



Queensland College of Teachers response to the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review

July 2021

Introduction

The Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Federal Government's Quality Initial Teacher Education Review.

The QCT is Queensland's teacher regulatory authority (TRA) responsible for registering teachers, accrediting and monitoring initial teacher education (ITE) programs in Queensland, and certifying Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers working in Queensland state schools and schools represented by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission.

The QCT recognises that a number of matters that play a critical role in attracting and retaining teachers – such as employment conditions and remuneration – sit outside our remit. For this reason, our submission's focus is on points in the discussion paper that relate to some of our legislated functions:

- granting teacher registration or permission to teach to eligible persons
- developing and applying professional standards for entry to, and continuing membership of, the teaching profession
- granting certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) to teachers employed in Queensland state schools and schools represented by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission
- accrediting and monitoring initial teacher education programs.

Overarching the QCT's submission are two key themes:

- the importance of a robust evidence base, that includes longitudinal studies, to inform policy change and evaluate the impact of that change
- the critical importance of high quality and consistent threshold tasks, assessed against a common benchmark, as a quality assurance mechanism across ITE providers to ensure high quality and classroom-ready graduate teachers.

These themes appear throughout our responses to the discussion paper questions.

In responding to the discussion paper, the QCT notes that some of the data used by the Expert Panel to ground assertions about ITE relates to 2018 or 2019 graduates from ITE programs. Given the reforms to ITE triggered by the *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* report were introduced after 2015 and undergraduate (ITE) programs are typically four years in length, graduate outcomes from 2018/19 would not fully reflect the extent of the reforms implemented.

It is imperative that in the context of ITE, which has been the subject of significant reform in the last decade (Louden, 2008), policy change is grounded in a robust and representative evidence base. This is a fundamental element of the policy cycle and is also an informing principle for national accreditation. Evaluation of the effectiveness of policy once implemented needs to occur in order to inform subsequent steps – be they amendment, maintenance, or cessation.

The QCT supports a long-term bipartisan strategy for education and the teaching profession that is pragmatic, supported by a robust evidence base, and not subject to short-term policy changes.

Since the release of the Action Now report, significant collaborative work has been completed by stakeholders across Queensland to implement the agreed reforms:

- Of the 62 initial teacher education programs currently taking enrolments in Queensland, 33 programs have engaged in a Stage 2 outcomes-based national accreditation.
- In Queensland there is a strong focus on continuous improvement and data-driven practice amongst ITE providers through annual reporting and Stage 2 accreditation.
- Queensland was one of the first jurisdictions with 100% implementation of endorsed Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs) in ITE programs.
- Queensland has achieved a consistent approach to the assessment of the final professional experience with a common report – the *Final professional experience recommendation* – implemented across all Queensland ITE providers under the agreed Queensland Professional Experience Reporting Framework.
- Queensland has seen 100% implementation of non-academic entry requirements, and successful completion of the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Programs (LANTITE) as a graduate requirement continues to be an expectation.
- Queensland has seen 100% implementation of primary specialisations in ITE programs.

In the context of this review, the QCT encourages the Expert Panel to consider the importance of outcomes in ITE programs, the impact of recent Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) reforms, an investigation of education systems that were early adopters of these reforms, and the need to support the collation of an evidence and data base to inform future decisions.

Relevant to the above, it is noted that the discussion paper, at times, draws examples from other contexts or raises concerns that are supported by pre-TEMAG data. For example, the discussion paper appears to suggest that preservice teachers with a higher ATAR score are more likely to complete an ITE program. It also appears to suggest that fewer high achieving preservice teachers are entering ITE programs (pp 4-5). Further, the data used in the discussion paper relates to 2009-2014 program commencement data.

The QCT looks forward to understanding the impact of TEMAG measures through more contemporary and discerning longitudinal research. One example is the study *Quality of Initial Teacher Education Through Longitudinal Analysis of Linked Datasets*, recently completed by the Australian Catholic University's Institute for Learning Sciences & Teacher Education. The research uses data from key ITE assessments (Professional Experience, LANTITE, Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA), academic program assessments (Grade Point Average)) to capture different performance trajectories of program cohorts from entry to separation or completion. Through this research, the authors

identify a set of strategic interventions and actions that could build on the good work and the significant reforms already completed in ITE.

Further to this, evaluations specific to the reforms required by TEMAG require greater attention in this subsequent review. For instance, the Queensland Council of Deans of Education has recently completed an evaluation of aspiring teachers' perception of Queensland's non-academic entry tool, the Non-Academic Requirement for Teacher Education (NARTE). Across 2018 to 2020 ITE intakes, over 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the NARTE enabled them to reflect on:

- why they wanted to be a teacher
- who or what inspired them to become a teacher
- why they feel teaching is a good career choice; and
- the skills and abilities that will make them a good teacher.

A more in-depth investigation of the findings of these reports may sustain impactful policy decisions from this subsequent ITE review.

1. Attracting high quality candidates into ITE matters

What can be done to attract more high-achievers and career changers to the profession?

In 2017, the QCT commissioned a study to investigate motivations for choosing teaching as a first or subsequent career, satisfaction with teaching as a career, and intentions for continuation in the profession (Wyatt Smith et al., 2017).

Importantly, attraction factors related closely to satisfaction with teaching. The study found that systems should be put in place to measure teacher satisfaction levels and use these to inform and improve workforce development and planning, and to develop strategies that retain teachers in the workplace. The study also recognised the importance of professional status and image to career satisfaction.

It was recommended that to promote the image of the teaching profession, educational leaders should aim to improve the community's, and the profession's own, perceptions of teaching. The study also recommended that to keep teachers in the profession, career development approaches should focus on strengthening teacher professionalisation.

Recommendations were also made that relate specifically to attracting high-achieving school leavers and career changers to the teaching profession. These included:

- Educational leaders should employ strategies to engage the media to support and enhance the positive status and image of teaching as a career.
- Opportunities for career advancement and leadership opportunities in primary schools should be promoted. Universities could re-assess their recruitment strategies considering the apparent lack of impact of traditional and contemporary marketing modes such as career fairs and internet sites and TV advertisements, identified in the report as having low levels of influence.
- The report identified the significant influence of teachers, friends, family and partners in selecting teaching as a first or subsequent career. School leaders and expert

teachers could identify prospective candidates for teaching while at school and foster interest through the years of schooling completion.

- Building on current initiatives in university-school partnerships, 'early achievers programs' or similar, will continue to open up university studies in relevant areas to foster student interest in teaching.
- Stakeholders involved in workforce planning will need to engage in continuous promotion of the status and image of the teaching profession by emphasising the impact teachers have on society, students' futures and the building of a productive, healthy future generation.
- Education leaders, TRAs and school leadership associations, could be part of the solution by identifying current teachers to promote teaching as a career choice. Prior teaching and learning experiences are strong motivational factors in career choices, and teachers have a significant degree of influence on their students' decisions to choose teaching as a career.
- Leaders responsible for teacher workforce planning need to consider targeted, attractive scholarships to profile teaching as a profession with the potential for strong career progression across a broad range of pathways including teaching, administration, planning and policy. Marketing and recruitment messages are required to target a wider audience including mature-age candidates with successful careers outside of teaching.
- Strategies to be developed are required to provide leadership opportunities for the 21-39 age groups. A main objective should be workforce planning and the potential for opening more diverse leadership opportunities that are aligned closely with sector strategic directions and policy priorities. Leadership opportunities or postgraduate studies in conjunction with ITE university providers that are attainable within the first few years of a career would serve to attract prospective teachers and retain beginning teachers.

It is important that in discussing ways to attract high achievers to teaching, consideration is given to the fact that people who excel in a particular subject area will have a passion for that subject area that may not be fulfilled in the context of classroom teaching. For example, someone who is gifted in the sciences may derive satisfaction from scientific research, but not in a classroom.

With that said, the impact of COVID-19 should not be underestimated. The global pandemic has had a significant influence on society's understanding of the work of teachers and the teaching profession, and in the context of mass unemployment and workforce instability, has demonstrated how stable employment as a teacher can be. It is too early to tell whether this will impact enrolments by career changers or school leavers in the near future. Interestingly, Queensland ITE programs experienced a larger intake of students in Semester 1 2021, than previous years.

Critically, in seeking to attract more high achievers and career changers to the teaching profession, the quality of ITE and the standards expected of the profession should not be compromised.

What factors influence the current education course selection of high-performing school students?

The 2021 Grattan Institute Report *Attracting High Achievers to Teaching* (2021) explored career motivations of high achieving young Australians aged 18-25. The study found that

factors such as the ability to make a difference, intellectual challenge, work-life balance and security and stability ranked as the most important. However, while 70% of respondents indicated they would consider teaching, the study found that there was a perceived lack of intellectual challenge and pay in teaching (Grattan Institute, 2021).

In relation to school-leavers specifically, the QCT study *Why Choose Teaching* suggested guidance and career officers have little influence on career decisions to enter teaching. Accordingly, the role and influence of guidance and career officers could be reassessed or refocused.

It also found that intrinsic motivation is identified as having a critical influence on candidates' decisions to enter teaching. Educational leaders at system and local levels need to capitalise on the desire of potential teacher candidates to assist students and the community to improve individual life outcomes and wellbeing. This recommendation applies across phases of schooling and is particularly the case for attracting Indigenous Australians into teaching (Wyatt Smith et al., 2017).

What features of the current ITE system may prevent high-quality mid- to late- career professionals transitioning to teaching? Has the move to a two-year masters affected your decision to enter ITE?

Elements of the discussion paper prompt consideration of alternative pathway models and adjustments to the form, entry requirements and content of ITE programs. Ultimately, irrespective of the inputs to programs, two considerations are imperative:

- (i) the outcome in terms of high quality and classroom ready graduate teachers
- (ii) understanding that alternative pathways and structures may not meet the current qualification requirements specified in legislation governing TRAs.

In 2010, concerns had been raised about the adequacy of single-year ITE programs. Post-graduate one-year primary programs, in particular, were considered too short to provide the level of curriculum, pedagogical and discipline content knowledge and professional experience required to produce well prepared graduate teachers.

In 2011, the first iteration of the *National Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures) document was developed by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in consultation with ITE providers, TRAs and other stakeholders. One of the key reforms introduced by the Standards and Procedures was that professional studies in education would comprise at least two years of full-time equivalent study.

Since then, a decade has passed and the complexities and requirements of teaching are significantly greater. Accreditation program requirements have also prescribed additional standards for graduate entry primary programs including elements such as primary specialisations and the inclusion of at least three-eighths of a year equivalent full time student load (EFTSL) dedicated to English/literacy, including at least one-eighth of a year EFTSL for early reading instruction. This has led to a situation where ITE providers are hard-pressed to ensure coverage of all required content in a two-year program.

With that said however, in Queensland, efforts have been made by some providers to accelerate these programs, and 7 out of the 19 Master of Teaching programs can be completed in 18 months while containing the equivalent of a two-year student load. Of these programs, three are secondary and the remaining four are early childhood or primary. It

should be noted that in the initial stages of the Master of Teaching programs being introduced, more programs than at present were able to be completed in 18 months. Understanding that entrants into a Master of Teaching program are often career changers, feedback from graduates in fast-tracked programs persuaded some ITE providers to revert to the traditional two calendar years for completion. The competing workloads of an accelerated ITE course with other life commitments were not tenable for some students.

A balance needs to be struck between program quality and program length. Alternative accelerated programs that combine employment with practical experience and study, such as La Trobe University's Nexus Program or Teach for Australia (TFA), may look to pose a potential solution; however, the costs and resources associated with these programs may hinder scalability. In addition, the structure of these programs may require (and they would in Queensland), an increase in the application of the alternative permission to teach provisions of a TRA's legislative capability. It is also important to consider these challenges within the context of the rate of attrition from the profession experienced by alternative accelerated programs.

Programs like TFA and the UK's Now Teach program are also based on the feasibility of school-based training programs. While potentially offering a flexible solution to career changers and supporting workforce shortages, these benefits need to be balanced with the need to ensure a high-quality and robust ITE program, child safety and high-quality learning for school students.

The growth of micro-credentials and alternative models of program structure across higher education more broadly, such as six-week modules rather than 12-week semesters, may offer a solution to make completion of an ITE program more amenable to career changers.

More flexible study options that allow postgraduate students to manage study easily with other work, family and recreational commitments may offer a solution. The need for such options was most recently demonstrated in the 2020 Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) data, which indicated that across all discipline areas (not just ITE), health, stress, financial difficulties, or that expectations were not met by the program were the most common reasons for students to consider leaving their program. Judging from the GOS data, the challenges for career changes are not unique to ITE.

Importantly, however, in the context of a review that has as one of its lines of inquiry a focus on attracting high achievers to teaching, policy decisions about teacher education and its length, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level or form, need to be considered in the context of professional status and quality. In a study commissioned by the QCT on promotion of the teaching profession, it was noted that there are multiple interpretations of professional status, one being occupational status which relates to the knowledge required by the profession in comparison to others. This has a significant influence on how the profession itself, and the public, perceives its status. Accordingly, any reforms that serve to publicly simplify a complex profession, may be detrimental to the status of teaching (Bahr et al., 2018) and may speak to concerns regarding the retention of early career teachers.

2. ITE program completions and entry into a teaching career

Are low completion rates an issue? What is the impact? Can low completion rates be addressed?

The discussion paper cites commencement and completion data from students who commenced a course between 2005 and 2014.

The accreditation standards, which were revised following the introduction of the TEMAG reforms, have introduced significant changes to ITE programs in Australia post-2015. For that reason, it is suggested that it is too early to tell whether these changes have had an impact on matters such as completion rates. Accordingly, a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of these reforms at a time that will generate relevant data is needed before any assertions about completion rates are made.

Presently, the Standards and Procedures require providers to demonstrate, as part of their accreditation, how they identify and support students who may be at risk of failure or non-completion. The results of these developments can be seen in the 2020 Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) data, which showed that teacher education students reported lesser falls than students in most other study areas for student experience during COVID-19 and that teacher education programs in 2020 saw a 75% positive rating in student support (QILT, 2020).

Critically it is important to acknowledge that not all attrition should be seen as unwelcome. The discussion paper cites first-year attrition rates of students commencing an ITE program in 2018. To draw any reliable conclusions, this data ought to be considered by comparison to other years and it would be relevant to also understand trends into 2019 and 2020. That aside, first-year attrition in ITE can be considered a positive – it indicates that ITE programs are properly structured to ensure first-year students have adequate early exposure to school contexts and the realities of the profession. This means that individuals who may not be fit for teaching are choosing to move out of programs before they invest too much time and financial resources in a career that is not right for them. This also may be prompted by early attempts at completing the LANTITE. Again, this is positive because it is attrition of those who are unable to meet the requisite standard.

Is the degree of variability in completion rates between providers ideal? What could be done to address this?

Variability between ITE providers should be understood in the context of the geographically and demographically diverse cohorts of students who are undertaking ITE programs. As the discussion paper notes, there are particular student characteristics that may present challenges to completion (p 10). Different ITE providers operate in very different circumstances across Australia and have different 'cohorts of interest'. For example, some providers may, due to context, have many external or part-time mature-age students or students from economically challenging backgrounds.

Key findings in *Quality of Initial Teacher Education Through Longitudinal Analysis of Linked Datasets* (Wyatt-Smith et al, 2021) linked to completion of an ITE program suggest:

- Diverse demographic characteristics and admissions pathways impact on the timing and successful completion of key assessments.

- Timing and grouping of assessments are consequential for ITE outcomes.
- Failure in a professional experience placement most often leads to non-completion of the program.

Pursuant to their obligations set out in Program Standard 6 of the Program Standards, ITE providers will gather and analyse data about such cohorts to inform program changes and improvements.

To support providers in these efforts, one solution could be to develop a research-based set of best practices for implementing supportive strategies for cohorts or individual students that are at risk of non-completion.

In Queensland, all ITE providers have undergone at least one Stage 2 accreditation process, which means providers have considered the evidence and data collected on cohorts from at least one ITE program to inform future developments within that program. As ITE providers across Australia continue to move through the ongoing evidence-based quality assurance cycle of Stage 2 accreditation, it is likely that evidence-based program changes will positively influence graduate outcomes. This issue should be included in any evaluation of the impact of accreditation changes in the future when there is sufficient data and evidence to inform such an evaluation.

It may also be worth mentioning that, as the discussion paper notes, it is desirable to have a diverse teaching population. This means there is also a need to facilitate completion of an ITE program by people for whom completion is socially and financially more challenging. Consideration needs to be given to provide greater access for all ITE students to social and financial support mechanisms.

Should more be done to identify suitability for a career in teaching earlier in the degree or before entry to ITE? What might this look like?

In short, ITE providers are required to impose non-academic entry requirements and academic entry requirements that are consistent with engagement with a rigorous higher education program, the requirements of the particular program, and subsequent success in professional teaching practice. Further, in order for ITE providers to meet program coherency requirements, providers tend to ensure that professional experience occurs early in the program so that students can identify their own suitability for a teaching career at an early stage.

In terms of efforts to identify suitability for a career in teaching before entry to an ITE program, replication of programs that support the direction of school students to teaching should be considered.

Unique partnerships or innovations

ITE providers across Queensland have a range of academic extension programs for high achieving Year 10, 11 or 12 students to study one university subject a semester while working towards their Queensland Certificate of Education. Such programs include Central Queensland University's Start Uni Now, Queensland University of Technology's START, Griffith University's GUESTS program, Christian Heritage College's Launch Program and University of Sunshine Coast and University of Southern Queensland's respective Headstart programs.

2. Does the supply of teachers entering the workforce match areas of need?

Have you experienced teacher shortages? Has it been in a particular subject area or region?

The QCT is able to use the number of Permission to Teach (PTT) applications as a proxy indicator of teacher shortages. Critically, this is not the only indicator; others include the number of teachers teaching out of field, the number of teachers found teaching who are not approved, and vacancy rates. PTT is an approval granted with strict parameters, and for a limited period of time, for a person who is not a registered teacher to perform teaching duties. Requirements include that there is a vacant position, and the school is unable to find an appropriate registered teacher to fill this. Approval under a PTT can indicate an unmet need for teachers in particular subject areas and/or geographical locations. In 2020, 211 applications for PTT were approved: an increase on the number approved in 2019 (178). This is, however, an extremely small number compared to the number of teaching positions filled by registered teachers.

Overall, however, the number of approved teachers in Queensland grows each year. Between 31 December 2016 and 31 December 2020, the Queensland register of teachers increased by 6665 teachers, bringing the total number of teachers in Queensland to 111,175 at the end of 2020. However, these numbers need to be considered in the context of a growing student population throughout Queensland.

The QCT's Principals Engagement Reference Group provides a source of anecdotal feedback from school leaders about teacher shortages in Queensland schools. Over the last five years, commentary has shifted from being about particular subject-specific teacher shortages towards more large-scale shortages that are across subject areas, geographical areas (including metropolitan schools) and sectors.

One option to alleviate subject area shortages may lie in the existing teacher population. Teachers should not be required to teach outside their subject area, because this is potentially detrimental to student learning. Accordingly, provision of extensive professional development to up-skill teachers to teach in another subject area may provide a solution. Such a solution should, however, be accompanied by appropriate support in the form of time and collegial support.

Alternatively, sector and system level initiatives and digital solutions such as those run by Distance Education Schools could enable a registered teacher who is a subject specialist to alleviate subject area and geographical shortages in their jurisdiction.

Should something be done to match the supply of teachers from ITE providers with the demands of jurisdictions and sectors, what would this look like?

In short, providers already work closely with jurisdictions and sectors to match supply and demand in Queensland. Under Program Standard 2, providers are required to demonstrate that their program development, design, and delivery has taken account of contemporary and emerging developments in education, curriculum requirements, community expectations and local, employer and national system needs, including workforce demands and teaching specialisations.

As part of Stage 1 accreditation, ITE providers are required to provide a rationale for their selection criteria based on feedback and input from stakeholders, specifically workforce demands. At Stage 2 accreditation, ITE providers demonstrate how they have worked with employers and sectors to meet workforce demand, and how they have changed or will change their program to better meet demand in future. With the rollout of a new Queensland Senior Secondary syllabus, Queensland ITE providers have moved to expand or align their secondary teaching area specialisations with the new school curriculum areas. To afford a breadth of teaching specialisation opportunities in an ITE program, ITE providers have employed a range of models that still meet accreditation requirements. Most common is the combination of all discipline areas in generalist junior and senior curriculum and pedagogy units with school-based curriculum specialists delivering discipline specific tutorials.

Ultimately though, ITE providers can only support those teaching areas that attract demand from ITE enrolments. However, incentives through scholarships or employer partnerships may influence subject area decisions.

Are there examples of incentives that have successfully worked to attract quality teachers in areas of shortage? How could these be rolled out more broadly?

While workforce matters do not specifically fall within the remit of the QCT's legislated functions, comment can be made generally in relation to initiatives that potentially attract quality teachers in subject or geographical areas of shortage.

Historically, scholarships have served to alleviate workforce shortages in specific regions. Financial reward, including financial support to enable professional experience in regional and remote locations, alongside support with family settlement can provide incentives to teachers who may not ordinarily opt to teach in an area of shortage. However, such incentive measures need to be considered in the context of communities and need to be implemented carefully to avoid a scenario where there is a *revolving door* of teachers in a geographical area.

Further, recruitment campaigns may serve to alleviate geographical and subject area shortages. Sustained campaigns that address aspects of the teaching profession that will help to cast the profession and the work of teaching in a positive light, may attract quality teachers and prospective teachers to particular subject areas.

4. Are graduate teachers ready for the classroom?

Are the APST fit for purpose in identifying the key knowledge and skills preservice teachers need to be ready for the classroom? Do they adequately reflect the role of teachers in supporting preservice and graduate teachers?

The 2016 evaluation of the implementation of the APST, which was conducted by AITSL and the University of Melbourne, found that more work was to be done to ensure systematic updating and awareness of the standards to ensure sustainability. However, it noted that preservice teachers had the best knowledge of the APST when compared to their more experienced teacher counterparts. Since that study, TRAs have completed significant work in embedding the APST across regulatory processes including ITE accreditation, transition to full registration, registration renewal and certification. Given greater uptake of certification

across the country, assessment of how the APST are taught, practised, and assessed in ITE programs, and generational shifts in the profession, it is likely that implementation and uptake has improved dramatically. Accordingly, now would be an opportune time for AITSL to work with TRAs, school sectors and higher education providers to complete another evaluation of the APST implementation.

In relation to the fitness for purpose of the APST, it is noted that the discussion paper does not make any significant reference to the APST but does extract some 'focus areas' related to understanding and implementing effective teaching strategies in the context of discussion of content in ITE programs.

The discussion paper then goes on to note the UK's Initial Teacher Training (ITT) core framework and seems to suggest that such an approach is preferable. It states that the UK has taken 'a more direct approach to the content of ITE courses'. Page 4 of the Framework outlines that it is not an expression of the full ITT curriculum for trainee teachers. The introduction to the Framework explains that the complexity of the process for becoming a teacher cannot be overestimated and it remains for individual providers to design curricula appropriate for the subject, phase, and age range that the trainee will be teaching.

The ITT Framework, like the APST, is designed to be applicable across all UK classroom contexts. The APST are to be interpreted and understood in-context, and the language of the Standards is intentionally sufficiently broad and flexible that irrespective of resourcing, geography, phase of learning or experience, a teacher will be able to understand and evaluate their practice through application of the APST. Accordingly, the QCT recommends that rather than query fitness-for-purpose, the Expert Panel should consider how AITSL can be supported to develop resources that will help teachers translate and contextualise the APST to their specific, unique, contemporary context.

Are ITE programs preparing graduates for teaching diverse student cohorts, including through cultural competency and inclusive education?

In assessing this element of an accreditation submission, panels take a rigorous approach to assessment and are mindful of ensuring logical and constructive development of all 37 Descriptors in the program. Standard 1 concerns knowing students and how they learn, and focuses on the physical, social, and intellectual characteristics of students, students with diverse backgrounds (including diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds), supporting the full range of student ability (including students with a disability), and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Moreover, ITE programs are required to teach the Australian Curriculum, which includes intercultural understanding as one of its general capabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures as a cross-curriculum priority. ITE programs are required to demonstrate, through their accreditation processes, how each descriptor, including the elements of each descriptor outlined above, of the APST is taught, practised and assessed across the program.

With the above factors in mind, results from critical tasks that specifically develop and assess a preservice teacher's preparedness across diverse student cohorts, at a graduate level, should be a focus point for review and program renewal at Stage 2 accreditation.

What are the benefits and costs of the number of TPAs in operation?

In Queensland, significant early collaborative work was done to ensure a limited number of TPAs were introduced and implemented. Currently in Queensland, two TPAs are in operation across all ten institutions. The Graduate Teaching Performance Assessment (GTPA) and the Queensland Teaching Performance Assessment (QTPA) are amongst the first three TPAs to be endorsed by the Expert Advisory Group (EAG). This has only been achieved because of the significant levels of goodwill and commitment to design, trial and moderate TPAs across Queensland ITE providers, and a commitment by Queensland stakeholders to promote a consistent approach.

While the QCT is unable to comment on costs associated with having numerous TPAs, anecdotal evidence from Queensland stakeholders suggests there are benefits to having fewer TPAs. In particular, supervising teachers, principals, preservice teachers, and providers have discussed the benefits of consistency and transparency in the process and the reduced burden for schools and sectors with only two TPAs.

Feedback from graduates who complete the TPA indicates that it is valuable in enabling them to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and practices. Further, anecdotal evidence suggests that experienced teachers are even taking elements of TPAs to use as professional learning activities.

To further improve and consolidate the positive impact of TPAs, the QCT would encourage efforts to support moderation to ensure national consistency in TPA quality across the board. Critically, to support such efforts, ITE providers need to be incentivised to work together in cross-institutional moderation to demonstrate scoring consistency at a passing graduate level. It is recognised that this is already evidenced across some TPAs but not explicitly demonstrable across others. This is a necessary precondition to support inter-TPA moderation. Investment in digital infrastructure and quality assurance systems and processes is also necessary. This will include establishing data custodians and data security, confidentiality and privacy expectations in order to facilitate online moderation processes at scale (Wyatt-Smith et al, 2021).

How could the TPA endorsement process be improved? Are the current arrangements leading to quality outcomes?

TRAs have been working closely with AITSL to help AITSL develop clearer EAG reports, and work with the EAG and ITE providers to determine when changes to a TPA require endorsement.

In the Queensland context, the QCT is confident in the threshold standards required of the GTPA and the QTPA. Through Stage 2 accreditation processes, the QCT consistently follows up on benchmarking processes to ensure all TPAs are engaged in relevant cross-institutional moderation and TPA data analytics to inform program renewal and quality assurance.

The QCT considers the continued implementation of robust TPAs to generate quality outcomes over time and supports evaluation and research on TPA effectiveness with the endorsement of higher education providers and school sectors to facilitate evidence-based research.

Do the current professional experience arrangements support the preparation of ITE students for the classroom and school environment? How could these be improved?

It should be noted that since the move to national accreditation program requirements, time in schools and the professional experience days in Queensland ITE programs have substantially decreased, albeit still meeting the national standards. This includes the removal of internships from program structures.

A number of external factors have contributed to these reductions in time in schools, including the changing demographic of ITE students, changes to the requirements of program structures, competing ITE curriculum expectations and an increasing pressure on finding suitable professional experience placements in schools. These considerations, in combination with the increasing trend in PTT applications and a call from regional and remote schools to encourage more preservice teachers to their communities, suggests new models for the implementation and support of professional experience could be considered.

However, as with the structure of ITE programs, alternative professional experience structures require consultation with TRAs and employing sectors to ensure child safety, adherence to legislative requirements, supported communities of practice for both supervising and preservice teachers and quality outcomes from ITE programs through consistent and moderated assessment. Strengthening the connection between course work and professional experience requires a system-level approach and commitment that enables sustainable partnerships between schools and ITE providers.

The QCT is only able to comment in relation to efforts that have occurred in Queensland to secure a consistent and high-quality approach to professional experience. This has been achieved through a single partnership agreement between employers and ITE providers, the Queensland Professional Experience Reporting Framework (QPERF) and the *Final professional experience recommendations*.

In Queensland, state and non-state employing sectors and ITE providers have negotiated to develop a macro-level partnership agreement which strengthens the links between school sectors and ITE providers to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to provision of high-quality professional experience for Queensland's ITE programs.

The partnership agreement supports the implementation of the QPERF, which enables a streamlined and moderated approach to the assessment of professional experience for all Queensland preservice teachers. The QPERF is a reflection of the shared commitment of ITE providers and employers to providing opportunities for preservice teachers to develop their knowledge and skills using an authentic and consistent assessment process. The QPERF provides consistency and clarity across sectors and ITE providers. It asks that evidence of preservice teacher practice in a school setting has been demonstrated and that preservice teachers receive constructive feedback on their performance.

The QPERF also clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of the preservice teacher, the higher education institution representative, the supervising teacher, the site coordinator and the school leader in the delivery of professional experience.

Importantly, the final professional experience recommendation report and the university assessment of TPAs are critical to a moderated assessment of a preservice teacher's readiness to teach from the perspective of both the school practitioner and the university.

The QCT recognises that research and evaluation of the moderation of teaching practice assessment and research in the consistency of judgements against the APST would support consistent and equitable authentic assessment of preservice teachers.

Outside this approach, the QCT has received anecdotal feedback that preservice teachers wish to experience all phases of the school year and the teaching and learning cycle that plays out over a term or semester. Under the Standards and Procedures, ITE providers are under an obligation to source sufficiently diverse professional experience opportunities. Logistically, this can be challenging at times, and so initiatives to provide more release time for prospective supervising teachers, transport and accommodation supports for preservice teachers in rural and remote communities and professional development for supervising teachers would be welcome.

Do the current course accreditation arrangements support ITE students being taught evidence-based high-impact teaching strategies? How could this be improved?

Under the current course accreditation arrangements, ITE providers are required to demonstrate how and where in the program they have Taught, Practised and Assessed all 37 Descriptors of the APST.

Specifically, Standard 1 focuses on knowing students and how they learn, and requires that teachers be responsive to their students, research on teaching and learning, and use teaching strategies in an informed way to support student learning. Standard 2, Know the content and how to teach it, requires teachers to know and organise content in such a way that best supports student learning.

Outside consideration of the APST specifically, all Queensland ITE programs also include deep consideration of cognitive development and the science behind learning and teaching.

In addition, under the accreditation requirements all preservice teachers are required to complete a TPA, which requires preservice teachers to demonstrate:

- what they want students to learn
- how they will facilitate this learning
- how they will know if students have achieved this learning.

It is accordingly a key mechanism by which programs can demonstrate preservice teachers' impact on student learning.

Critically, the APST and the TPA do not prescribe the use of any specific evidence-based high impact teaching strategies. This is important, because particular strategies may have a 'high-impact' in one context, but not in another. Accordingly, the role of the teacher is to be aware of different strategies available, know where to source information and research about strategies, diagnose the needs of their students, and apply relevant teaching strategies.

Through strong delivery of the APST and use of the TPA in ITE programs, course accreditation requirements presently do support use of evidence-based and high impact teaching strategies.

5. The role of teachers and school leaders in supporting the next generation of teachers

How can ITE providers best support teachers in their ongoing professional learning?

ITE providers do not have a direct role to support teachers in their ongoing professional learning outside their obligations set out in the Standards and Procedures. Pursuant to Standard 5, part of the way that ITE providers support delivery of professional experience is through the provision of professional learning opportunities for supervising teachers.

Outside of this, ITE providers are required to ensure that all 37 of the APST are evidenced in an ITE program, thereby equipping graduate teachers with a robust and contemporary knowledge and skill set to make them classroom ready.

Standard 6 of the APST concerns professional learning and sets out the expectations of classroom teachers for engaging in professional learning and with colleagues to improve practice and student learning. Graduate teachers are well-equipped with a strong sense of professional identity, which includes recognition of the need for ongoing professional learning.

Additionally, there is significant work underway in the development of micro-credentials and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which potentially could be a source of ongoing professional development for teachers. However, providers' capacity to develop and deliver such resources is heavily constrained by funding arrangements and staff capacity.

Do the current HALT arrangements support the education ecosystem, particularly in relation to ensuring quality mentoring and supervision of ITE students, and how could HALTS support the development of ITE students and newly graduated teachers? What would this look like? What changes to current arrangements would be required to give effect to this?

It is important to note at the outset that the original policy intention of certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers was to secure career opportunities for teachers without requiring them to leave the classroom. Certification is designed to recognise and reward excellence in classroom practice and ensure Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers remain before students.

Generally, Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers are high achieving teachers who tend to take on greater responsibilities such as mentoring and supervision of initial teacher education students. However, certified teachers should not become the single source of mentoring and supervision in a school, nor should the responsibility of organising and arranging the support and development of preservice and beginning teachers fall solely on certified teachers. It is imperative that certified teachers remain in the classroom, achieving improved outcomes for school students.

Opportunities, however, need to be made available for teachers across the school to take on this responsibility through securing of release time and appropriate training. Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers could serve as a knowledge base for other teachers. For instance, with appropriate release time and support, such as relevant professional development, Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers can provide mentoring and coaching

to other teachers about teaching practice, support for preservice and beginning teachers, or applying for certification.

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