

Submission
No 124

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Alphacrucis University College

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO.3 -
EDUCATION

Inquiry into Teacher Shortages in NSW

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3rd August, 2022

Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education
Legislative Council
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Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Chairman and the Education Committee,

On behalf of Alphacrucis University College, I wish to thank the Committee for the invitation to provide feedback regarding teacher shortages in NSW.

You will be aware of our deep interest and practical contributions to solving the teacher supply crisis emerging across Australia. In 2017, AC generated the new '**AC Teaching School Hub model**' of teacher training currently being run in partnership with the NSW Government through the National Embedded Cross-Sector Teacher Education Pilot (NECSTEP), which has had a significant impact on resolving teacher supply issues in regional areas. We would be pleased to share our experience around helping communities solve the training crisis facing teachers and schools.

We look forward to working with the Committee and would be happy to provide further evidence if required.

Warm Regards,

Professor Stephen Fogarty

President

Alphacrucis University College

Alphacrucis University College

Established in 1948, Alphacrucis University College (AC) is at the forefront of equipping leaders for careers of impact in Teacher and Higher Education, Business, the Arts and Humanities, the Social Sciences professions, chaplaincy, theology, and Community Services. AC is also the national college of Australian Christian Churches (ACC), the largest movement (by attendance) of Protestant Churches in Australia, consisting of over 1000 churches and over 375,000 constituents.



AC is a multidisciplinary and dual sector university college, offering industry-relevant and community-transformative programs from VET Certificate level through to PhD. It operates campuses in all Australian state capitals, and in Auckland, and via online and 'pathway' programs in constituencies which assist the missions of NGOs, businesses, and other educational institutions around the world. AC's onshore and offshore study centres include programs in Finland and the Philippines, third parties and a global online platform.

In 2022, AC was approved as a University College under the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Provider Category Standards and Other Measures) Bill 2020*, recognizing the College's high national standing and performance. It is worth noting that all of the other institutions that have been awarded the University College category are based in NSW.¹

AC currently enrolls nearly 4000 students, studying across all courses and locations, and has maintained steady and consistent growth over the last decade. The University College has also performed well in student satisfaction measures through the QILT surveys, consistently being ranked within the top 20 tertiary providers around the country.

AC's vision is to be 'a global Christian university, transforming neighbourhoods and nations'. The College is driven by the understanding that a dynamic hybrid of entrepreneurialism, a commitment to justice, and to local partnership will transform human communities.

AC is a not-for-profit and mission-based University College and is a company limited by guarantee with a majority of independent Board members.

¹<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/articles/new-university-and-three-university-colleges-registered-teqsa>

Terms of reference addressed

Alphacrucis University College (AC) will be focussed on addressing the terms of reference highlighted in bold below:

(a) current teacher shortages in NSW schools,

(b) future teacher supply and demand,

(c) out-of-area teaching, merged classes and minimal supervision in NSW schools,

(d) the NSW Teacher Supply Strategy,

(e) teaching workforce conditions,

(f) Initial Teacher Education,

(g) impacts related to COVID-19, including the impact of government responses such as remote teaching and safety restrictions,

(h) the impact of workplace mandates,

(i) the status of the teaching profession,

(j) the impacts of the Staffing Agreement on the ability of principals to effectively staff schools and manage performance,

(k) the administrative burden for principals associated with recruiting for and appointing roles,

(l) the impact of central appointments prioritisation for teaching and principal roles,

(m) support for principals to effectively staff schools above base allocation,

(n) the impacts of incentives and the transfer point system on regional shortages,

(o) the approval to teach process in New South Wales,

(p) the impact of casualisation, temporary contracts and job insecurity,

(q) the measurement of staff turnover particularly in regard to temporary staff, and

(r) any other related matter

Response to the inquiry

1. Alphacrucis University College (AC) congratulates the committee for its interest and action on a fundamental issue of importance for all Australians (teacher supply and effectiveness). We appreciate the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry and will structure our position as a response to the terms of reference (TOR) provided.
2. In particular, AC supports the key recognition that initial teacher education, the communities towards which that training is oriented, and the career / development paths of the professionals involved, are not separate items for consideration. They are, rather, parts of larger *learning ecologies* linked to the sources of community identity, aspiration and expectation. Such community-based learning ecologies perform a critical part in motivating matriculants and career changers to ascribe vocational value to teaching as a profession. Attempts to 'fix' teacher supply and quality without reference to the modelling, support, and values which arise from the communities in which schools operate, have essentially proven futile. The research indicates that while remuneration, for example, is a facilitating factor, it is neither a primary motivator for entry to the profession, nor will increased remuneration have the same impact on attraction and retention that might be expected from closer attention to the most important primary motivators.
3. It is also a matter of general observation among teaching staff that end-on, compliance regimes (such as LANTITE, continuous professional learning thresholds, pre-service values and ability testing, etc etc) load obligations on teachers often without adequate systemic support, change and identity management, sensitivity to local/ community needs, and address to the career progression of staff. Gallant and Riley (2014), indeed, suggest that early career exit from teaching has reached 'epidemic proportions', a factor exacerbated by the age bubble in senior cohorts. Reasons for this include the following:
 - a) Poor teacher training and preparation (Skilbeck and Connell 2003);
 - b) Burnout (Goddard, O'Brien, and Goddard, 2013; Korthagen, 2004; Maslach, 2003; Maslach and Leiter, 2008);
 - c) Lack of support for new teachers (Centre for Innovative Thought, 2006);
 - d) Working conditions (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005);

- e) Discipline issues, lack of administrative support and negative school cultures (Ewing and Manuel, 2005); and
 - f) Identity formation and maintenance as a teacher (Hochstetler, 2011; Hong, 2010; O'Connor, 2008; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009).
4. In this context, AC has responded to these fundamental challenges to the Australian teaching profession by seeking to apply international best practice through its '**AC Teaching School Hub model**' of teacher training, providing through regional Teaching Schools an evidence-based, multi-faceted solution to a number of challenges facing the teaching profession. See section [\(f\) Initial Teacher Education](#) for a brief on the model which is currently being piloted and researched in NSW.
5. AC holds that a widespread transformation of teacher training through the Teaching School Hub model can directly impact a number of findings of key reports (*Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools – March 2018* and *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers – December 2014*). This embraces the developments recommended in repeated government reviews, including:
- a) Improving the attractiveness of the teaching profession and increasing quality and classroom readiness through highly selective, paid ITE cadetships;
 - b) Specialised induction with locally-embedded clinical training for guaranteed classroom readiness and integrated practices;
 - c) Clearer career pathways with comprehensive executive training and subsidised teacher-researcher opportunities which provide higher levels of mentoring and support for professional teachers;
 - d) Greater Principal and local executive engagement in ITE selection and training across a range of criteria, including intellectual agility, EQ, numeracy and literacy, ethos, community knowledge and wider information sources from known referees for more transparency and quality;
 - e) Greater community engagement through vocational training opportunities within school clusters;
 - f) Localised professional development through tertiary-supported master-teachers using regionally targeted research;

- g) Valid and reliable research partnerships to evaluate the innovative success of the AC Teaching School Hub models;
 - h) Stronger tertiary/provider partnerships for increased integration of schools and systems;
 - i) Provider-based input and autonomy of the specific learning needs of the region;
 - j) Increased public confidence in ITE and the stabilisation of regional education; and
 - k) A clinical approach which provides more opportunity for suitability assessment by the Higher Education providers.
6. This inquiry comes at an opportune moment in the history of Australian education. While much of the public debate has been about funding, curriculum or individual identity rights, the literature indicates that deeper and more widespread issues are at play, requiring an innovative whole-of-system redesign.

(a) current teacher shortages in NSW schools

7. AC acknowledges that there is widespread debate as to the nature of the teacher workforce shortages, including that:
 - a) There is a serious shortage of Mathematics teachers
 - b) There is a growing problem with the supply of science teachers
 - c) Overall supply, benchmarked against international experience, is adequate, but there are significant problems emerging in:
 - i. the age profile of the profession at the upper level
 - ii. the ability for particular locations (lower SES, rural, regional, etc) to attract sufficient teachers
 - iii. retention of early career teachers
 - iv. attraction of sufficient, *high quality* younger future teachers.
 - v. retention at critical locations within ITE programs, which contribute to the emerging workforce demographic issues.
 - vi. issues of burnout, motivation, and commitment to quality.
8. In addition to this, there are emerging problems in leadership performance, motivation, training and work conditions. The NSW Auditor General's report points to *"a shortage of qualified secondary teachers in STEM-related disciplines.... (which) is projected to worsen due to a combination of student population increases, an ageing workforce, and fewer people going into teaching. Shortfalls are likely to be more acute in rural and remote areas, and areas of low socio-economic status."*²
9. There are four main points at which ITE candidates drop out of the teacher training pathway. These points provide some insights into motivation, adequacy of training, classroom readiness, induction and mentoring, etc. The four points are:
 - a) Prior to entering an ITE program, there are those candidates who never join - either because they do not have good models or voices in their decision making, or because the ATAR system motivates students to 'spend' the ATAR 'currency' on

² Audit Office of New South Wales. (2019). *Supply of secondary teachers in STEM-related disciplines*. www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/supply-of-secondary-teachers-in-stem-related-disciplines#_blank.

the highest achievable program. So, the social chatter reinforces the myth that smart people do (say) Law, and 'also rans' do Education.

- b) Significant numbers of ITE candidates also drop out of teacher education after the first practicum (usually over a year into training)- pointing to issues with selection and motivation, and also in the overly-theoretical loading imposed upon teacher education providers by state and national regulatory bodies.
- c) The next drop out point is during third year, when further pracs and the expenses of the program impinge upon decision making.
- d) Further dropouts occur when early career teachers enter the maw of living off casual work or short term contracts, often for year after year, and encounter the rising tide of reporting, external compliance, and dealing with social problems which elicit from many teachers the comment that 'I just want to be able to teach'.

10. Estimates of dropout rates between intake and the end of the third year of service vary. In part they vary because of differing methods in measurement. At the low end, commentators speak of 30% drop out rates, while at the upper end there are estimates as high as 70% for drop out through all causes. By way of comparison, though it is early in the piece, the **AC Teaching School Hub Model** is currently running at a 95% retention rate (or, conversely, a 5% non-continuation rate).

11. Given that it is estimated that there are 62,000 ITE students studying across Australia at any given time (or an FTE, assuming a loading of 0.6, of 37200), simply lowering non-continuation would provide an efficiency bonus per year of between (at the lowest estimates of non-continuation, ie. 30%) \$39 million, or (at the highest levels of non-continuation, ie. 70%) of \$101 million. This effectiveness 'saving' is in fact potentially much larger, when one considers the Productive Commission of NSW's Report, which points to not only the current lack, but the opportunity cost placed upon the NSW Economy by dint of the inflexibilities which are inherent in stretched workforce elements.

12. An example of the broader economic impact is the inability to find science and maths teachers. This has ongoing ramifications on the competitiveness of the skills base and

competitiveness of NSW as a whole. *“As we embark on our jobs-focused economic recovery, we must consider new opportunities to embed productivity improvements in the way we do things. These include investing in our human capital by upskilling and retraining our workforce to fill these jobs, and making it easier to do business.”*³ In other words, the current need is probably not for more money, but for more effective ITE programs based on the approaches developed by organizations such as AC, Latrobe University NEXUS programme, etc.

13. AC would recommend that what is needed are localized models, such as the **AC Teaching School Hubs**, where needs (such as may come with rural/ regional, indigenous, independent, or other school setting) can be bespokely tuned to meet local needs. This might include Mathematics teacher supply, ageing workforce demographics, or the need to ‘tune’ ITE preparation so as to produce (as will become pressing for many schools once VET units are integrated into a more flexible HSC curriculum in 2025) teachers who can teach both in ASQA registered courses, alternative pathways, etc.

³ P. Achterstraat, et. al., ‘Rebooting the economy, Productivity Commission White Paper 2021’ (Sydney: NSW Government Printer, 2021).

(b) future teacher supply and demand

14. As is the case with estimating current ITE non-continuation, estimates of future teacher demand and supply are subject to assumptions about policy settings and value positions.

Different positions include:

- a) The Centre for Independent Studies estimates that there is no teacher shortage, just localized issues in STEM etc.⁴
- b) The Rorris Report, sponsored by the NSW Teachers Federation, on the other hand, estimates the need *“for an additional 11,095 FTE teachers”*, assuming that NSW chooses *“to stay with its current 10-year average student-teacher ratio (poor by national standards)”*.⁵
- c) The State Planning NSW estimates that: *“There will be a massive 21% growth in student numbers by 2031. This means NSW schools will need to accommodate an extra 269,000 students, with 164,000 of these students in the public system.”*⁶

Using a 1:24 ratio, the estimate affirms Rorris’ estimates. It should be noted that this only caters for *new* school places. The need to replace retiring and non-continuing teachers - perhaps one third of the total workforce across that period - clearly indicates (counter to the CIS estimates) a looming teacher supply problem.

15. Part of the reason for the intractability of the problem - under government after government, review after review - is that the sectoral issues interact with broader issues. It is not a coincidence that teacher supply became a matter of particular debate during the COVID-19 Pandemic, when the fragility and necessity of schools and teacher availability became very apparent. Likewise, the lack of teacher availability in rural and regional communities relates powerfully to ‘rural-urban’ drift, a trend which is worldwide, longstanding in Australian history, and reinforced by the urban-centred policies, funding and educational preferences (again, the ATAR prefers ‘reputable’ universities for higher

⁴ <https://www.cis.org.au/publication/teacher-workforce-fiction-vs-fact/>

⁵ R. Rorris, NSW Public Schools to 2031: Impact of Enrolment Growth on Demand for Teachers, <https://www.nswtf.org.au/files/rorris-report.pdf>.

⁶ <https://www.sinswonline.education.nsw.gov.au/Home/Overview#:~:text=There%20will%20be%20a%20massive,particularly%20in%20urban%20growth%20areas.>

achieving students) of an advanced democratic society. Countering such broader influences needs to take into account how future ITE candidates make decisions - including through communities of values, influence and culture. The more that responsible bodies seek general solutions, the more they will be driven to local considerations.

16. AC recommends a clinical, local and scalable approach to teacher training which takes account of the social capital factors which both predict and facilitate the attraction and retention of large numbers of quality teacher education candidates. By reinforcing authentic local decision making, the particular strategic HR needs of the region can be addressed through a strong relationship with innovative and flexible tertiary training bodies. Such localised partnerships provide:

- a) Interaction of community and school which enables mechanisms for engaging future candidates early, through mentoring and pre-training;
- b) Retaining of candidates via paid cadetships, using time which in other programs would be considered extra-curricular to reinforce skills and preparedness;
- c) A competitive cadetship application process for limited places, in which fees are subsidized, creates a situation wherein the average ATAR point rises progressively over time, simply because authentic subsidiarity incentivizes the engagement of the best students.

17. Although evidence is still emerging, the **AC Teaching School Hub model** has grown by a factor of 10 over the last 5 years, and is now operating in networks which feature some 80 schools, with well over a hundred students currently training in 46 schools in these networks. A further 20 schools will join in 2023. This is despite the fact that AC has had - and continues to not have- access to federal government funding (such as Commonwealth Supported Places) which underpins other ITE programs, and which requires much higher levels of investment by partner institutions.

(d) the NSW Teacher Supply Strategy

18. AC acknowledges that the [NSW Teacher supply strategy](#) is a laudable effort across multiple fronts to address teacher supply issues. In fact the **AC Teaching School Hub Model** is *already* placed as one of a suite of measures being utilised by the NSW DET, through the NECSTEP pilot (see [Section F - Initial Teacher Education](#) below) but is in the implementation phase so not yet widely publicised.
19. Of the current approaches in the NSW Teacher Supply Strategy, the **'Grow your own' pilot** programme bears closest resemblance with the current work of AC. In this section it would therefore be helpful to compare and contrast the approaches. There are several key differences, between the **AC Teaching School Hub Model** and the *'Grow your own'* pilot:
- a) The AC model is **collective**- a cohort model (annual minimum viable [MVN] numbers of 10 ITE students, and 10 education related VET students) who are in close contact with each other throughout training, and thence into career. The *'Grow your own'* model, on the other hand, is supporting individual students in individual schools. Whilst this is a good initiative, the research indicates that isolation in students' experience, particularly the remote learning experience, seems to be a causal factor in attrition from training. A learning cohort model significantly mitigates this risk.
 - b) The AC model requires clusters of schools to combine **locally**, and with real **local agency**, select / screen who goes into training, from their own communities. The cluster agrees *before even going to the recruitment phase* to meet the annual MVN of 10 students. In other words, the HR pipeline is dependent upon the *decision of schools* to find candidates, rather than the opportunistic availability of candidates, which would vary from year to year. The former is strategic HR, the latter less reliable, and thus more liable to fail to guarantee consistent numbers into the programme. This is a key philosophical shift in ITE- that it becomes a

tertiary / school cluster decision ('B2B') rather than a tertiary / student decision ('Retail').

c) The business model in the AC approach factors in the cost of two key local appointments- **a tertiary director ('AC Regional Director'), and a Teaching School Director, both of whom need to live locally to the cluster**, and are able when needed to travel around the various schools where students are placed. Both of these work in close collaboration around promotional phases, recruitment, and wrap-around care of candidates, including such small details such as meeting assessment task deadlines, and liaising around pastoral care matters. AC have found definitively that these two staff make the operation work, where many other approaches have failed. In the first instance both are part time appointments, that scale up as the students numbers grow to a maximum of 40 per year per hub.

d) The AC, as a dual provider (VET and Higher Education), has designed the Teaching School Hub to **include education-related VET training as a pathway into ITE**. these include

- i. Certificate III in Education Support
- ii. Certificate IV in Education Support
- iii. Certificate III in Community Services
- iv. Certificate III in Early Childhood Education & Care

Cohorts of students are trained, either whilst year 11-12 students (VETIS), or as mature age, in a VET qualification that prepares them for a teaching career pathway. This has the additional benefit of preparing students who may not be yet ready for a degree-level standard of learning and literacy, in a lighter format. These students also become far more ready to be of immediate use as para-professionals (Teacher's Aids), when they enter the clinical teaching model.

e) The AC model fundamentally relies on a **paradigm of local agency** - empowering principals and local communities to make local decisions about their own HR supply. They choose from amongst their best fit graduating students,

their existing para-professionals, local parents, or local career changers, who have a sense of the 'spirit of place'- an intrinsic desire to stay in a particular area / school 'family' to work.

20. This fresh take of supply strategy of the **AC Teaching School Hub Model** is a major philosophical shift: for 150 years in the NSW government, and tertiary providers, there has been a centralised HR supply strategy: the centre trains and accredits, 'agnostic to employer', and then distributes in a 'one size fits all' mode. However, 'sending out' and incentivising students to 'go to the bush' or hard to staff schools, for example, including lavish financial inducements, have been under-subscribed for years. For those students who do go, the lack of local fit often becomes a problem in workplace satisfaction, or even workplace wellbeing / safety. This is also the case for many schools- the beginning teacher who arrives is not classroom ready, or at least not ready for that particular classroom.

21. Reiterating, the DET's '*Grow your own*' approach is laudable - if it truly is an own-grown model. Some of the other approaches in the NSW Teacher Supply Strategy that are highly centralised are less likely to have a sustainable effect on hard to staff schools and regions.

(e) teaching workforce conditions

22. Many teachers and school leaders indicate that out-of-hours and at-home work is a significant disincentive to choosing teaching as a continuing career. (McKenzie et. al., 2014). OECD studies indicate that a great deal of time is spent not learning or teaching, but disciplining, administering discipline and family/ guardian relationships, etc.

- a) The annual number of teaching hours tends to decrease as the level of education increases.
- b) On average across countries, teachers spend half of their working time in non-teaching activities including planning lessons, marking and collaborating with other teachers.
- c) Keeping order in the classroom, generally the biggest concern for new teachers, occupies an average of 13% of all teachers' time across countries. (OECD 2015)
- d) Schools could further benefit, OECD studies concluded, from developing ways to use teachers' time more efficiently so that they could devote more time to professional development, teaching-related work and learning.

23. In part, the availability of time in and out of classrooms relates to the 'factory model' of teaching which still underlies most educational systems, largely for reasons of economics and bureaucratic inertia.

- a) So long as school timetables are dominated by the inflexible "30 kids in a classroom", 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM model of education, variations around that model will have little impact on workload.
- b) Of course, smaller class sizes do not necessary *decrease* workload for a teacher: that workload (as those who have taught in Dalton Plan schools can attest), however, is shifted towards
 - i. greater personal attention and continuous contact,
 - ii. task profiles which may be attended by higher levels of motivation and (importantly, given the discussion in the literature as to the importance of intrinsic motivation among teachers) formation.

24. Utilising the **AC Teaching School Hub model** can also contribute to freeing up staff time in the classroom. By bringing ITE into the classroom early and in a functional manner, supervising teachers can use the 'extra hands' offered by cadet teachers and teaching assistants to variegate and differentiate their teaching styles.

- a) More eyes and hands in the classroom mean that less directive approaches, such as formative assessment and self-directed learning approaches, can be integrated into the classroom.
- b) In this way, planning and summative assessment outside classroom hours can be reduced, or segmented and shared among the teaching team involved in creating learning opportunities for a class.
- c) Integrated research clusters and continuing professional learning will also introduce teachers to new and more pro-active forms of assessment and learning, providing greater flexibility in the use of teaching time. As William and Leahy have demonstrated (2015), onerous volumes of marking and grading often stems from inefficient learning and assessment approaches – busy marking instead of smart marking. The Teaching School Hub model integrates PD time facilitating re-training in these areas.

25. Most importantly, however, Hub-like approaches integrate multiple pathways towards learning, including learning outside the classroom.

- a) Much of the non-teaching work of teachers in standard settings relates to disciplining, programming and assessing. The provision of multiple pathways (beyond the standard matriculation pathway, such as the HSC or the VCE) has a demonstrated impact on student engagement, and helps structure the amount of variegation and differentiation that teachers have to pursue in any given setting.
- b) So, a school which only has one track (say, the HSC) will have very high levels of differentiation required in many classrooms, while students who have access to, say, work-integrated learning via VET options, or advanced studies tracks through Cambridge Examinations (UK) or the AP scheme in the USA, or the choice of evening, online or flexible learning options, are much more likely to be motivated and engaged in their chosen subjects.
- c) All of these are made possible by the planning, load sharing and specialization possibilities inherent in school clusters. This implies, however, opening up

matriculation and personal formation pathways for students in recognition that the current matriculation approaches are largely slaved to controlling access to retail model, university placements via the ATAR. More widespread use of student-centred, flexible learning through tailored programs would open up possibilities for shifting work allocations in classrooms.

(f) Initial teacher education

26. As indicated above, AC's recommendation around initial teacher education centres on the **AC Teaching School Hub model**. The model was piloted in 2018 in a partnership with the **St. Philip's Teaching School (SPCC)**⁷ in the NSW Hunter Valley (the demonstrator hub). After strong initial success, two additional 'hubs' were rolled out in 2020-21, the **Teaching Schools Alliance Sydney (TSAS)**⁸ and the **St Thomas Aquinas Teaching Schools Institute**⁹ in Tasmania. There are already over 50 schools involved, with a number of new Hubs already in the works to be launched in 2023, The first cohort at SPCC have just graduated at the end of 2021, with retention rates at 95%.

27. In June last year (2021), the NSW Government allocated \$2.9m to subsidising the SPCC hub and providing seed funding for two more NSW regional hubs, one Catholic (Wilcannia Forbes) and one public (North-Western NSW) in partnership with the University of New South Wales and the Gonski Institute. This is planned for roll-out in 2023, in collaboration with a group of rural state secondary schools, the DET, UNSW, and AC, with 10 ITE students and 10 teaching-oriented VET students. The facilitating body has been titled the **National Embedded Cross-Sector Teacher Education Program (NECSTEP)**.

28. The central aspect of the **AC Teaching School Hub model** is that it flips the conventional model of teacher training, bringing exceptional higher education entirely onsite to local school clusters. This strategic approach to HR allows the schools to sponsor annual cohorts of quality pre-service teachers and provide clinical training from day one - a permanent practicum. It enables a tertiary-industrial partnership approach to teacher training, embedded in regional knowledge and the unique ethos of the schools. The model includes:

- a) A cluster of schools (connected through region or ethos) of between 3000 and 10000 school student enrolments, providing 8-30 initial teacher education positions per year, delivered entirely onsite by faculty through a blended model of intensives and online learning, fully accredited by a tertiary provider.

⁷ <https://www.spcc.nsw.edu.au/teaching-school>

⁸ <https://www.teachingschoolsalliancesydney.org/>

⁹ <https://catholic.tas.edu.au/teaching-schools>

b) ITE Students who are screened by the tertiary provider and local schools at programme entry level on the basis of quality (IQ and EQ), proven and locally vouchsafed volunteerism, local diversity needs, future HR needs and ethos alignment.

c) The school cluster sponsoring at least 50% of the clinical teaching training costs and providing at least 1 day of paid placement as a teaching assistant for the ITE students Cadetship.

d) The students having virtually guaranteed employment upon completion, and schools having the option to bond the trainees as a condition of entry.

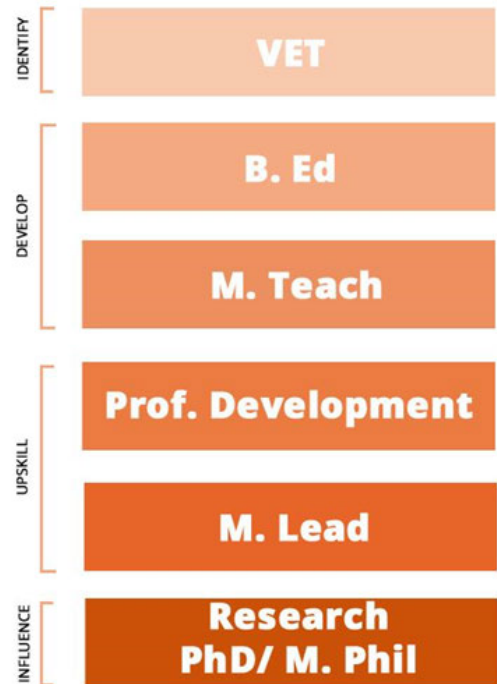
e) The school cluster financially supporting 6-20 Higher Degree Research and 10-30 Master of Leadership (MLead) degrees for senior teachers within the cluster. These researcher-teachers also provide staff professional development for the local school cluster thus reducing the costs of regional PD.

f) A designated regional director provided by the Higher Education Provider (HEP) to manage integration in the school, coordination of Clinical Teaching cadetship placement, ongoing support of ITE students, and support to key school staff.

g) The HEP forming a close long-term partnership with the school clusters, bonded by a MOU for annual minimum viable numbers of students.

h) The assignment of an external research team from an external tertiary institution for each Teaching School Hub which provides a longitudinal programme evaluation for an improvement spiral.

i) The School Hub also becoming a VET provider with part of the student training involving teaching Certificate courses to the local community.



29. Our modelling suggests that up to 32% of teacher training could be delivered (6360 ITE students at 40 students per Hub) through the Hub- style model, or 80 Hubs nationwide by

2026, distributed proportionally across the three schooling sectors. The CBA benefit ratio for the model is 7 generally, 12 for regional Australia. At this scale, we calculate that the net benefit for the model is \$1,280,514,291 across all jurisdictions; and \$746,397,172 for regional Australia in particular. This does not include a number of potential value-add measures including educational export, regionalisation, private partnerships and broader educational impact within the Teaching School Hubs.

30. Although early days, the **AC Teaching School Hub model** has demonstrated results which address a range of Australia's unique educational problems around teacher shortage including teacher quality, high attrition rates, indigenous educational gaps, regional 'brain drain', alternative pathways, VET in schools, and targeted industry-based experiential learning. We would recommend that any report analyses the success and impact of this model, and consider how it may be delivered more broadly.

(i) the status of the teaching profession

31. There is little doubt that teaching has declined in attractiveness as a career, particularly for school leavers with high ATAR equivalents. This has been for a number of structural and 'contingent' reasons since the 1960s:

- a) The social advancement pathway formerly promised to aspiring lower middle SES students, who often took up teaching, nursing or other service vocations which 'professionalised' through the 1970s and 1980s, is no longer so clear, largely for broader social and generational reasons;
- b) The old Australian emphasis on security of career ('teaching or the bank') taught by the Depression generation, has declined as a social motivator;
- c) The massification of school education has occurred post-war, with the consequent rise in centralization, compliance and reporting. This has led to the restriction of intrinsic motivators (such as sense of community, interpersonal relationship, etc), even as the relationship of the teaching profession to forms of knowledge, professional preparation pathways in an information age, and social requirements for internalized disciplines among school students and their families have shifted radically.
- d) A parallel massification of university-based initial teacher education has taken place, with the significant expansion of teacher education enrolments by universities, in low-cost, theory-driven classes which substantially delay exposure of ITE students to the classroom. Concurrently, Universities have been essentially incentivized to disengage from their local communities of practice and shift attention towards research. These factors have led to the 'debasing' of the currency of a teaching degree's perceived worth;
- e) The debt trap associated with increasing Higher Education qualification processes, combined with the compounding casualization of the teaching workforce (as governments have sought flexibility and 'efficiency' in contractual relationships) has rendered teacher preparation an uncertain, high-cost pathway;
- f) Broader social criticism of the profession, the offloading of family and social concerns onto the classroom teacher, and the politicization of school-related issues, have also had an impact on the perceived status of the profession;

- g) The 'artificial market' created by the dominance of the ATAR entry system has shifted status from lower ATAR entry point serving professions, towards higher demand areas such as law, medicine, finance, etc. In this false economy, capable students feel the need to 'spend' their ATAR points on the highest value course, in the highest ranking university, available to them, further debasing the value of vocation.

32. These issues are, of course, not restricted to Australia: the fact that they affect the West in general is a pointer towards the contextual issues underlying the nature of professions in a globalizing society. Not surprisingly, therefore, there have been a number of responses in societies which, like Australia, are entangled in such fluid socio-economic arrangements.

- a) Numbers of universities overseas (for example, the University of Liverpool, UK) have discontinued ITE programs, as "*school-centred initial teacher training*" has spread to embedded programs related to school networks under the British Government's "*school-centred initial teacher training*" (or SCITT) program.
- b) Alain et. al (2013, pp. 8-9) in their review of teacher supply and attraction factors for the European Union, found similar patterns to those noted above: declining attractiveness for the most capable students, ageing of the profession, declining working conditions, and looming teacher shortages in key areas and across numbers of European nations.
- c) The key impacts for Alain's EU subjects were not about remuneration, so much as about values, the desire to work with young people, and the vocational value (intrinsic motivators) of teaching. As The Staff in Australia's School Survey (SiAS, 2015) notes, 'extra pay based on years of service was seen as effective in retaining teachers (though less so in the independent sector, where the preference was for pay increases according to merit or increasing qualifications), but less effective in attracting them.' (McKenzie et al. 2014, p. xlii).
- d) The literature demonstrates that best outcomes in terms of attracting teachers, relate to:
 - i. Settings where the prestige of the profession has been maintained or raised;
 - ii. 'a concurrent model of initial teacher education with high exposure to practice in schools' (Alain et. al., 2013, p. 10);
 - iii. Supportive Early Career induction and training programs (Alain et. al., 2013, p. 11);

- iv. Focused and well-articulated professional development oriented towards local communities of practice and linked to ongoing career aspirations (as opposed to the “fragmentation, waste, lack of coherence, remoteness and ... insufficiently practical” PD typifying many centralized professional development or compliance-led programs) (Alain et. al., 2013, p. 11);
 - v. Mobility, both social (in terms of remuneration and reputation) and geo-social (ie. the ability to experience different places and life chances by moving location or even country);
- e) As noted above, there are existing models for ITE, early career and continuing teacher development which address all of these issues. The **AC Teaching School Hub model** has successfully moved the indicators on most of the key criteria noted in the literature (see [Section F - Initial Teacher Education](#)).
33. The issue of not only teachers, but the status of executive and Principal roles also need to be considered. The causes for decreased effectiveness, or the opting out of present or future leaders from the teaching profession, are varied. They have become the particular point of attention for education systems such as that in NSW, where it is clear that implementation of devolution, the implementation of high stakes testing and end-on compliance regimes (including for Principals themselves), and continuous local teacher development schemes, depends heavily on the development of an effective leadership cohort in the midst of an ageing profession.
34. Bodies such as the School Leadership Institute and programs such as the AIS Aspiring Principals Leadership Program, are one response to widespread reported problems in the profession. These problems include (according to the 2017 Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey):
- a) workload intensification relating to administration and reporting;
 - b) lack of time to focus on teaching and learning;
 - c) the ‘relentless pace of educational reform’;
 - d) workplace violence, threats and bullying (NSWSPC 2017); and
 - e) ill health and impacts of Principalship on family life.
35. The current average time span from teaching-commencement to principalship in Australia is 29 years. This is a parlous situation for school education, occurring in no other profession. It

indicates 'a wait in line' approach, rather than a merit/ talent based approach, and indicative of system-wide absence of purposeful training pathways for school leaders, entrenching a default setting of professional longevity and survival as the only noticeable preparation for school leadership.

36. The Staff in Australia's School Survey (SiAS 2015) indicates the flip side of these in-career issues, i.e. those teachers deciding *not* to seek a leadership position. Reasons included:
- a) time demands being seen as too high (on average Principals report working c. 60 hours a week on all school functions);
 - b) anticipated difficulty in maintaining a satisfactory work/life balance; and
 - c) the desire to remain in the classroom. (McKenzie, et. al. 2014, xxv)
37. 'Attractiveness to Principals' as a TOR, then, relates equally to those who are or are becoming Principals, those who have chosen not to become Principals due to the pressures on the position, and those who are seeking early retirement in order to escape those pressures. Again, these are not unique patterns, with the advent of high stakes testing and increased administrative load impacting on senior school leadership ranks around the world.
38. In order to support principles and teachers across the career path, schools need to become purposeful whole-staff learning ecologies, from initial teacher training through to continuous Principalship training. This training should be integrated into the Australian Qualifications Framework, to ensure quality and transferability. Further, training should be done as much in the location of practice, according to the motivating ethos and mission of the related organization, as possible. As Izadinia (2016) notes, the literature demonstrates that identity- and mission-alignment matter. This approach builds teacher support into its entire ethos of the career. the **AC Teaching School Hub model**.

(k) the administrative burden for principals associated with recruiting for and appointing roles –

39. There are five fairly static steps for teacher career advancement: Teacher; Head of Faculty; Executive (Pastoral care or Curriculum); Operations Deputy; Principal.
40. As indicated above, the current average time span across this career path in Australia is 29 years. This indicates that any solution needs to be locally sustainable (i.e. not reliant on the shorter timetables which dominate political or administrative cycles).
41. Supervision of practicum teachers in schools is often haphazard, and left to the individual devices of poorly trained supervising teachers, who are too frequently contacted with short notice by a tertiary provider looking for a placement. The development of mentoring and supervision relationships therefore needs to be integrated into the local learning ecology.
42. Likewise, continuous Principal training faces repeated challenges depending on the availability of time and finance, the aspirations, ability and age of the leader/ potential leader, and the utility of the training to the identity and organizational mission defining the leader's role. End-on approaches (such as 'point counting' in the sort of end-one compliance systems used by the Association of Independent Schools or state bodies such as NESAs) 'keep the score' but are essentially oriented at lifting the level of the lowest common denominator.
43. The career pathway gradually prepares teachers to become 'Master teacher / operations manager' at school executive level. Yet the step to Principal is often made with no training whatsoever in accounting, finance, budgeting, governance, capital works management, law, HR management etc. Many beginning Principals arrive in the job effectively financially sub-numerate. The ones that survive generally do so on raw talent, but at great personal cost.
44. The issue with many current 'solutions' (financial, administrative, curricular, training etc) is that they operate in isolation and in open markets where the inputs and outputs are not controllable. A large-scale initial teacher training clinical teaching model (CTM) operating in a school cluster, requires pathways into a holistic master-teaching regime. In some SCITT models, and in the **AC Teaching School Hub model**, this operates through integrated

Masters coursework and higher degree by research (HDR) clusters. This approach provides solutions for recruitment though:

- a) Creating a structural requirement for a communal culture of teacher reflectiveness and support as experienced teachers become master-teachers, not just 'prac' supervisors.
- b) The 'Hub' enables additional pathways for teachers (from novice through supervisor to leadership), which are not dependent upon, but which augment, the traditional five-step career pathway. These include mentor teacher, Master teacher, cluster-based researcher, ITE associate lecturer, Foundation associate, Executive Principal, educational strategist, and others as local needs require.
- c) A greater range of potential pathways where teachers are not caught in a zero-sum competition for limited promotional opportunities, and have greater agency in designing their own career pathways.
- d) A strong Foundation or Trust at the core of the cluster which develops HR planning capacities which are more personalized than is possible in large systems, reinforcing identity and mutuality over the long term.
- e) Evidence from rural and regional school clusters such as St Philips of high demand as first choice employers, so raising the level of both applicants and of staff retention over time.
- f) A HR pipeline that is more controllable through the locally-embedded ITE program.

(q) the measurement of staff turnover particularly in regard to temporary staff

45. As noted above, the reasons for teaching stress, lowered retention, and burn out have been well addressed in the literature.
46. Buchanan et. al. (2013) reviewed the available literature and came up with the following list of key interventions for teacher retention:
- i. Collegiality and support
 - ii. Student engagement and behaviour management
 - iii. Working conditions and teaching resources
 - iv. Professional learning
 - v. Workload
 - vi. Isolation
47. If in fact, however, *'up to one third of teachers in Australia and other developed countries leave within the first five years'*, there is a considerable amount to be gained by addressing the causes of 'moveage and wastage'. Buchanan notes that almost all the top ranking retention issues had to do with the primary motivations for becoming a teacher in the first place, ie. 'the desire to be good teachers (identity); to help their students learn (relationship); and contribute to the next generation (social altruism).' (Buchanan et. al. 2013, p. 122).
48. The availability of the key interventions with these intentions were major predictors of retention and avoidance of burnout. In other words, **well-led local autonomy in the creation of the resourcing and a relational environment supportive of teaching, combined with direct attention to the identity issues driving teaching in the first place, are critical contributors to suppressing 'moveage and wastage'.**
49. Best practice (in Britain, and as implemented now in Australia through such Clinical Teaching and Hub models as those used at Alphacrucis University College and the University of Melbourne) creates 'mediating' institutions of the right size and coherence to encourage the formation of ECTs and CCTs.

- a) In Britain, school clusters (built around organizations such as The North East Partnership SCITT based in North Shields), have in recent years been named among the best providers of postgraduate teacher training in the country (Ward 2016). The 2017 *Good Teacher Training Guide* noted the following:
- b) Teachers trained in schools are more likely to become teachers than those trained in universities.
- c) Ninety per cent of the final-year trainees from school-centred teacher training entered teaching compared with 79% from university postgraduate courses and 74% from undergraduate courses. There were no universities among the 17 providers where all final-year trainees became teachers.
- d) It could be that those opting to train in schools are more committed and schools select trainees more carefully, seeing them as possible future colleagues.
- e) Forty per cent of the school-based providers were assessed as 'outstanding' by OFSTED compared with 30 percent of the university departments.
- f) School-based training attracts a wider cross-section of society, with more from ethnic minorities, more aged 25 and over, and more men to primary teaching. (Smithers & Bungey 2017)

50. Between the Australian qualitative data relating to the impact of intention, identity and environment, the workforce survey data, and that emerging from Britain, it is clear that teacher training requires a *structural* change, ie. not just changes oriented towards individual schools or teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Given the importance of teacher quality to the future of Australian competitiveness, coherence as a globalized society, and rural and regional sustainability, AC recommends that government look to best practice internationally as a basis for restructuring teacher education away from the current 'retail' model in large, detached university programs and towards:

- a) Embedding teachers in clusters of schools which form locally-directed learning ecologies, via integrated programs connecting right across the range of AQF awards - such clusters to be funded/ developed relative to the spread of enrolments across the State, Catholic, and Independent sectors.
- b) With a strong emphasis on HR pathways which introduce students to classrooms early, articulation of candidates in the same places through mentored Early Career employment, and embeds teachers in continuous, locally-directed continuous professional learning (CPL) which is relevant to their careers
- c) Focusing on the retention issues, such as stability of employment, identity formation, and support for groups of teacher peers and in the classroom.

Recommendation 2

Given the demonstrated efficacy of providing greater local and regional autonomy in teacher training and school administration, that NSW government strongly encourages the Federal Government to move a significant section of the funding of teacher education through Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) away from universities, to compliant school based approaches, in which regulated but autonomous clusters of schools take responsibility for providing the context of primary ITE and CPL via competitive contract with registered Higher Education Providers. Any CSP review should also consider the important role of the new higher education category of University College (all four of which

currently reside in NSW) which could help shape the sector to encourage more dual sector, locally-partnered, flexible, teaching-focussed and pragmatic education solutions .¹⁰

Recommendation 3

Given that the literature for teacher retention clearly demonstrates that the ability to serve, to engage meaningfully in a relational way, and to contribute to society are (above financial rewards) among the top motivators for joining the teaching service in the first place, that Government and the Opposition act energetically and in a bipartisan way to:

- a) Decrease the end-on compliance load required for teacher professional maintenance and advancement
- b) Raise the status of the profession in the community through, for example:
 - a. increased local and international service opportunities;
 - b. funded embedded research opportunities within the CPL frameworks of schools;
 - c. early selection and encouragement in the pre-matriculation years; and
 - d. alternative pathways into teaching via such as VET programs in Education Support.
- c) Help overcome the personal and professional risks which flow from decades of blame shifting and rapid policy shift regarding, for example, institutional responses to child abuse, and public debate over the Gonski Plan.
- d) Provide accredited training pathways for school leaders to better manage the HR issues associated with devolved educational organisations, with appropriate funding on the same model as proposed for clusters.

Recommendation 4

Alphacrucis University College believes that with the developed 'AC Teaching School Hub model' there is now the opportunity for a world-first, world-class solution to a significant amount of problems in the teaching profession (while also bringing significant economic benefit). Currently demonstrating a 95% retention rate, the NECSTEP program ([Section F -](#)

¹⁰<https://www.tegsa.gov.au/latest-news/articles/new-university-and-three-university-colleges-registered-tegsa>

[Initial Teacher Education](#))¹¹ is funded for 2 years by the NSW Government, but a further 2 years of funding would support the trainees through the full cycle and provide the full-scale results for research. Alternatively, an expansion of the number of Hubs would establish NSW as the key innovator of this clinical training globally. AC therefore recommends the committee continue to assess and consider the model as a key part of the long-term solution to teacher shortages in NSW.

¹¹ Further details of the cost-benefit analysis and business planning around the Hub model can be provided upon request.

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