

I fervently believe teacher education should be in-service. This is based on my experience as a former student and current teacher. Before starting my Bachelor of Education (in-service) with UTAS, I had already completed one year of a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) at Charles Sturt and one year of a Bachelor of Education at UNSW and am able to compare the experiences.

The UTAS degree was all done online with the proviso that students volunteer in a classroom for at least three hours per week. I found this process so much more enriching and motivating than only doing a two week practical experience toward the end of the year in my other courses. I was able to relate everything I was learning each week to a real experience which I found exciting and stimulating. I was also able to engage in conversations with teachers and students on a regular basis which only further added to the depth of my understanding. Also, over the four years I was able to observe a variety of teachers in a variety of contexts and became aware of the various teaching styles, strategies as well as challenges teachers may face according to the students they had.

I completed a nine week and seven week practicum on top of this and when I walked into a classroom as a qualified teacher for the first time, I felt confident and well equipped to do the job. I was well aware of behavioural challenges and the importance of relationships between colleagues, students and parents. I understood the importance of proper preparation and professional expectations. Basically, 'I knew what I was in for'!

As a current teacher, I believe that workload and uninteresting Professional Development days are two factors that may influence a teacher to reconsider their career. Teachers should not have to be organising events such as carnivals, excursions, special days on top of their already busy schedule. An administrator could take on these tasks. I think Professional Development days should be teaching us skills not have us analysing data. This is boring and not useful. Professional Development should stimulate and excite teachers and provide them with new skills and knowledge that they can use in the classroom. Analysing data and comparing your school with others is not productive. Again, this job can be done by administrators and school leaders who make the decisions about how to use the data and then provide teachers with learning opportunities based on this. For example; the recent "Tell them from me survey" results were analysed in the last whole school PD under the heading wellbeing. I initially thought we were going to be presented with skills to teach and support students with their wellbeing or perhaps how we as teachers can better look after ourselves.