



Public submission made to the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools

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Submitting as a: Academic person or institution
State: NSW

Summary

1. Attracting high ability students to ITE is a perennial challenge, but the extent of this challenge is now unprecedented. Decadal trends show alarming shifts in ITE admissions and declines in mathematics and science preparation for ITE.
2. In pursuit of the 40% participation target Australian HE degree admissions over the last decade show a doubling of those in low ATAR brackets (below 40th%tile). Furthermore approximately 1 in 3 recent school leavers with ATARs available, are now admitted to degrees without their ATAR reported to the Commonwealth. Students are also less prepared for university study, with increases in those with no mathematics for their HSCs; and low and declining participation and declining attainment (in PISA at 15years) in science and mathematics.
3. These dynamics are amplified among those entering ITE which attracts and admits students with very low levels of academic attainment, including ATARs of less than 30. In Commonwealth data we see more than half of recent school leaver ITE entrants have no ATAR recorded (36%) or an ATAR below the 50%tile (26%).
4. Among ITE admissions school participation and attainment in mathematics and science is declining. Over the last decade in NSW, for example, there was a trebling of those entering ITE without HSC mathematics, a halving of intermediate and advanced mathematics and growth among those undertaking only elementary maths.
5. These trends present a transparency and accountability issue. Current arrangements produce a vicious cycle in which diminishing academic standards, especially in mathematics and science, feed back into schools. We need full, frank and fearless reporting on all those entering teaching degrees; with minimum standards in an articulated long term plan to meet the international benchmark for ITE entrants (the top 30% of their age cohort)

and requirements for adequate preparation in KLAS, including mathematics and science.

Main submission

As my submission is a graphical synopsis of trends in Initial Teacher Education I am not able to upload it here. The text commentary is non-nonsensical without the figures so I do not include it here.