

Good afternoon,

Please find below a submission from myself, [REDACTED] (a community member with professional and personal experience in the education sector), to the Government Review to inform a Better and Fairer Education System.

My submission is regarding entry to initial teacher education university courses. Please note, I have read and understood the privacy policy pertaining to submissions to the Review and am happy for my submission below to be publicly available but with my name omitted and listed as 'anonymous'.

Whilst the quality of students exiting education courses in Australia is obviously an issue, I believe the more pertinent and pressing concern for the future of our education system is the chronic teacher shortage, which, amidst an ever-growing demand for teachers nationwide, is only going to get worse in the coming years.

The issues surrounding the quality of entry level graduate teachers seems to be appropriately addressed in the Consultation Paper with recommendations for Universities to improve their education courses with a myriad of changes and national uniformity, which is welcomed and should deliver a higher quality cohort of teachers who are well prepared and trained to deal with the daily pressures of the school teaching environment.

I believe the issue around the quantity of teachers is currently the more pertinent and pressing issue nationwide and needs further examination. I feel many students aspiring to undertake a bachelor of education course, and who would potentially make excellent teachers, are currently unable to undertake such courses due to the prohibitive nature of the Victorian Government's minimum ATAR entry requirement in Victoria of 70. It is interesting to note that Australia currently does not have a uniform approach to minimum entry level requirements for entry to initial teacher education degrees and this is not explicitly referred to in the Consultation Paper. The report does however mention that a number of factors, and not necessarily a student's ATAR, can impact the success of a student studying education and their success and suitability as a teacher.

In Victoria there seems to be a desire to promote education courses as only for the elite and highly successful academic students with the minimum entry level ATAR set unrealistically too high at 70, particularly for primary education courses. This minimum ATAR excludes the average student. Now this might be fine if there was an overabundance of teachers in the workforce, but we currently have a chronic teacher shortage and we should be encouraging more students to apply for education degrees, not less. Many students who don't reach the 70 ATAR prerequisite but are extremely passionate about teaching, and would make excellent teachers. are instead not provided with the opportunity to undertake a bachelor of education course. I understand the rationale behind setting an ATAR minimum entry requirement and suggest a national uniform approach with a minimum ATAR of 60 would provide the right balance of both the academic quality and quantity gains required to help alleviate our current teacher crisis. This uniform approach should be in place as soon as possible (by the end of the year) to enable more students to enter bachelor education degrees. Or you could even look at a separate uniform minimum entry ATAR for primary education courses and a slightly higher minimum entry ATAR requirements for secondary

education courses. Also, many universities now offer places for certain courses (not currently education) based on a students' various characteristics, contributions and achievements which may be worth considering for education bachelor degrees.

It is also worth looking at how universities provide access of individual education subjects to students from other faculties. Currently, most universities do not allow for students from other faculties to undertake an education subject as an elective. Providing greater access to tertiary education subjects to students in other faculties could potentially provide another cohort of students interested in undertaking a teaching career.

Anyway, food for thought. All the best with the Review.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards

