

# Response to the Draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

Australian Institute for Teaching and  
School Leadership (AITSL)

November 2022



AITSL acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, sea country and waterways from across Australia.

We honour and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.

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# A comprehensive approach to the teacher workforce

AITSL welcomes Ministers' commitment to develop a National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (Action Plan). The draft Action Plan released for consultation goes a long way towards putting in place a comprehensive strategy that reaches across the teacher life cycle. Australian teachers and school leaders have immense expertise, and make a difference to the lives of children and young people every day. At the same time, the issues facing the profession are complex and require sustained attention. The Action Plan should be seen as the first step in a multi-year strategy to attract, prepare, place, induct, develop, recognise and retain the expertise of teachers.

## What is the problem?

The proposal in the draft Action Plan to collect, publish and make use of national supply and demand data is welcome. Even without nationally consistent data, there is anecdotal evidence that pressure on the teacher workforce is growing. The problem is often seen as one of supply and demand, and to some extent it is. It is important, however, to take a broad view of both supply and demand and centre the issues in attraction and retention. Supply of teachers depends not only on new teachers coming through initial teacher education and migration, but also on retaining and developing the existing workforce, and potentially attracting qualified people back into the profession. The demand picture is also nuanced. Shortages may exist in particular schools or subject areas, even where there is not an overall teacher shortage. Deployment of the existing workforce within schools and making the most of their expertise is critical.

Teaching is not immune to trends in the modern workforce. It is not realistic to expect that most teachers will enter the profession at a relatively young age, progress slowly in their careers, and retire decades later. A quarter of initial teacher education graduates are aged over thirty years, and a quarter of early career teachers are aged over 40. Around a third of initial teacher education graduates have studied at the postgraduate level. It is likely that more and more teachers will move in and out of the profession. Everything from teacher preparation, to development, to deployment of teachers, to the way we talk about the profession and its rewards, will need to acknowledge this reality.

In addition, around 10% of current teachers are on casual contracts. Many of these may now have found more permanent roles, for example in tutoring schemes introduced to offset the impacts of the pandemic, reducing the pool of casual relief teachers available to meet any future needs. It is important that the career pathways, professional learning and expertise of these teachers are considered in any national plan.

In summary, a comprehensive national teacher workforce strategy needs to focus on attraction and retention. It should be based on analysis of the current and future nature of the career structure of teaching, and take into account future enablers and barriers to the attraction and retention of teachers and school leaders.

## Making a lasting difference

To genuinely have an impact on the quality of teaching and school leadership in Australia, the Action Plan needs to be the first step in a long-term strategy. These actions should be evaluated and modified based on their impact. Ministers' agreement to the Action Plan should also be the beginning of a deeper examination of longer-term issues such as the future of the teaching profession, the

organisation of work in schools, and the career pathways that can develop and make best use of the expertise of Australian teachers and school leaders.

AITSL proposes that a serious effort to support and esteem the teaching profession should have three main characteristics. This strategy should be:

- Comprehensive
- Sustained
- Adaptive

### Comprehensive

AITSL's *Teaching Futures* paper proposed a model of the teacher life cycle that can guide action to increase teacher numbers and effectiveness. Coordinated action across these areas is the key to making real inroads into persistent problems.

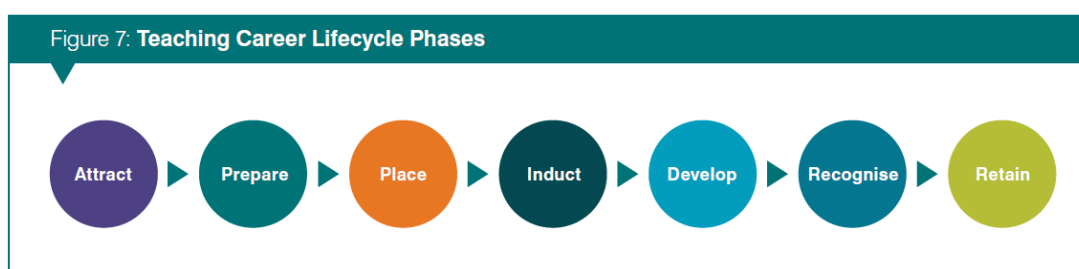


Figure 8: Teaching Career Lifecycle Phases and Supports

● <b>Attract</b>	Incentives, perceptions, career pathways and motivators, initial teacher education program quality.
● <b>Prepare</b>	Initial teacher education program quality, leadership mentoring and preparation, industry partnerships, teacher registration.
● <b>Place</b>	Placement according to vacancies or skills needs, progression across or between schools.
● <b>Induct</b>	Early career teaching load, support, induction processes, mentoring, collaboration, professional identity and wellbeing.
● <b>Develop</b>	Professional learning, instructional coaching, reflection, career and leadership pathways, feedback and review.
● <b>Recognise</b>	Status of the profession, career pathways, recognition of expertise.
● <b>Retain</b>	Incentives, workplace experience, teacher and school leader wellbeing.

Figure 1 AITSL's *Teaching Futures: A National Teacher Workforce Strategy for Australia 2020*

**Attachment 1** maps the initiatives in the draft Action Plan to these career phases. This overview analysis shows that the draft Action Plan covers all areas. Only one action covers induction, which is a critical career phase. It is important that the proposed induction guidelines and supports are comprehensive and effective. Otherwise, there is a focus on the early stages of a teaching career, and slightly less on developing and recognising the existing workforce. Although not called out separately in the *Teaching Futures* model above, the decisions made by leaders on deployment of staff within schools are critical and need to be supported by any workforce strategy. The workforce strategy also needs to take into account the current and future nature of the workforces. The character of the workforce has evolved while remaining predominantly female (75%) and full time (58% classroom teachers). The workforce is older (38% of registered teachers are over 50; and 47% of classroom teachers), 17% of registered teachers were born overseas, early career teachers start in the profession often in their 30s (25% of students complete initial teacher education (ITE) aged 31 or more; 53% of teachers in their first 5 years are aged over 30), and may be mid career changers and come to the profession with diverse ITE study pathways (online: 20%, multi-modal: 23%). Additionally there is evidence of increasing stresses in teaching – increased workloads (average full-time working

hours: 55.6 hours), and persistent claims of burn out and stress. It is critical that we understand both the reasons that teachers stay and leave the profession, along with the changing nature of work in the wider community, so that we can plan career pathways and opportunities that will optimise retention.

Implementing the initiatives in the draft Action Plan should not come at the expense of considering other initiatives. For example, the current draft says little about the role of teacher pay in attracting and retaining staff, about teaching out of field and strategies to mitigate its impact, or the ways in which teachers and leaders can select and evaluate effective professional learning, all of which are significant conditions influencing demand and supply.

### Sustained

Delivering a comprehensive approach will take time. While refining the actions in the draft Action Plan based on consultation is important, the real impact will come from a longer-term effort to develop, sustain, esteem and make best use of the expertise of teachers and school leaders. Future priorities should be based on consultation with the profession and evaluation of the impact of the first set of actions.

A longer-term focus will also allow the strategy to move beyond addressing immediate issues. For example, shortfalls in teacher supply require immediate action, but preventing future supply issues requires longer-term attention to career pathways, teacher development and other strategies to increase retention of the existing workforce and make teaching attractive to new entrants.

### Adaptive

A long-term strategy must have the capacity to adapt based on evidence of what is and isn't working. The Action Plan should be accompanied by a clear theory of change and evaluation strategy. The impact of individual initiatives should be measured, and new initiatives chosen based on a strong evidence base.

In this context, the draft Action Plan's commitment to collecting and publishing better data on the workforce is vital. The Australian Teacher Workforce Data (ATWD) initiative has already supplied rich data that can play a part in this evaluation, and more data will create a clearer picture of progress.

The draft Action Plan has a broad focus that is welcome. The following sections provide AITSL's views on what would make the most difference in each of the six areas identified, including longer-term actions that could be considered in future.

### High-Impact Actions

Of the areas for action identified in the Action Plan, there are some where AITSL believes reform directions are clear, and can have a particularly high impact, and others where more investigation is required to ensure the next steps are well targeted.

AITSL's priorities for immediate action are:

- Developing a **national labour market model**, as envisaged by Actions 19 and 20. Having accurate information on the state of the teacher labour market is vital in its own right, and is also critical for targeting many of the actions in the draft Action Plan, and for understanding their impact.
- **Increasing numbers of certified highly accomplished and lead teachers.** The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers have four levels, but fewer than 0.3% of teachers are currently certified at the higher levels. This does not reflect the number of expert teachers in Australia and undersells the expertise that exists in the teaching workforce. Taken together, the commitments to set a target for the number of certified teachers (Action 3), streamline the certification process (Action 27) and create career pathways for expert teachers (Action 24) are the beginning of a comprehensive strategy to address this problem.
- **Progressing reform in initial teacher education.** The Quality Initial Teacher Education Review made a set of recommendations that build on the work done over the past decade to improve initial teacher education. The work of the Teacher Education Expert Panel (Action

10) to advise on implementing these recommendations is a chance to implement urgent reforms. Chief among these is the establishment of a national board to oversee, develop and promulgate information about the quality and consistency of ITE programs. This board would have a particular focus on overseeing the quality of Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs). The capacity of TPAs to provide assurance of the quality of graduates from ITE is critical to enabling innovation in ITE without compromising quality.

In other areas, AITSL advocates for an investment in greater understanding of what would work best to address particular issues. These areas include:

- In relation to maximising time to teach, **analyses of the work that is done within schools**, who does it, what qualifications are required to do it, how much time they devote to it, what can be reduced or eliminated, and what is the most effective use of staff time.
- In relation to improving teacher supply, better understanding the employment patterns and preferences of **casual relief teachers**, their access to professional learning and ways to retain them in the workforce.
- Also in relation to improving teacher supply, better understanding **what would attract particular cohorts to teaching**, and what the key barriers are.
- In relation to better understanding future teacher workforce needs, better understanding the **drivers of actual attrition**, as opposed to stated intentions to leave.

# Elevating the profession

The status of the profession is a critical factor in attracting and retaining teachers. The value placed on teaching also influences policy, which should be based on making the most of the expertise of teachers. Valuing, developing and leveraging the great expertise that exists in the Australian teaching workforce is the pathway to improving student outcomes.

There is evidence that the status of the teaching profession is high with the general public. Teachers regularly appear near the top of lists of the most trusted professions. There is a gap between this finding and various studies that show teachers do not feel valued. It is important that any communication efforts are directed as much at teachers themselves as at the general public.

## Comments on specific actions

<p>1. A targeted national campaign to raise the status and value the role of teachers</p>	<p>As discussed above, the real issue is teachers' perceptions of the value placed on the profession. Any campaign should have the profession itself as a primary audience, and focus on ensuring the profession values its own expertise, understands the esteem in which the public holds teachers, and thus makes joining the profession more attractive.</p>
<p>2. Creation of new Australian Teacher of the Year awards</p>	<p>These actions are welcome efforts to acknowledge the expertise that exists in Australian schools. To have maximum impact, they should focus on teachers who have demonstrated their expertise through a rigorous assessment program or initiative. Honours should be targeted at recognised expert teachers who have achieved, for example, national certification at the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers or another program assessing to an equivalent standard. This will ensure clear and consistent messages about what excellent teaching looks like.</p>
<p>3. Encourage members of the public to nominate teachers for Medals of the Order of Australia</p>	
<p>4. Targets to increase the number of classroom teachers recognised as high achieving and highly accomplished</p>	<p>Setting a target is an important driver of action to increase numbers of certified highly accomplished and lead teachers. AITSL looks forward to working with stakeholders to take meaningful action to open up certification to many more expert teachers. As part of this, national quality assurance structures are required to ensure those certified are demonstrating excellent teaching practice to a nationally consistent standard. These quality assurance structures complement the intent of Action 21 of the draft Action Plan.</p>



# Improving teacher supply

Although supply is part of the picture, it is unlikely to address most workforce pressures. In 2019, there were around 68,000 enrolments and nearly 17,000 graduates of initial teacher education, coming into a workforce of over 500,000 registered teachers. Retaining and developing the existing workforce is at least as important.

A group often overlooked in discussions of supply is casual relief teachers. Teachers on casual contracts are about 10% of the workforce but contribute only 5% of workforce FTE. Many are older and attracted to the flexibility of casual work but younger CRTs are more likely to suggest that they could take on a permanent teaching role. CRTs are a vital part of the workforce, but often lack access to professional learning, professional support and guidance and career progression. Recent initiatives to employ additional teachers to assist students to catch up on learning loss from COVID may have depleted the pool of relief teachers, creating short-term supply issues. A better understanding of the needs of casual teachers and ways to retain them should be a priority.

Work on teacher supply inevitably involves some trade-offs between quality and quantity. The most productive actions are likely to be those that reduce unnecessary barriers to entry while maintaining rigour in teacher selection and preparation. Innovative models of initial teacher education seek to do this, improving the quality of initial teacher education, especially in-school experiences, while reducing the barriers in cost and time to becoming a teacher. The ultimate guarantee of quality in ITE is a rigorous final assessment of graduate competence. This is provided by teaching performance assessments, and ways to increase their effectiveness are discussed below.

Improving teacher supply is an area that would benefit from a better evidence base. Some work has been done on incentives that may attract particular cohorts to teaching, including salary. More work on what actually has an impact on attraction and retention is required to target these initiatives.

## Comments on specific actions

5. More teaching places at universities in the right subject and specialisations	More teaching places are welcome, but must be used to procure high-quality initial teacher education in areas of genuine need. This will require identification of demand for specific specialisations and in specific geographical markets from sophisticated labour market modelling (via the ATWD).
6. 5,000 bursaries worth up to \$40,000 each to attract our best and brightest to the teaching profession	This will support deployment of the workforce in accordance to need, employability of ITE graduates and potentially reduce supply issues
7. 1,500 more places in the High Achieving Teachers program to encourage more professionals to switch careers to teaching	Employers should seek close partnerships with initial teacher education providers, provide high-quality school placements with mentoring by expert teachers, and seek to influence the distribution of graduates across subject areas and stages of schooling. Models where employers are able to allocate places and assist in selecting candidates, and where there are strong partnerships and extensive high-quality school placements, are most likely to address specific shortages. Achieving this requires reliable information on supply and demand, as proposed elsewhere in the draft Action Plan. The commitment to use this funding to pursue innovation, rather than simply more of the same, is therefore welcome.
8. Trial new ways of attracting and retaining new teachers in the schools that need them most	Innovative models may point to issues with the current <i>Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures</i> . In this case, consultation on

	changes should begin, with proposals brought to Education Ministers Meeting for approval.
9. Prioritise visa processing for qualified teachers and prioritise teachers from State and Territory nominated visa allocations	<p>Overseas-qualified teachers have a small but significant role to play in alleviating teacher shortages, making up around 6% of the teaching workforce. They also bring much-needed diversity to the profession. AITSL plays a role in the skilled migration system by providing skills assessments for teachers applying for certain classes of visas. AITSL has seen a significant increase in demand for this service, and has worked to optimise its resources and processes to assess these applications quickly.</p> <p>It is important that teachers coming into Australian classrooms are well supported. AITSL is currently progressing a project to curate and promote resources to support migrant teachers and systems, sectors and employers. AITSL could be commissioned to develop and publish the evidence base on the benefits of migrant teachers, including resources and examples of support required to ensure successful and sustained employment in Australian contexts.</p>

# Strengthening initial teacher education

Much progress has been made in assuring the quality of ITE since the report of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group in 2015. The recent Quality Initial Teacher Education Review (QITE) produced a set of recommendations to further improve the quality of ITE. These recommendations provide a strong basis for future improvement. AITSL welcomes the work of the Teacher Education Expert Panel to support implementation of these recommendations.

There are a number of further reforms AITSL believes would be valuable, and AITSL has articulated these in submissions to the QITE Review and the Productivity Commission’s review of the National School Reform Agreement. Chief among these is the establishment of a national board to oversee, develop and promulgate information about the quality and consistency of ITE programs. This board would have a particular focus on overseeing the quality of Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs). The capacity of TPAs to provide assurance of the quality of graduates from ITE is critical to enabling innovation in ITE without compromising quality.

## Comments on specific actions

<p>10. Teacher Education Expert Panel</p>	<p>It is important that the Teacher Education Expert Panel develop practical approaches to implementing the recommendations of the QITE Review. Part of this should be considering the structures needed to support implementation. AITSL would welcome further discussion on approaches to implementation, including AITSL’s proposal for national quality assurance structures.</p> <p>In relation to measuring the performance of initial teacher education programs, AITSL would recommend examining the capacity of the ATWD initiative to provide information on longer-term outcomes, and examining what information derived from TPAs can tell us about program quality. This information is useful for providers seeking to improve, as much as it is for any external assessment of performance.</p>
<p>11. Recognise previous study, work experience and skills that may be transferable to teaching.</p>	<p>The application of recognition of prior learning in initial teacher education provides an incentive for more people to enrol in ITE programs. A review needs to address incentives for ITE providers to maximise the advanced standing and reduce any barriers in the regulatory framework. The objective should be to reduce the duration of many ITE programs by a full year. AITSL would be pleased to provide input to these discussions.</p> <p>Providing advanced standing can be an important incentive for people with relevant experience to come into teaching. It is also important to look at other ways to make the profession attractive. For example, the starting salaries for career changers may be considerably less than they were earning previously.</p>

<p>12. Co-design actions to attract and retain more First Nations teachers</p>	<p>AITSL supports this important work, and the commitment to co-design actions with First Nations stakeholders. It is important that other actions in the Action Plan, such as those listed under Improving Teacher Supply, work for First Nations teachers and prospective teachers. Current First Nations staff, including Community Aboriginal teachers, and teacher aides in schools are an important group of potential teachers, and could benefit from recognition of prior learning.</p>
<p>13. All teaching students will undergo initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills in their first year</p>	<p>Supporting initial teacher education students to develop the literacy and numeracy skills needed for effective teaching is critical. Detailed exploration should also be given to pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers. Depending on the nature of these changes, they may require an update to the <i>Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures</i>.</p>

# Maximising the time to teach

Teacher and school leader workload and wellbeing are complex issues, and are likely to require integrated strategies to make real progress. Reducing the stress felt by teachers and leaders will require effort at all levels, from the requirements placed on schools by systems, to work practices and organisation within schools, to the resilience and coping strategies of individuals. It would be useful to develop a more detailed evidence base on the work that is done within schools, who does it, what qualifications are required to do it, how much time they devote to it, what can be reduced or eliminated, and what is the most effective use of staff time. The question is not only how much time is available for teaching, but also how teaching time is organised to support learning. For example, team teaching and the use of specialist teachers are strategies aimed at improving the effectiveness of teaching time.

## Comments on specific actions

<p>14. Pilot new approaches to reduce teacher workload through a Teacher Workload Reduction Fund to maximise the value of a teacher's time</p>	<p>This approach is welcome, and local pilots would help to build an evidence base in this area. It is important that these projects are evaluated, and that the learnings are combined and shared nationally.</p>
<p>15. Build on work already underway to maximise teachers' time to teach, plan and collaborate, and independently evaluate the effectiveness of these measures on teachers' time.</p>	<p>AITSL has develop a School Workload Reduction Toolkit, based on a successful UK model. This toolkit, available on the AITSL website, could be expanded, enhanced, and supported to be implemented to learn from the results of these actions.</p>
<p>16. Examine how to support implementation of the national curriculum and literacy and numeracy progressions</p>	<p>This action meets a need often expressed by teachers – for access to quality-assured curriculum materials that they can adapt to the circumstances of their students. It is important that development of support materials follows a user-centred design approach – ensuring it is rigorous, aligned, and has impact.</p> <p>There also remains an opportunity to deliver the Online Formative Assessment Initiative. The discovery and alpha phases of this initiative identified a real need among teachers for support to accurately assess student growth, and advice on what to do to help their students take the next steps. These first phases for the initiative have developed a detailed proposal for next steps, and this should be implemented.</p>
<p>17. Each initiative in the next National School Reform Agreement will be subject to a Teacher Workload Impact Assessment</p>	<p>This action is welcome, and there is no reason why it could not be applied beyond the National School Reform Agreement. The impact assessment should be designed so that there is genuine input from the profession. It should be undertaken early in the design process for any initiative, not as a final hurdle when a decision has largely been taken.</p>
<p>18. Identify the most effective use of initial teacher education students,</p>	<p>Practical guidance on the roles of non-teaching staff is critical. There are a wide range of classroom-based and non-classroom based non-teaching roles and responsibilities in schools, some</p>

teaching assistants and other non-teaching staff	<p>requiring high level skills. Capturing the responsibilities and skills needed underpins the allocation of non-teaching staff to roles There is evidence that the impact of teaching assistants can vary, and even be negative, depending on how their work is organised. It is also important to see teaching assistants and other non-teaching staff as potential future teachers, and to create pathways for them.</p> <p>Better data is needed to underpin research and improvement in this area. Non-teaching staff are not currently captured in the ATWD, and ways to achieve this should be considered.</p>
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# Better understanding future teacher workforce needs

A better understanding of the teacher workforce is a critical foundation for the actions in the draft Action Plan and, importantly, for our ability to evaluate them. A strong start has been made through the ATWD initiative, which is already providing the first national picture of the workforce. The power of the ATWD is that it is longitudinal and links initial teacher education data, teacher registration data, and the largest ever survey of the Australian teacher workforce.

## Comments on specific actions

<p>19. Develop and publish nationally consistent teacher workforce projections based on consistent standards, disaggregated at a regional level and by subject specialisation, to enable a national understanding of teacher demand.</p>	<p>AITSL strongly recommends that these actions are pursued together, through the development of a national labour market model. The ATWD provides a strong foundation for this, and could be enhanced by additional sources of demand data and insights from data held by teacher employers. The ATWD's access to unit record data would allow modelling at smaller geographical levels than other approaches, which is critical as labour markets can be highly local. AITSL would also recommend a governance structure similar to, or built on, the ATWD structure. This governance model has built trust and support for the ATWD and allowed all jurisdictions to provide their data with confidence that it will be used and protected appropriately.</p>
<p>20. Develop and publish nationally consistent ITE graduate supply data, including disaggregated by subject specialisation and participation in ITE at the regional level, to enable a national understanding of teacher supply.</p>	<p>A national labour market model would be a major national asset, and provide a firm basis for workforce planning, policy making and evaluation. The labour market model has been recommended by the Productivity Commission and the QITE Review, among others, and it is now time to invest in it for the long term.</p>
<p>21. Establish a National Quality Framework to guide Teacher Regulatory Authorities in teacher accreditation and ensure nationally consistent standards for initial teacher education</p>	<p>It is important that this work builds on existing national frameworks, such as the <i>National Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia</i>, the <i>Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education in Australia: Standards and Procedures</i> and the <i>Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia</i>. Considerable work has been done by AITSL in consultation with stakeholders to progress national consistency in the regulation of the teaching profession.</p> <p>To enhance the current approach, a National Quality Framework could cover all career stages of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, and should focus on providing assurance that judgements made in each jurisdiction are consistent, rather than seeking more consistency in process. Any additional framework should be underpinned by key national and jurisdictional representatives working together to oversee and regularly moderate and assure the quality of regulatory decisions. The existing national policies may also need amending as a result of some actions in the draft Action</p>

	Plan. This should be done in consultation with affected stakeholders.
22. Prioritise provisional or conditional registration to increase the supply of teachers	There is scope for increased consistency in the application of provisional registration, limited authority to teach and other forms of registration other than full registration. AITSL would be pleased to lead national consultation on this issue, along with any other amendments to the national approach to teacher registration. Considerable progress has been made by teacher regulatory authorities to increase consistency in teacher registration, and this work would be a logical next step.
23. Develop and publish comprehensive data about why teachers leave the profession and what careers they move into and what would improve retention, as well as why other career leavers choose teaching.	<p>This action outlines a comprehensive program of research. It is important that this work builds on existing longitudinal ATWD data. The ATWD currently has the base line for ongoing longitudinal data on the profession that will provide direct and accurate data on actual attrition rates across the lifecycle – including in early career, the factors that impact attrition such as workplace stresses and the factors that encourage teachers to remain in and return to the profession, and the relationship between workplace stressors, attrition intentions and actually leaving teaching, rather than reported intentions to leave, which may never translate to actual attrition.</p> <p>This data, incorporated into the proposed national labour market model, will support accurate forecasting of supply and underpin effective policy for retention.</p>



# Better career pathways to support and retain teachers in the profession

Career pathways that develop and recognise the expertise of teachers are critical to attracting and retaining teachers, and maximising their impact while they are in the profession. Teaching offers a relatively flat career structure, despite the four career stages outlined in the Teaching Standards, and progression is often based on experience rather than expertise, or requires movement into management positions. More opportunities to progress are likely to lead to greater attraction and retention. An overarching project to develop a framework for teacher career progression based on expertise would be a welcome addition to this area of work. Such a framework could focus on recognising expertise, providing pathways for developing both leadership and teaching expertise, and focus on often neglected groups such as middle leaders in schools.

Related to attracting and retaining teachers, is the provision of effective professional learning. It is vital that teachers have information on the quality of professional learning, and that they are in a position to evaluate its impact on their practice. An initiative that would have the potential to make a breakthrough here would be to fund the development of a national online tool that allows teachers to find, manage, record and evaluate professional learning. AITSL has worked with stakeholders to scope such a tool and would welcome an opportunity to develop it fully.

## Comments on specific actions

<p>24. Develop and support career pathways which value teachers and reflect transitions in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</p>	<p>The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers have four levels, but fewer than 0.3% of teachers are currently certified at the higher levels. This does not reflect the number of expert teachers in Australia, and this situation requires urgent action. Existing certified Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers report that one of the frustrations they experience is that their expertise is not fully utilised in their schools. Roles should be designed to allow expert teachers to use their expertise to improve the practice of other teachers.</p> <p>AITSL would be pleased to work with stakeholders to test appetite for an accreditation process aligned to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals (Principal Standard). This consultation should also canvass the need for a review of the Principal Standard and/or the development of standards for middle leaders, which are likely to be pre-requisites for an accreditation process.</p>
<p>25. Develop national guidelines to support early career teachers and new school leaders including mentoring and induction</p>	<p>It is timely to update the existing national guidelines for teacher induction, and the addition of new school leaders would be valuable. It is important that support extends beyond guidelines. Currently, there is provision for induction into a school and system (and evidence is mixed about the efficacy across schools, sectors and jurisdictions) but less for induction into the profession. Opportunities for beginning teachers to connect with each other and receive advice from expert</p>

	<p>teachers are particularly important, and can be enabled by technology (e.g., AITSL's MyInduction app).</p> <p>A national set of mentoring standards would describe the knowledge, skills, actions and behaviours required of mentors to maximise their effectiveness in schools. AITSL would be pleased to build on current work to develop these standards, noting a commitment to implement them and provide support for mentors to become more effective. would be required from jurisdictions for these to impact the profession.</p>
<p>26. Improve access to high-quality First Nations' cultural competency resources to ensure teachers are better prepared to teach First Nations people in culturally safe ways</p>	<p>Consultation for AITSL's recent project on Indigenous Cultural Competency, revealed that this is a high priority professional learning need for Australian teachers. Cultural responsiveness was also identified as the preferred term to describe this work by stakeholders. AITSL recently published an Indigenous intercultural development toolkit that supports teachers to understand and improve their practice in this area. Adequately resourced and nationally coherent implementation of this toolkit and associated resources to impact classrooms across Australia is an important complement to the assessment of current resources proposed in this action.</p>
<p>27. Streamline HALT accreditation processes to make it less burdensome for teachers to be accredited and incorporate recognition of equivalent qualification and certification processes</p>	<p>The 1054 teachers currently certified as Highly Accomplished or Lead under the national process does not accurately reflect the number of teachers operating at these levels. This means many excellent teachers go unrecognised, and schools and systems are denied the opportunity to make best use of their expertise. Reaching the proposed target of 10,000 HALTs will require major change, not tinkering with the current approach. AITSL welcomes the opportunity to explore streamlining the certification process, including exploring the potential to recognise other processes, while maintaining the standard to become a HALT.</p>
<p>28. Develop micro-credentials and expand the Quality Teaching Rounds to enhance teachers' access to quality professional development</p>	<p>Any expansion of quality professional learning is welcome. As well as developing specific professional learning, teachers and school leaders need the capacity to select appropriate professional learning and evaluate its impact. The proposed online tool discussed in the introduction to this section would be a major breakthrough here.</p>

Mapping of draft Action Plan to teacher life cycle

Action	Attract	Prepare	Place	Induct	Develop	Recognise	Retain
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Action	Attract	Prepare	Place	Induct	Develop	Recognise	Retain
21		Secondary focus	Major focus	Secondary focus			
22	Major focus	Secondary focus	Major focus				
23							Major focus
24	Secondary focus				Major focus		
25				Major focus			
26					Major focus		
27					Secondary focus	Major focus	Secondary focus
28					Major focus		

Major focus
Secondary focus



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AITSL is funded by the Australian Government