

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Teachers and Teaching Research Centre (TTRC) - The University
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
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INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

TEACHERS AND TEACHING RESEARCH CENTRE

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The Teachers and Teaching Research Centre (TTRC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Inquiry into teacher shortages in New South Wales.

Established in 2013, the TTRC is led by Laureate Professor Jenny Gore and sits within the School of Education at the University of Newcastle. Our current major research program, *Building Capacity for Quality Teaching in Australian Schools*, is supported by a \$17.2 million grant from the Paul Ramsay Foundation. This program of research represents the largest study of teacher professional development in Australian education history and includes four randomised controlled trials on the impact of Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) on student and teacher outcomes across New South Wales, Victorian, and Queensland government schools.

This work builds on the development of the Quality Teaching Model, which has been the NSW Department of Education's framework for high-quality pedagogy since its release in 2003.

We have also conducted a substantial program of research on student aspirations – including aspirations for teaching – involving students in Years 3-12 in NSW government schools. This longitudinal program of work conducted between 2012 and 2017 generated more than 12,000 student surveys and interviews/focus groups with more than 1000 students, parents and teachers.

Our submission is informed by more than two decades of educational research into initial teacher education, quality teaching, teacher development, school change, leadership, student aspirations, equity, and STEM education. We provide evidence that addresses several points in the Terms of Reference (namely ToRs a, b, c, e, f, g, i, p) and offer recommendations for consideration by the Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education.

On the status of the teaching profession (addressing ToR a, b, f, i)

The status of teachers and teaching is at the heart of the current teacher shortages. Valuing teachers and raising the status of the profession have been enduring challenges of the field. Teachers are frequently subject to harsh criticisms and unfairly blamed for falling education standards. Covered by the media more, and more negatively, than other professions¹, it is no wonder we struggle to attract new teachers and retain the ones we have who are too often demoralised by a lack of respect for their important work.

Experts, academics, unions and even the Department of Education have been warning of teacher shortages for decades². Unfilled vacancies, difficulty recruiting, increased teaching out of field, a lack of access to casual teachers and resorting to merged classes and minimal supervision have been the tough reality for schools in rural and remote areas for many years – conditions now confronting schools throughout NSW. With our ever-increasing population, demand for more teachers to fill expanding and new schools will only continue to grow.

Attracting people to teaching is critical. The recent Gallop Inquiry, funded by the NSW Teachers Federation, found “profound changes in the work and workload of teachers”³ over the past two decades. The report reinforces findings from the recent federal Quality Initial Teacher Education Review⁴ which called for teaching to be made more attractive through the removal of red tape and administrative burden from teacher workloads. Its number one recommendation was to raise the status of teaching.

¹ Mockler, N. (2022). Constructing teacher identities: how the print media define and represent teachers and their work, *Bloomsbury Academic*, https://www.google.com.au/books/edition/Constructing_Teacher_Identities/zM5EEAAAQBAJ?hl

² NSW Teachers Federation (2021). Growing teacher shortages and NSW could miss out on thousands of teachers, <https://news.nswtf.org.au/blog/media-release/2021/11/growing-teacher-shortages-and-nsw-could-miss-out-thousands-teachers>

³ Gallop, G., Kavanagh, T., Lee, P. (2021). Valuing the teaching profession: an independent inquiry, *NSW Teachers Federation*, <https://www.nswtf.org.au/pages/reports>

⁴ DESE (2022). Next steps – report of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review, *Department of Education, Skills and Employment*, <https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-initial-teacher-education-review/resources/next-steps-report-quality-initial-teacher-education-review>

A steady pipeline of ITE students has been relied upon to renew staffing in schools. But recruitment into, and completion rates of ITE have fallen significantly in recent years⁵. The sector is struggling to attract school leavers (including high achieving school leavers⁶). Furthermore, the current reliance on ITE students to address teacher shortages could lead to greater burn out and attrition⁷.

On aspirations for teaching careers (addressing ToR b, f, i)

Who enters teaching, and why, are important questions in addressing the status of teaching. Our scoping review of empirical studies published between 2007 and 2016 on why people choose teaching as a career found, overwhelmingly, that intrinsic and altruistic motivations prevail⁸. This finding contrasts with popular views that: (a) young people, including high achieving young people, are not interested in teaching; and (b) teaching is primarily a fallback occupation for those who cannot get into other fields. Our longitudinal study of student aspirations offers fresh evidence on each of these points.

We found teaching to be the second most popular career aspiration among young people (students in Years 3-12 in NSW government schools), demonstrating the continuing high value placed on teaching as a career⁹. Prior academic achievement (based on NAPLAN results) was not a significant predictor of interest in teaching – in fact, there was slightly more interest in teaching among students from the higher two NAPLAN quartiles than the lower two quartiles.

Gender (a higher proportion of girls), age (fewer students in the middle years of schooling) and Indigeneity (a higher proportion of Indigenous students) are predictive of interest in teaching. However, Indigenous students in the highest NAPLAN quartile (quartile 4) were far less likely to desire to go to university than non-Indigenous students – a result that highlights deep-seated cultural and historical factors that shape interest in attending university¹⁰.

These data provide a counter-narrative to the primacy, in policies for teacher recruitment and selection, of needing to attract ‘better’ students. We caution that current attempts to attract the ‘best and brightest’ risk undermining the very goals espoused, by mis-representing teaching as a field dominated by low-achieving students.

Enthusiasm for teaching already exists. We argue that heavily regulating who can teach – and the associated public discourse that devalues the quality of teachers, their work, and their sense of professional identity – works against the aims of policy makers.

The student population in Australia is diverse. It is important that our teacher workforce is also representative of wider society. Our research shows that equitable access into higher education is more complicated than overcoming crude barriers such as money, distance and prior education. Strategies for attracting a more diverse cohort into ITE include: allocating places for students from underrepresented groups (at all universities, including prestigious institutions); offering targeted early entry schemes that do not rely solely on academic measures; and, providing financial support through scholarships and fellowships for disadvantaged students.

⁵ AITSL (2019). Australian Teacher Workforce Database, <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/research/australian-teacher-workforce-data/key-metrics-dashboard>

⁶ Goss, P., Sonnemann, J. (2019). Attracting high achievers to teaching, *Grattan Institute*, <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/921-Attracting-high-achievers-to-teaching.pdf>

⁷ Morrison, C., Bentley, B., Clifton, J., Ledger, S. (2022). Growing numbers of unqualified teachers are being sent into classrooms – this is not the way to ‘fix’ the teacher shortage. <https://theconversation.com/growing-numbers-of-unqualified-teachers-are-being-sent-into-classrooms-this-is-not-the-way-to-fix-the-teacher-shortage-186379>

⁸ Fray, L., Gore, J. (2018). Why people choose teaching: A scoping review of empirical studies, 2007–2016, *Teaching and Teacher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.06.009>

⁹ Gore, J., Barron, R.J., Holmes, K., Smith, M. (2016). Who says we are not attracting the best and brightest? Teacher selection and the aspirations of Australian school students. *Australian Educational Researcher*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-016-0221-8>

¹⁰ Gore J, Patfield S, Holmes K, et al. (2017). When higher education is possible but not desirable: Widening participation and the aspirations of Australian Indigenous school students. *Australian Journal of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944117710841>

Policies for addressing teacher shortages, while ensuring quality, should capitalise on the widespread interest in teaching among school students. One positive initiative designed to nurture students' interest in teaching is a NSW high school's "future teacher program" which takes students between Years 8 and 12 through a structured program where they have opportunities to teach in local primary schools, and learn more about what it is to teach and what it takes to become a teacher. Such career specific programs take various forms but could play an important role in attraction and recruitment.

Based on our existing research and funded by the federal Department of Education, we developed a free 10-hour NESA accredited online professional development course that explores how aspirations are formed and strategies for teachers, careers advisers and school leaders to nurture aspirations in their students. This course offers an inexpensive, research-backed approach to capitalise on the existing interest in teaching in our schools.

On the impact of COVID-19 (*addressing ToR a, c, g, e*)

The advent of COVID-19 has only exacerbated the factors driving teacher shortages and their multi-faceted impact.

Classes are regularly being combined with upward of 40 students together and students are spending hours in the library or quadrangle with minimal supervision. In our research in NSW schools, teachers and school leaders report as many as ten classes on a given day being relegated to the playground without teachers¹¹. Student learning and well-being are compromised by such conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on teachers around the world, raising significant concerns about their wellbeing. The main sources of stress for teachers – workloads, student behaviour, and expectations¹² – are spiralling out of control as the pandemic continues to affect staffing. The need to cover additional classes has limited teachers' time for planning, assessment and professional development, adding to their workloads and reducing their morale.

Our comparison of 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 2020 (first year of the pandemic) survey data from teachers in NSW, demonstrates that their morale and efficacy declined measurably during COVID-19. Interviews with teachers and school leaders reinforced these findings and highlighted the depth to which teachers felt dispensable and unappreciated¹³, despite working incredibly hard for their students. The pressure to rapidly adapt to online teaching and learning also challenged their confidence in their teaching.

Principals too are suffering through increased workloads, greater stress and dealing with more behavioural issues and a drop in staff morale and school culture.

Importantly, however, despite dire predictions about learning loss, our research demonstrated that students, on average, did not fall behind in their learning in 2020 or 2021¹⁴. Our study involving more than 6000 students in Years 3 and 4 across 100 NSW public schools found children across three socio-economic brackets (low, mid and high) made as much progress last year as they did in 2019. In fact, students in the most disadvantaged category showed more progress in maths and reading during 2021 than they did in the year before the pandemic despite the term-long lockdown¹⁵.

¹¹ Patfield, S., Gore, J., Harris, J. (2022). Scaling up effective professional development: toward successful adaptation through attention to underlying mechanisms, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103756>

¹² Collie, R., Mansfield, C. (2022). Teacher and school stress profiles: A multilevel examination and associations with work-related outcomes, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103759>

¹³ Fray, L., Jaremus, F., Gore, J., Miller, A., Harris, J. (2022). Under pressure and overlooked: the impact of COVID-19 on teachers in NSW public schools, *The Australian Educational Researcher*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-022-00518-3>

¹⁴ Gore, J., Fray, L., Miller, A., Harris, J., Taggart, W. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on student learning in NSW primary schools: an empirical study, *The Australian Education Researchers*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-021-00436-w>

¹⁵ Miller, A., Fray, L., Gore, J. (under review). The cumulative impact of COVID-19 in consecutive school years (2020-2021) on student learning outcomes in NSW primary schools.

These results are a testament to teachers who valiantly ensured student learning was not compromised despite incredibly challenging circumstances. They add evidence to the truism that the interactions between teachers and students – the pedagogical experience – is the most significant in-school factor shaping student learning.

The better-than-expected results – which are also better than most parts of the world where measurable decline in academic achievement has been found¹⁶ – could also, in part, be attributed to factors such as the state's \$780 million COVID catch-up tutoring program or the additional time spent on numeracy and literacy, often at the expense of other areas of the curriculum when students returned to the classroom¹⁷.

However, our study also found significant *negative* effects on teachers' and students' wellbeing and mental health. For teachers, COVID-19 greatly exacerbated workloads and concerns about employment conditions while, for students, the narrowed curriculum and time spent away from friends and extended family during periods of lockdown led to serious signs of stress and anxiety¹⁸. Teachers reported significant and worrying decline in student behaviour and increased mental anguish.

While the COVID tutoring scheme might have been a factor in the positive student achievement findings, it has dramatically exacerbated teacher shortages by taking casuals out of the regular teaching workforce pool. Furthermore, the scheme has not been applied systematically, with schools deciding on needs and applying for funding on their own and with no quality control for tutors or framework to help ensure quality teaching¹⁹.

On initial teacher education (*addressing ToR f, i, p*)

In response to current pressures on the system, final year ITE students are being employed and given responsibilities that exceed the usual expectations of new graduates, while simultaneously trying to complete their degrees. This emergency solution to staffing shortages risks sacrificing long and successful careers in teaching. The main message – that any warm body will do – significantly undermines efforts to raise the status of the teaching profession, which is critical in attraction to and retention in the workforce. Current arrangements for ITE students to fill staffing shortfalls also undermine state and national agreements regarding program standards and registration to teach. These arrangements place ITE students at greater risk of not completing their degrees and increase the likelihood that they will leave the profession prematurely.

Recently, there have been calls to reduce the two-year master's degree requirement especially for mid-career professionals in priority areas, such as engineers and accountants, so they can transfer into teaching via a single year graduate diploma or other accelerated programs. While this might be a partial solution to dire teacher shortages now, it runs counter to the aim of raising the status of teaching and risks sending underprepared teachers into classrooms, exacerbating burn out and attrition²⁰. Attrition from fast-track programs, such as Teach For Australia, is known to be high²¹. Quality should not be compromised. Students throughout NSW deserve qualified, well-prepared teachers, not any adult willing to be in a school. Short ITE programs are not the solution.

¹⁶ Patrinos, H., Vegas, E., Carter-Rau, R. (2022). An Analysis of COVID-19 Student Learning Loss, *World Bank*, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/37400>

¹⁷ Gore, J., Fray, L., Miller, A., Harris, J., Taggart, W. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on student learning in NSW primary schools: an empirical study, *The Australian Education Researchers*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-021-00436-w>

¹⁸ Fray, L., Jaremus, F., Gore, J., Harris, J. (under review). Learning from home during COVID-19: troubling consequences for students' return to school.

¹⁹ Gore, J. (2021). COVID coaches: tutoring only works when backed by quality teaching directed at the students who really missed out, *EduResearch Matters*, <https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=8816>

²⁰ Morrison, C., Bentley, B., Clifton, J., Ledger, S. (2022). Growing numbers of unqualified teachers are being sent into classrooms – this is not the way to 'fix' the teacher shortage, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/growing-numbers-of-unqualified-teachers-are-being-sent-into-classrooms-this-is-not-the-way-to-fix-the-teacher-shortage-186379>

²¹ dandolo (2017). Teach for Australia program evaluation report, *Department of Education, Skills and Employment*, <https://dese.gov.au/teaching-and-school-leadership/resources/teach-australia-program-evaluation-report>

Given that teaching is intellectually (and emotionally) demanding work, good teaching requires an appropriate mix of theoretical and practical knowledge. It is important that student teachers, undergraduate and postgraduate, are supported to gain classroom experience throughout their studies – but it is the quality of time spent in schools, not just the quantity, that matters. The University of Newcastle already provides practical opportunities in school for students in first year, and every subsequent year. To be beneficial, practical experience must be underpinned by defensible theoretical perspectives and robust evidence. Otherwise, we are unlikely to alleviate high levels of attrition and worsening teacher shortages in the long term.

Reform in ITE is hampered by differing views on what teacher education should be and do²². These tensions arise from enduring differences in the ideological approaches and commitments of politicians, system leaders and teacher educators. There are four major traditions in teacher education, often pitted against one another, each with a different emphasis:

- a. Disciplinary tradition: emphasises a strong background in the discipline/s one plans to teach.
- b. Scientific tradition: emphasises skills in teaching based on empirical research.
- c. Experiential tradition: favours apprenticeship and learning by doing.
- d. Critical tradition: seeks to develop critical consciousness about the inequitable impact of schooling on children from disadvantaged social circumstances.

We argue that all four traditions in learning to teach are important and foundational to quality ITE, but a unifying framework is required to enhance quality and coherence in ITE programs. The ITE curriculum is crowded and fragmented, making it hard to provide the kind of program coherence that ensures graduates feel well prepared. One solution would be widespread use of the Quality Teaching Model.

The Quality Teaching Model provides a common language and set of concepts that teacher educators can use to underpin and articulate what constitutes quality teaching for their students. Such a framework would add clarity on what is expected in classrooms and help build both the confidence of ITE students and their confidence in the profession in ways that impact positively on retention and completion rates in ITE and the quality of graduates.

The Quality Teaching Model is comprised of elements of practice for which there is evidence of impact on student outcomes²³. It was developed in 2003 by Associate Professor James Ladwig and Laureate Professor Jenny Gore at the University of Newcastle. The Model was commissioned by the NSW Department of Education and has been its endorsed pedagogical framework ever since. The Model focuses on what teachers do in the classroom rather than who they are. In other words, it examines the quality of *teaching* not *teachers*. Such a focus positions ‘outputs’ from ITE programs (graduates) as the primary target rather than ‘inputs’ (recruits). It recognises that teaching can be taught/ learned and teacher education matters.

The Quality Teaching Model focuses on three key concepts:

1. Intellectual Quality - pedagogy focused on deep understanding of important ideas.
2. Quality Learning Environment - pedagogy that creates productive classrooms focused on learning.
3. Significance - pedagogy that helps students see value in what they are learning.

The QT Model provides the shared conceptual language for defining and understanding quality. Having a quality teaching framework is a partial step to improving teaching practice. When combined

²² Gore J. (2001). Beyond our differences: A reassembling of what matters in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 52(2), 124–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487101052002004>

²³ Ladwig, J., and King, M. (2003). "Quality teaching in NSW public schools: An annotated bibliography." Ryde: NSW Department of Education and Training Professional Support and Curriculum Directorate.

with the powerful processes of Quality Teaching Rounds professional development, we find significant positive effects on teachers, teaching²⁴ and student outcomes²⁵.

In 2021, we conducted a pilot study in which 37 fourth year students took part in a Quality Teaching Rounds workshop prior to their final 10-week internship. Through a series of surveys taken pre- and post-workshop and after their internship, participants indicated greater confidence in their ability to teach, including confidence in motivating students, using a variety of teaching and assessment strategies, and successfully managing student behaviour. Importantly, participants also reported lower levels of pre-internship stress following the workshop, and less desire to leave the profession. We are currently replicating this trial with an additional cohort. This two-day workshop experience could readily be expanded to ITE students across the country.

The federal Quality Initial Teacher Education Review final report Finding 4²⁶ recommended “higher education providers and employers to consider adopting the Quality Teaching Rounds approach to teacher development to ensure ITE students are equipped to implement evidence-based teaching practices when they enter the profession.”

On casualisation (addressing ToR p)

Teacher shortages have traditionally been filled by Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs), many of whom are new graduates. CRTs have always provided an essential role in the effective functioning of schools but occupy a precarious position in the teaching workforce and have limited access to effective professional learning. On average, pre-pandemic, students experienced a full year with casual teachers during their schooling (K-12). Days taught by casual teachers have undoubtedly increased during the pandemic, although such information is not readily available.

Casualisation and precarious employment have detrimental effects not only for teachers' well-being and professional engagement but for schools as communities – knowing students and their families over time is critical to ensuring successful learning outcomes and is the first of the teaching standards. Research suggests that more than 60% of beginning teachers (those in their first two years of teaching) are employed on short term contracts or as casuals. This means a majority of beginning teachers may not experience high quality induction²⁷.

While some teachers choose casual and temporary employment conditions, and casual supply will always be a necessary part of the system (to address absence due to illness, professional development, etc), CRTs and their students will benefit from greater job security and (funded) access to high quality professional development.

Funding from the NSW Department of Education (Strategic Leveraging Grant) is supporting research examining the impact of participating in Quality Teaching Rounds for 32 CRTs within eight NSW schools. While the project is not yet complete (report due November 2022), initial analysis shows significant improvement in the quality of teaching, overwhelming support from participating casual teachers and school principals, and a viable model of implementation. The potential for wider support of casual teachers is enormous and timely, given current pressures on schools.

²⁴ Gore, J., Lloyd, A., Smith, M., Bowe, J., Ellis, H., Lubans, D. (2017). Effects of professional development on the quality of teaching: Results from a randomised controlled trial of Quality Teaching Rounds, *Teaching and Teacher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.007>

²⁵ Gore, J., Miller, A., Fray, L., Harris, J., Prieto, E. (2021). Improving student achievement through professional development: Results from a randomised controlled trial of Quality Teaching Rounds. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.007>

²⁶ DESE (2022). Next steps – report of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review, *Department of Education, Skills and Employment*, <https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-initial-teacher-education-review/resources/next-steps-report-quality-initial-teacher-education-review>

²⁷ Preston, B. (2019). Reforming Replacement Teaching: A Game Changer for the Development of Early Career Teaching? In: Sullivan, A., Johnson, B., Simons, M. (eds) *Attracting and Keeping the Best Teachers. Professional Learning and Development in Schools and Higher Education*, vol 16. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-8621-3_9

Supporting teachers now (addressing ToR a, b, c, e, i, p)

The Quality Teaching Model has enabled us to empirically test assumptions about teaching quality in different contexts. It is often assumed that beginning teachers deliver poorer quality teaching and that teaching is poorer in disadvantaged schools and rural and remote settings. These are contexts in which teaching out of field is more common while the number of teachers teaching out of field has also increased across the state in the wake of current teacher shortages.

On experience²⁸: three separate studies over a 15-year period found no significant difference between beginning and experienced teachers in the quality of teaching delivered. Two possible explanations with merit are: a) universities are doing an increasingly good job at preparing graduates, and b) most current professional development is not having a meaningful impact on teaching practice.

On disadvantage: we found a statistically significant relationship between quality of teaching and school-level advantage using ICSEA as a measure. However, the relationship is primarily leveraged by the poorer schools. In schools with an ICSEA above 950 the relationship no longer exists²⁹, that is, there is no difference in quality of teaching delivered between mid-ICSEA and high-ICSEA schools. Given that teachers in all ICSEA bands produced high quality teaching after participating in Quality Teaching Rounds, the result in low-ICSEA schools suggests that the issue is less about the quality of teaching or teachers and more to do with enduring and pervasive structural disadvantage.

On location: we found a small but significant difference in the quality of teaching between rural and urban schools. However, in our sample there were no urban schools at the lower end of the ICSEA range and no rural schools at the upper end. When we only look at schools with overlapping ICSEA, the relationship no longer exists, suggesting that community disadvantage is more important than school rurality in understanding quality teaching.

These studies highlight some of the erroneous assumptions about teachers and teaching that inform public and policy debates. We argue for greater investment in and attention to rigorous evidence³⁰ in policy formation.

As well as ensuring a pipeline of students into ITE programs to meet growing workforce demand, more needs to be done to support the more than 65,000 public school teachers in NSW (and 300,000 teachers nationally). Better pay and workplace conditions are critical, but they are not the only factors impacting attrition and desire to leave the profession.

Teacher morale is demonstrably lower today than in previous years. Teachers feel less connected to the profession, less confident in their ability to make a difference, and less supported³¹. Student results against standardised tests like PISA and NAPLAN have stagnated, for which teachers are, unfairly, copping much of the blame. Professional development opportunities have been severely limited since the pandemic started.

Our program of teacher professional development, Quality Teaching Rounds, is backed by rigorous randomised controlled trial evidence demonstrating significant positive effects for teachers and teaching. It is one initiative in which schools and systems could invest that has broad positive impact on teachers and students. It is low cost³² and requires minimal external input while empowering teachers to build their own and collective capacity for quality teaching.

²⁸ Gore, J., Rosser, B., Jaremus, F., Miller, A., Harris, J. (under review). Beginning teachers are not the problem: fresh evidence on the relationship between years of experience and teaching quality.

²⁹ Gore, J., Jaremus, F., Miller, A. (2021). Do disadvantaged schools have poorer teachers? Rethinking assumptions about the relationship between teaching quality and school-level advantage. *Australian Education Researcher*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-021-00460-w>

³⁰ Halsey, J. (2022). Don't expect schools to do all the heavy lifting to close the education divide between the big cities and the rest of Australia, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/dont-expect-schools-to-do-all-the-heavy-lifting-to-close-the-education-divide-between-the-big-cities-and-the-rest-of-australia-186586>

³¹ Fray, L., Jaremus, F., Gore, J., Miller, A., Harris, J. (2022). Under pressure and overlooked: the impact of COVID-19 on teachers in NSW public schools, *The Australian Educational Researcher*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-022-00518-3>

³² Deloitte Access Economics (2020) Quality Teaching Rounds – Cost benefit analysis <https://qtacademy.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Deloitte-Access-Economics-QTR-Cost-Benefit-Analysis-Final-report-9-Sept.pdf>

Our randomised controlled trial evidence shows that participation in QTR can improve student academic achievement³³ and the quality of teaching³⁴. Just as importantly, in the face of the current alarming teacher shortages, when teachers participate in QTR they experience enhanced morale and stronger individual and collective efficacy, and the culture of their schools improves^{35 36}.

The current teacher shortage, exacerbated by COVID-19, has meant that many teachers do not have the time, resources or access to casual relief teachers that would enable them to undertake high quality professional development (PD) which is precisely what could support them in the face of current challenges, maintain their ongoing professional growth and ensure their retention in teaching.

We argue that supporting teachers, CRTs, and graduates through investment in Quality Teaching Rounds is an inexpensive and powerful mechanism for meeting the goals of this review.

Participation in Quality Teaching Rounds can deliver better student outcomes. It rejuvenates experienced teachers and builds confidence in beginning teachers, casual teachers and teachers teaching out of field, leading to better job satisfaction and less attrition³⁷.

Most critically, QTR is built on respect for and understanding of the complexity of teaching. It values teachers and is predicated on the belief that every teacher is capable of great teaching with the right tools and support.

Embedded systemically, QTR has the potential to: decrease attrition among both preservice and inservice teachers; increase morale and job satisfaction; enhance the quality of teaching in all schools, grades and subjects; and improve student outcomes, including narrowing equity gaps in achievement.

The NSW Department of Education has been a committed partner in this research for the last two decades. Through our non-profit social enterprise, the QT Academy, we are providing this professional development at scale in NSW. Over the past three years 2,708 teachers from 900 NSW government schools have taken part.

Providing all teachers in NSW with a two-day workshop and four-day experience of QTR would cost \$242 million over 3 years, an investment that is one third of the State's recent \$720 million investment in a two-year tutoring scheme and would have wider and more sustainable impact. That is, rather than targeting a subset of students for additional support, QTR would support *all* students in all grades and subjects through enriched pedagogy

Solutions to the current teacher shortage cannot afford to focus only on the short-term or on the attraction and training of new teachers. We must support the teachers currently in the workforce, who are teaching in the most trying of circumstances, otherwise new teachers will not stick around in this wonderfully rewarding career.

³³ Gore, J., Miller, A., Fray, L., Harris, J., Prieto, E. (2021). Improving student achievement through professional development: Results from a randomised controlled trial of Quality Teaching Rounds. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.007>

³⁴ Gore, J., Lloyd, A., Smith, M., Bowe, J., Ellis, H., Lubans, D. (2017). Effects of professional development on the quality of teaching: Results from a randomised controlled trial of Quality Teaching Rounds, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.007>

³⁵ Gore, J. Rickards, B. (2020). Rejuvenating experienced teachers through Quality Teaching Rounds professional development, *Educational Change*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-020-09386-z>

³⁶ Gore, J., Rosser, B. (2020). Beyond content-focused professional development: Powerful professional learning across grades and subjects, *Professional Development in Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1725904>

³⁷ Gore, J., Bowe, J. (2015). Interrupting attrition? Re-shaping the transition from preservice to inservice teaching through Quality Teaching Rounds, *International Journal of Educational Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.05.006>

Recommendations

1. Raise the value of teaching through more attractive pay and conditions.
2. Reduce administrative burden on teachers.
3. Nurture existing interest among school students in teaching:
 - i. Expand and evaluate “future teacher programs”;
 - ii. Fund teachers and careers advisers to undertake training in nurturing aspirations.
4. Attract a more diverse cohort into ITE:
 - i. Allocate places for students from underrepresented group, including at prestigious universities;
 - ii. Offer targeted early entry schemes;
 - iii. Provide financial support to disadvantaged students.
5. Invest in programs of rigorous research on teaching and teacher education.
6. Embed the Quality Teaching Model in ITE programs to increase coherence and ensure the preparedness of graduates.
7. Fund expansion of Quality Teaching Rounds for ITE students, casual relief teachers, beginning teachers as part of their induction, and support scaling across teacher workforce.