

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION

Inquiry into Teacher Shortages in NSW

23 August 2022 Hearing

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

NSW EDUCATION STANDARDS AUTHORITY

QUESTION No. 1– Teacher Accreditation Process – Classroom performance feedback

Page No. 18 and 19 TRANSCRIPT

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Okay, well, let's hope so. In your teacher accreditation decisions, do you get the material on these two observations and what was noted about teacher quality in the classroom?

PAUL MARTIN: When the teachers or the schools—in the current system, the decision is made at the school level. We would have the evidence that the school has used to make the decision. Up until relatively recently—and we have gone back to the practice, but we had a hiatus there where we had an IT issue—we would do an audit of the evidence that's provided, and we would report on that evidence back to the system or sector in order for them to improve their processes. We would get audit evidence from the schools around what evidence was used by teachers to demonstrate their proficiency. We would have a look at that, and we would say back to the Department of Education, to the independent sector or to schools that they should think about looking at other types of evidence or they should be increasing this, that or the other. We have worked on that consistently since 2004. We were unable to do that for a couple of years because we had an IT issue, but we've gone back to that process. From November this year we'll be doing that ourselves.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: In what proportion of cases of accrediting teachers do you get classroom feedback

PAUL MARTIN: I wouldn't be able to answer that today, but I'm happy to have a look and take that on notice.

RESPONSE

NESA's accreditation application requirements for Proficient Teacher include one classroom observation. All provisionally and conditionally teachers must upload a report on an observation of their teaching practice in their NESA online account when they apply for Proficient Teacher.

NESA oversees Proficient Teacher accreditation decisions, including auditing records for quality assurance. NESA's audit program aims to ensure that accreditation decisions at Proficient Teacher align with the Standards. The audit reviews the extent to which the analysed observation report describes the teacher's practice against the selected Proficient Teacher Standard Descriptors.

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Observation and feedback are essential aspects of the initial training of teachers. Prior to graduating, initial teacher education students are required by NESA to have undertaken at least 80 days of professional experience in a four-year Bachelor of Education degree and at least 60 days in a two-year Master of Teaching degree.

The focus of professional experience is for teaching students to be assessed by experienced classroom teachers to provide them with feedback and a written report on their teaching practice against the set of 37 Graduate teacher standards. Assessment of earlier professional experience placements are formative in nature, predominantly aimed at providing feedback to improve practice. The final professional experience placement incorporates a Teaching Performance Assessment which is summative in nature and requires successful completion prior to graduation.

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QUESTION No. 2– Teacher Accreditation Process – Number of HALT applications in 2020, 2021 and 2022

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Has the New South Wales Government ever asked you to reduce the administrative burdens in order to apply for the HALT program? I understand that there's an application fee and that it's quite an extensive process. Have they ever asked you to reduce those?

PAUL MARTIN: Yes, the current New South Wales Government, the current Minister, has asked us to look at all of our practices that are unnecessarily onerous or where the artefact or the work doesn't lead to an improvement, materially, in the point of the exercise. With HALT, simultaneous to current arguments around teacher workload, we were trying to streamline the process to encourage people to enter it anyway, so it has coincided with both requests to simplify and reduce workload and with our own desire to get more teachers into HALT.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I'm happy if you want to provide them on notice, but we've got eight HALTs in 2022, nine accredited in 2021 and 12 in 2020 according to Mr Latham. Are you able to provide the number of applications for each of those years on notice?

PAUL MARTIN: Yes, I am.

RESPONSE

	2020	2021	2022
Applications considered by the Moderating and Consistency Committee (calendar year)	34	38	21*
Accredited at Highly Accomplished Teacher	20	27	9
Accredited at Lead Teacher	8	2	3

*includes 4 applications considered by Moderating and Consistency Committee on 2 September 2022 with decisions not yet confirmed by TAA A/L.

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QUESTION No. 3 Teacher Accreditation Process – Gender breakdown of HALT recipients 2020-2022

Page No.20 TRANSCRIPT

The ACTING CHAIR: Ms Boyd?

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Thank you, Chair. My goodness, I'm patient. Hello and thank you for your appearance today. I also want to ask about the HALT program but from a slightly different angle. From what I just heard there are 29 in the last three years. What is the gender breakdown of those? Do you know?

PAUL MARTIN: I will answer that on notice. Given the fact that I attend the presentation ceremonies, they're overwhelmingly women and there is a significant proportion of primary school teachers over secondary.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: If you could perhaps, on notice, provide both as a percentage of applications, so of people who originally begin the process, how many of them go through to getting the accreditation as percentage on gender basis as well but also the percentage that that represents of total teachers as well, so not the raw numbers, although there may be more women than men. I'm curious as to how that works out in terms percentages. I've heard anecdotally that the process can be quite difficult for anyone who takes any time out teaching to have children or to do other things, so I'm just curious as to how it impacts on the Have you done anything from a gender lens perspective to try to ensure that the processes are as accessible as possible for women?

RESPONSE

86.8% of accredited HALTs in NSW are female and 13.2% are male.

77% of all teachers currently maintaining Proficient Teacher accreditation are female and 22.98% are male. There is a higher proportion of females with HALT accreditation than are represented in the broader population of Proficient Teachers. Teachers must be accredited at Proficient Teacher or above to be eligible to apply for HALT accreditation.

Under the HALT Policy, applicants who take a Leave of Absence from accreditation can continue to develop their application and submit modules one and two while they are on leave. This allows teachers who take time away from teaching, including women who take parental leave, to progress with their HALT application.

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QUESTION No. 4 Teacher Accreditation Process – Proficiency over 100 hours of maintenance

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PAUL MARTIN: When the Institute of Teachers first started in 2004, we only accredited teachers who were employed from that time. So there were 4,000 in the first year and then another 4,000 or so, which made it eight, and so on and so forth. When we first started off, we had a process of the hundred hours to maintain your accreditation over five years, and then teachers at the end of that five years used to write a report, an accreditation report—a reflection of their teaching over the five years. Over time, we realised that that was an unnecessary burden. It might have made some teachers think about their practice more or whatever, but we didn't find that we were materially assisting in the process of proficiency, so we got rid of it.

At some point in the last decade, there were changes in New South Wales in terms of Commonwealth requirements for funding that required the institution of various consistent performance and development processes across schools and systems across the country. That broke down; it didn't particularly eventuate. But there were elements where schools made judgements about the ongoing proficiency of teachers—their ongoing work. We removed all of our requirements for teachers' ongoing demonstration of proficiency and simply allow the schools to tell us that—whatever processes they currently use, whatever practice they currently use, v Proficiency for ongoing maintenance for a teacher relies on the hundred hours over five years and their principal or supervisor pressing a button on our NESA portal to say that the teacher continues to be proficient.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Can I ask about the hundred hours? Is it the case that many teachers are actually exceeding the hundred hours?

PAUL MARTIN: I will take that on notice, but I think we have some data that teachers do more than double 100 hours over five years. Our requirement is a lot less than the actual PD that teachers do, yes.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I think last year you made a decision around cancelling the recognition of a whole range of courses that contributed to the hundred hours. It seems to me that that has now created an issue for teachers in terms of finding courses that meet the accreditation requirements. I'll give you an example. I understand that the child protection training that's delivered within the Department of Education is not an accredited course. It's being done. It's obviously something that needs to be done by teachers. It takes time and

it takes them away from other things. Shouldn't something like that count towards accreditation, and why it?

PAUL MARTIN: It does count towards accreditation. As far as I understand—and I'll take that on notice to clarify anything I may be mistaken in—it doesn't count towards the teachers' priority PD hours that need to do, which have a set of parameters around I would make the point that the department, the independents and the Catholics are allowed to accredit their own PD. NESA has given them the permission to accredit their own PD, so the department can make decisions appropriately about which PD it accredits as PD. But, in terms of the nature of some professional development like work health and safety or child protection or anaphylactic shock issues et cetera, they can all still be counted, but they are counted as part of the teachers' elective hours rather than the priority PD that has been determined to sit in much more close relationship with the actual practice of teaching and learning—for example, curriculum, assessment, teaching students with special needs, teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those areas are where the priority PD is situated. Teachers can still count all of those other areas of PD, but it's determined to be elective PD.

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RESPONSE

Teachers need to do at least 100 hours of PD every five years, including at least 50 hours of NESA Accredited PD – formerly referred to as Registered PD. The balance of hours can be any combination of NESA Accredited PD and Elective PD.

Courses and training that teachers have to do to meet legislative requirements (including anaphylaxis and child protection) count as Elective PD.

On average, teachers record 165 PD hours overall and an average of 98 hours of Accredited / Registered PD over their five year maintenance period.

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QUESTION No. 5 Teacher Accreditation Process – latest figures on Accredited Teachers in 2022 (as at August 2022) in 2021 and in 2022

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PAUL MARTIN: There is no category for a student to be able to apply to NESA to have a consideration of their mark because of the nature of the teaching. We have to be able to—there is too much variability and too much difference within schools and between schools, even for teachers who are trained in the subject area or not trained, whatever. We rely on schools to deliver that. There isn't a capacity for poor teaching or untrained teaching, no.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I will quickly ask one more question. My colleague Mr D'Adam did excellent research and asked some questions on notice to see the attrition rates of teachers and the teachers who are actually leaving from an accreditation perspective. Can you just give us the latest figures, if possible, today or on notice, about the accredited teachers for this year, this month and then for the same over the past two years?

PAUL MARTIN: I'm happy to take that on notice.

RESPONSE

ACCREDITED TEACHERS

As at:	Aug 31-2020	Aug 31-2021	Aug 31-2022
Accredited Teachers	166,455	165,448	169,967
Rate increase/decrease		▼ 0.6%	▲ 3%

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QUESTION No. 6 Teacher Accreditation Process – Conditional Approval

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The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Conditional approval, yes. So you are looking at the numbers who are going in on conditional approval.

PAUL MARTIN: We are facilitating that process. We are making sure that it is easier.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: You are then looking at the numbers of that cohort who are still there in five years' time. Is that not something you are doing on a routine basis?

PAUL MARTIN: We do it in relation to some of the policy work that we do. We certainly do it in providing advice or information to the department or the sectors and to the Australian Government, as I said, AITSL and a variety of other areas. As far as a policy unit that is looking at the data as part of their normal business, no.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: You don't have that capacity in NESA?

PAUL MARTIN: No, we don't. Interestingly, though, Mr D'Adam, the relationship between the numbers coming into the profession under the conditional pathway in order for those teachers to enter sooner rather than provisional—when they have completed their qualification—is something we are looking because of the effects of COVID and trying to get teachers into schools as quickly as possible. But as a part of routine policy, no.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: In preparation for attending today, did you have a look at the figures? Earlier in your evidence you suggested that the exits of early career teachers was not as bad as it had been portrayed in the media. You clearly have some data that you are relying on. Can you provide that to the Committee?

PAUL MARTIN: I have a few different pieces of data. Some of it is from 2020. I am happy to provide it on notice rather than put it on the record when I haven't had enough of an opportunity to ascertain its I would prefer to put that on notice, if that's

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Of course.

RESPONSE

The 2020 *Attrition of NSW Graduate Teachers* report is published on the NESA website here

<https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/who-we-are/research/research-reports>.

Updated figures for comparison with the report are provided below. The trend of early career teachers leaving the profession is on par with the 10.7% figure reported.

Not all accredited teachers are employed as teachers in schools/services. The data below relates to attrition from accreditation not attrition from employment as a teacher.

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INITIAL ACCREDITATION ATTRITION

Calendar Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Annual Initial Accreditations**	8,673	7,950	8,318	6,851	7,174	5,986
Still accredited	7,663	7,046	7,471	6,277	6,877	5,982
No longer accredited	1,010	904	847	574	308	4
% no longer accredited	12%	11%	10%	8%	4%	0.06%

*As at 1 September 2022

**includes Conditional accreditations

CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION ATTRITION

Calendar Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Annual Conditional Accreditations	5,126	4,883	5,068	4,240	4,989	4,143
Still accredited	4,707	4,629	4,871	4,173	4,969	4,141
No longer accredited	419	254	197	67	20	2
% no longer accredited	8%	5%	4%	2%	0.4%	0.04%

*As at 1 September 2022