



Challenges and Strategies

There is a global teacher supply issue which has been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. This Literature Review Summary identifies some of the key challenges in attracting candidates to teaching and potential strategies to mitigate against these.

Status of the teaching profession

Often those considering a career in education are dissuaded by family, friends and teachers due to concerns related to teacher wellbeing, administrative workload, salary, lack of workforce diversity and the overall status of the profession. Students may hear teachers speaking about their profession in disparaging terms and if they express an interest in a teaching career, may be told they're either not academic enough or too academic to be *just* a teacher.

To counter these negative perceptions:

- marketing campaigns could promote teaching as a prospective career choice
- the benefits of the complex but rewarding nature of the profession could be more widely promoted.



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Attractiveness of teacher education

The Masters level of education is perceived as a highly attractive pathway to teaching but other pathways via higher education institutions (HEIs) currently lack the same degree of professional prestige. This is partly due to the status of the profession and entry barriers for students, particularly those changing careers. These barriers include costs (courses, textbooks and the opportunity cost of income earning work), length of courses, geographical location of HEIs, lack of recognition of foreign qualifications and subject area specialties.

A range of strategies address these issues:

- Financial incentives to enter teacher education could attract candidates, however, for greater impact, these need to be contingent on entering the profession. They also need to be competitive with incentives provided in other industries. Raising teacher salaries is broadly accepted as a key incentive. More specific incentives according to life stage could include:
 - » Scholarships and bursaries for school leavers
 - » Housing, mortgage support and childcare for those switching careers.
- Shorten the length of course time to accelerate candidates into employment.
- Create purpose-built 'homegrown'

programs to support potential candidates from regional and rural areas to study and teach in their local area.

- Create residency programs (financial and employment incentives) to attract socially minded candidates to internships in rural and remote areas, similar to medical residencies.
- Provide students in teacher education with options for conditional accreditation so they can commence employment before completing their studies.

Career Prospects

There are a number of challenges with career progression in the teaching profession:

- The casualisation of the workforce deters high achievers who seek ongoing employment certainty.
- Career changers want to remain in the area where their families have established strong connections.
- Initial salaries for teachers in Australia start relatively high but flatten quickly when compared with other careers.
- There are limited options for career progression, and these usually involve leadership and/or administrative roles.
- Some perceive teaching as merely repeating the same lessons year after year and therefore lacks the nuance that motivates and provides opportunities for professional growth.

The creation of pathways beyond traditional leadership and administrative roles may help prospective teachers to become aware of career advancement opportunities.

More visibility of professional collaboration and collegiality that recognises teachers' expertise could attract potential candidates seeking an intellectually challenging career.

The literature review found little evidence that higher entry standards to initial teacher education are effective in attracting high achieving candidates.

Access to full
Literature Review here:



Wyatt-Smith, C., Holloway, J., Alexander, C., Harris, L., Day, C., & Marcy, A. (2022). *Reviewing the Evidence Base: Attraction, Pathways and Retention - A Focus on Attracting Candidates*. Sydney, Australia. Association of Independent Schools New South Wales and Australian Catholic University.