

Quality Initial Teacher Education Review
Submission from the Review Panel from the NSW ‘Valuing the teaching profession’ Inquiry’
(‘Gallop Report’ released February 2021)

This submission to the Quality Initial teacher Education Review is made by the Gallop Report review panel members:

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Basis of submission

The 2020-2021 'Valuing the teaching profession' Inquiry was commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation as an independent examination into the changes to the profession within the NSW public school system since 2004. Within broad terms of reference, the Panel was asked to examine traditional work value considerations along with the impact of Commonwealth and State policies, social, technological and economic determinants, and the realities of the student population and their classroom and community contexts.

The Inquiry received well over 1000 submissions, many from whole school staffs, as well as from a number of expert witnesses who presented to the Panel in public hearings, as well as providing research findings including in commissioned papers. Public hearings were also held of a select number of teacher and principal witnesses.

It is acknowledged that the Inquiry was focused exclusively on the public school system in NSW, and its teachers. That said, it became apparent that while the specific experience of school and teachers under the NSW Local Schools, Local Decisions policy from 2011 until its formal demise in 2021, are particular to this NSW experience of devolution, there were many universal trends relating to student populations, technology, policies around student inclusion, the demands of data collection and many other issues that are common across most schools and teaching experience.

The Gallop report was delivered in February 2021. It was the subject of a briefing to members of the NSW parliament and a formal debate in the NSW Legislative Council, and can be found online at [gallop_inquiry_report_2021.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.gallop.com.au/gallop_inquiry_report_2021.pdf)

This submission seeks to draw the attention of the QITE Panel to the findings of our report that we consider to be relevant to its terms of reference and issues raised in the Discussion Paper released by the review. While the focus of the Gallop Inquiry was on the significant changes in teachers work over the last seventeen years, including an examination of its current condition, and recommendations for future action by policy makers, we submit that

- Recommendations to address teacher supply challenges, encourage highly performing students to enter teaching and to strengthen the quality of teacher preparation are likely to have limited impact in the absence of concerted actions by all Australian governments and school employers to understand the current and emerging realities of teachers' work and to implement substantial actions, in cooperation with the profession, to address these issues, and
- There are credible proposals for change in teacher preparation arrangements, shared arrangements across ITE providers and schools/school systems, and improved mentoring and career roles within schools related to ITE placements and early career experience that can be drawn from the analysis of current teaching realities that are directly relevant to the QITE terms of reference and possible recommendations.

Key findings from the Valuing the teaching profession report

The QITE Panel's attention is drawn to

- Appendix 1 Summary of evidence in teacher witness statements pp140-157,
- Appendix 2 Summary of evidence related to workload, time and complexity pp158-172, and

- Appendix 3 Summary of evidence relating to COVID-19 workload pp173-179.

Together these summaries support the evidence given by expert witnesses and underpin the findings and recommendations of the Inquiry.

We note that, in relating to the issue of dedicated time to be built into teachers' work patterns to enable collaborative peer review and feedback, planning, lesson design, reviewing and assessing student achievement and engagement that typifies high performing jurisdictions, Australian schooling systems have not sufficiently addressed key findings from the Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools 2018). These include inclusion of time for organised, shared professional development within teachers' workloads, support for teaching to be established as a high-status profession, effective induction practices built into school professional practice, and engagement of highly accomplished and lead teachers in collaborative practices.

Our report recommended specific allocations of time for teachers to be engaged in the professional work needed for high impact teaching and effective learning. This is against the backdrop of findings that showed teachers' time being distributed increasingly over the last 17 years to administrative, data driven tasks that have detracted from shared pedagogical practices.

The report documents

- the deeply significant changes in the characteristics of the current school student population, the impact of technology, and case studies the impact of child and adolescent health issues on teaching and learning (Ch. 3)
- the myriad of changes (Ch 2) and the 'cascade of policies' (Ch 4) impacting teaching over the last 17 years
- Chapters 5-7 detail changing teacher registration/accreditation impacts, the shift of responsibilities from the public schooling supporting mechanisms and resources to schools and teachers, and changing curriculum contexts
- directly relevant to the QITE review, issues in teacher recruitment and retention, workload, time and complexity, school leadership and the erosion of salary relativities (Ch 8-11).

Relevance to the current review

It is the contention of our Panel that piecemeal proposals to adjust initial teacher education program (ITE) design, pilot projects to attract some career-changers to teaching, adjusting ITE entry requirements, and so on will be largely ineffective in addressing current and worsening issues of teacher morale, teacher supply/shortages, declining ITE enrolments and retention. Such proposals will be more likely to have impact in the context of actions directed at creating a confident, enthusiastic and respected profession that itself is able to attract and retain high-performing practitioners. The inherent nobility of the teaching profession remains as a motivator of so many teachers but in the evidence of our report, struggles to shine through the myriad of imposts on the practice of teaching and the policy stances governments and employing authorities place on it.

While the terms of reference of the QITE carefully exclude attention to the conditions of teaching itself, this submission urges the review to find, and recommend, that specific recommendations directed to entry to ITE, program design, attracting high performing school leavers and career-changers will have maximum effect if accompanied by concerted action by all Australian governments and school employers to seriously address

- dedicated, shared teacher time for high impact pedagogical practice exemplified in leading international jurisdictions
- dedicated professional development practice focused on student learning
- expanded leadership roles in schools/career structures focused university-school liaison in ITE placements, systematic induction practices and other professional leadership practices
- early employment experience of widespread temporary/casual employment contract lasting years (our Inquiry found approaching 40% of teachers in the NSW public system hold such contracts)
- the decline in salary relativities with other professions, and the need for greater salary recognition of leadership positions.

We urge the review to assess any proposals for a Commonwealth-led publicity campaign to promote teaching to be considered on the basis that they are jointly supported by jurisdictions and accompanied by concrete action, relevant to each jurisdiction, to address the systemic issues ventilated in our report and summarised above. Such a linkage with concrete actions to address the real circumstances of teaching is necessary to give credibility to any publicity campaign and avoid it being met with the cynicism and dismay that legitimately is engendered by slick but insubstantial such campaigns.

It is our firm view that the communicative power of teachers themselves, and their satisfaction in and with the practice of their profession, is far more powerful than PR campaigns that ignore the lived realities of teachers and teaching.

Nor should actions be taken to meet current and looming teacher shortages by lowering already diffuse entry requirements for ITE, or undermining standards and requirements for teacher preparation by quick fixes and shortened programs that usher underqualified, under prepared or semi-trained teachers into the complex and demanding classrooms of today's schools. Such approaches have a tawdry history in various jurisdictions, and in fact it was just such actions which led to the birth of teacher registration in Australia.

There is a sharp contradiction in some of the rhetoric around the desire to attract highly performing individuals into teaching while simultaneously advocating reduced teacher preparation and a transfer to schools of substantial responsibility for teacher preparation without commensurate attention to the substantial resources needed within schools to support such strategies. In NSW, the effects of Departmental divestment of responsibility, and collapse of professional support services under Local Schools, Local Decisions compounded the challenges for many schools to thoroughly engage with universities around teacher education, given the new demands including of accountability and data collection put upon them.

Finally, it should be noted that the QITE review panel is undoubtedly very familiar with the numerous reviews of teacher education, and teaching, undertaken regularly since the 1980 National Initial teacher Education Review, and the constancy of key recommendations advanced. Actions on systematic well-designed partnerships between universities and schools in practicum/internship arrangements, and systematic well designed and resourced induction programs, and ongoing professional development strategies are regularly recommended because they remain so poorly addressed. As are recommendations around salaries and career structures, most notably exemplified with government moves to propose salary freezes for teachers while depending on extraordinary reliance on the profession to meet the challenges of teaching and learning in the COVID-19 pandemic. While parents and the public are recognising the vital social role of teachers and schooling, this is a particularly ill-considered policy approach by governments. It is open to the

review to point to this circumstance and recommend appropriate actions to provide an effective context within which more specific recommendations under the terms of reference might be successful.

Submissions re the first QITE theme: Attracting high quality candidates into teaching

Comments relevant to the data presented and issues raised in the review's Discussion Paper:

- recent data released by the NSW Minister for Education on the decline in entrants to ITE programs in NSW universities shows a one third decline over 5 years, significantly greater than the Australian average noted by the review (although the longer time frame of the review's data 2006-2019 may include steeper declines in recent years)
- suggestions that increased entry requirements are in part responsible are hard to verify; stronger NSW requirements (3 Band 5s including one in English for school leavers, from 2014/15, equivalent roughly to ATAR 80) were largely circumvented by universities through structuring first year ITE programs to include an open entry first year of non-education studies) and were irrelevant to post graduate programs; further, while the Discussion Paper points to some bespoke non-academic entry measures the majority of such measures used amply by ITE providers are in reality recruitment measures not selection measures, and align with the business models of the institutions
- as the Discussion Paper indicates, the great majority of ITE entrants either do not have an ATAR or it is not the basis of entry; accordingly, there is no ATAR barrier to entry. The Paper notes that 39% of the 24% who are accepted on an ATAR basis have an ATAR greater than 80, with the majority entering with no ATAR based assessment of suitability and the majority of those that do being spread over ATARs in the 50-80 range. Ch 8 of the Gallop Report documents research from the University of Sydney highlighting the numbers of low academic performers routinely admitted into many ITE programs
- to the extent that recent reforms have strengthened ITE requirements (LANTITE, admission criteria, TPAs, 2 year P/G programs) these should surely be seen as supporting the concept of high quality and rigour in requirements for teaching; it may well be that there is a slightly depressing aspect to the LANTITE measure but given it shows some 8% of the university and other provider ITE students cannot meet a minimal literacy/numeracy standard (and the Discussion Paper shows distressingly higher rates of failure for too many institutions) obvious conclusions must be drawn about recruitment standards
- it is probably correct that the two-year requirement for P/G programs, in the absence of course design that allows either/both compressed course time taken or design features including income options (some show-cased in the Discussion Paper) are a disincentive to career-changers (if they indeed exist in any significant numbers) or young graduates who may consider teaching
- however, this factor re young graduates is likely to be far less significant if there were a more attractive salary and career structure for the profession, and a healthier public standing for the profession (this related to the earlier comments around the need for governments to decisively address salaries, career structures and working conditions in terms of professional working time)
- the expansion of scholarship programs for entry to teaching remains an attractive strategy within a context of improved salaries, career paths and conditions of teaching.

Submissions on the second QITE theme: preparing ITE students for effective practice

- while the APST (Graduate level) set a broad framework for ITE requirements, more specificity is needed. Attention is drawn to the paper considered and broadly endorsed by the national meeting of Education Ministers (MCEECTYA, in 2010) that set out a number of priority areas for teacher preparation. While some of the proposals have been addressed through the 2011 National ITE Standards and Procedures and the later TEMAG measures (subject content requirements, literacy/numeracy requirements, TPAs) there is no national standard in other areas. The NSW priority areas in place from 2007 were submitted to AITSL to be redeveloped as genuine national standards by inclusive working parties could have been the basis for fuller and more detailed exemplifications of explicit teaching. However, the revised statements were effectively removed from the supporting resources and requirements for ITE accreditation within a year or two. The areas include evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy, inclusive teaching (CAL/D, differentiation), using ICT, Aboriginal education, classroom management, special education, student assessment, professional experience partnerships. NSW alone retains these as explicit Priority Areas that are assessed in ITE program accreditation. National working parties informed by relevant research (perhaps assisted by the national evidence institute) and inclusive of the teaching profession itself) should address these issues and establish authoritative frameworks for ITE preparation.
- Redesign of P/G Master of Teaching programs, including along the lines of models noted in the Discussion Paper, are productive ways forward. In NSW, Conditional Accreditation is a formal status that supports graduates commencing teaching as part of completing a teaching qualification. The necessary elements of such redesigned programs include
 - significant and agreed preliminary study within the program (note the progressive evolution of the Teach for Australia program from the initial non-university six weeks initial study proposed by the Rudd/Gillard government, through the Victorian Institute of Teachers' requirement of enrolment in a formal qualification, through to current considerably lengthened initial course-based study of at least one semester of compressed study – suggesting that experience leads to a greater appreciation of the necessity of a proper preparation before entering the challenges of today's classrooms
 - systemic partnership arrangements with participating schools, re placements
 - dedicated time and expertise in school mentoring/supervisory roles
 - agreed ongoing engagement of the ITEB provider in the preparation at the school, along with the completion of formal course study, research and reflection within course study of the placement experiences
 - appropriate payment/employment arrangements (commencement/training wage, teacher aide employment, part-time teaching arrangements)
- Proposals to return to the one-year Dip Ed should be rejected. Such preparation cannot meet the demands of modern classrooms and schools, and will leave schools with an unreasonable burden of inducting under-prepared teachers into the profession.
- The 2010 MCEECTYA paper's proposal for there to be formal compacts between universities and school systems around professional experience places should be examined, under the Commonwealth Government's Grants Scheme powers. School involvement in such

partnerships should be an element in the next negotiation in 2023 of the national schools funding agreements. The requirement that ITE programs should only enrol students where there is a guaranteed and negotiated placement in a school or schools was advocated and should be revisited. With the significant increase in online ITE candidature (with its significant attrition rates), such a measure would require far more sophisticated and serious school placement arrangements in such courses/candidatures.

- There should be far greater transparency in and publication of data (entry scores and other measures, LANTITE results, attrition rates, employment rates of graduates) for all ITE institutions and programs. The data in the Discussion Paper showing the considerable range of outcomes across institutions is significant but disguises the identification of measures with institutions and programs.
- The introduction of the Teacher Performance Assessments (TPAs) is supported, noting that 2021 is too early to assess their effectiveness. Further cross institutional collaboration, and benchmarking, under the current AITSL processes should be supported.
- There is a clear need for schools and school systems to systematically develop formal roles focused on expert mentoring and supervisory practices, to support ITE placements (traditional practicum, internships and redesigned Master of Teaching programs). The Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher certifications are proving very slow to develop into well-accepted and engaged recognition of expert teaching. The review could well recommend that better processes for recognising teacher expertise under the HALT framework should be developed. This could include recognition of expertise demonstrated in ITE/beginning teacher induction as a significant component of winning HALT certification. The Commonwealth might include this within its next round of funding agreements with the states and territories (including all schools and systems receiving funding as it is not just the public sector that should contribute to teacher preparation). Ch 10 of the Gallop Report further addresses this issue, including remuneration.

Finally, the review is urged to carefully consider the messaging and communication of any recommendations it resolves to make. There have been far too many excited announcements of minor projects, quick fix programs (as an example, the NSW announcement of fast tracking some fifty talented graduates and others new to the profession into principalships seems trivial in the context of a 2200 school system and is discourteous and dismissive of the efforts of the thousands of teachers currently working and striving for promotion). The initial messaging of the Teach for Australia program is a further example of tone deafness, leading to a decade of cynicism and opposition in many quarters, creating a barrier to a fair consideration of the potential value of such a program (initially sold as six weeks of intense preparation for bright graduates who will bring transformation to difficult to staff schools, under an expensive boutique program that sees the associates committed to just two years of teaching with a sense of missionary zeal, on their way to leadership roles in other areas of life where they will think kindly of those still teaching).

Recommendations should be directed towards program designs, and frameworks for productive partnerships across schools and ITE providers that operate for the preparation of the profession as a whole, focused on meeting the current and emerging needs and challenges of the school students of the nation in all their diversity.

