

**Media Release – 20 March 2015      NSW Council of Deans of Education**  
**Employment of Graduate Teachers in Australia**

- The NSW Council of Deans of Education (NSWCDE) is confident that there is no significant oversupply of initial teacher education (ITE) graduates.
- Employment data in aggregate fails to illustrate variations across state lines, urban vs. regional job markets, and age level and subject area of teaching specialisation. ITE programs should make market-based adjustments to student intakes and work to increase student quality and suitability for teaching, rather than decrease their enrolment numbers.
- The increased casualisation of the teaching workforce privileges short-term economic concerns above what is best for students' learning. NSWCDE advocates for permanent positions, while acknowledging current realities.
- Career advising processes at secondary and tertiary level must help future teachers understand the realities of the job market they will enter: one in which working casually may be a necessary step toward attaining a long-term position.

A popular, and politicised, message gaining currency of late has been one of rampant teacher oversupply and universities “pumping out graduates” into a bleak job market in which as many as 90% of teachers fail to secure jobs in teaching. However, long-term data show that the vast majority of new graduates – more than 80% – are employed as teachers in the years soon after graduation. In fact, the number of graduate teachers looking for employment is on par with other industries such as accounting and social work.

Reductions in training new teachers could result in future teacher shortages. There has been a decline in ITE completions since 2009, and the rate of retirements will increase in coming years as the “baby boomers” advance in age (currently 53% of the teacher workforce are age 45 or over). There are projected shortages in many fields of secondary education, particularly languages other than English, physics, mathematics, many fields of applied studies.

Students interested in a career in teaching should be given a realistic picture of the job market they will be heading into, one in which working casually or outside one's preferred geographic area or subject area may be necessary in the short-term to secure long-term employment. Many universities are already implementing the recommendations of the recent Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report, which include measures at the admissions level and throughout students' tertiary careers to ensure that those aspiring to be educators demonstrate “both academic skills and desirable personal attributes for teaching”.

NSWCDE remains proud of the quality teacher preparation occurring in many ITE programs across Australia and maintains that, rather than 90% of teacher education graduates unable to find a job, 84% of teachers *have* been able to find work within two years of graduating. NSWCDE will continue to advocate for schools and systems to maintain full-time permanent or contract positions wherever possible, to improve teachers' confidence in their job security and to better enable them to strengthen students' educational outcomes.

**What:** NSWCDE comments on workforce supply and demand in teaching

**When:** March 2015

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