

**Submission
No 61**

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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I retired at the end of last year after teaching for 38 years across 5 schools in NSW, Qld and on exchange in the UK.

My experience includes teaching 10 years in Primary before becoming a K-12 Sportsmaster & HOD/PDHPE, subsequently becoming a Head of House (including three boarding school Houses), a HOD in English and History at multiple schools and a Deputy Principal. This was mainly in independent co-ed schools in NSW but also in a public selective high school and a GPS boys school in Queensland. I have also been an IEU Chapter representative and careers advisor over recent years.

I greatly appreciate your keen interest in education and share your concerns as to the serious decline in learning standards.

There are so many reasons for this, some of them due to societal changes.

My reason for writing is to inform you of an easily remedied factor that is negatively impacting teacher availability, both fulltime and especially casual, that is not gaining any recognition in the public debate over shortages.

The ridiculous, unproductive “Professional development” hours being demanded by NESA are a major contributing factor as to why many of the best, most experienced teachers have resigned over the past two years. This is because until 2023, teachers who began their careers before 1994 were not required to meet the 100 hours (over 5 years) requirement for registration. Many of my colleagues have expressed the view that the courses are “woke” rubbish irrelevant to their classroom teaching and deliberately designed to dumb down the syllabii being taught.

However, even more ridiculous is that casual teachers must also complete 100 hours over 7 years? Why?

Whilst fulltime teachers benefit from schools paying for their courses, giving them time to undertake them and even arranging them on professional development days, casual teachers do not.

Why do casuals (especially those who have taught over 28 years since 1994) who cover multiple subjects on any given cover day, need to attend professional development courses at all and why should they pay anything other than a nominal registration fee with NESA?

Many more highly experienced teachers would return on a least a casual basis if the bureaucrats at NESA were forced to amend their requirements.

Very best wishes to you in all your endeavours.

Tom Lavelle