a model similar to Health Workforce Australia (HWA) be considered for education. The HWA seeks to build a sustainable health workforce for Australia by understanding and responding to challenges within its labour market. A similar approach in the teaching workforce will require a significant commitment of resources, high level of cooperation and data sharing within and between jurisdictions and institutions.
- 72 ACDE recommends that the experience of graduates and the education institutions need to be part of the process in terms of identifying and addressing issues within education, and in implementing long term solutions. ACDE has proven its ability to work with these stakeholders and government to deliver long term change.
- 73 Incentives within the education system need to be reviewed against the aim of building a sustainable education workforce and delivering high quality education in Australia. If the intrinsic and extrinsic incentives of our policy settings are undermining education then those policy settings need to be changed.

- 74 ACDE recommends a framework is developed which promotes, rewards and credentials excellent professional learning in high quality graduates, beginning teachers, professional teachers and leaders.
  
- 75 The existing reforms of 2011, the introduction of National Graduate Teacher Standards and the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs Professional Standards be allowed time to be established prior to any review of their effectiveness.

## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AEI	Australian Education International
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACDE	Australian Council of Deans of Education
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment

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