



Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why was the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group established?

The Australian Government knows that having well trained and knowledgeable teachers provides the foundation for a strong, high quality education system. Quality teaching is one of the keys to driving positive student outcomes. It is vital that the quality of teaching in Australia is world class.

We know there is excellent practice in a number of initial teacher education courses, but in others there is room for improvement. The quality of teaching starts with those who enter teaching, the training they are provided and the support they receive.

That is why on 19 February 2014, the Australian Government established the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, to examine how new teachers can be better prepared with the right mix of academic and practical skills needed for the classroom.

2. Why does teacher training need to be improved?

Recent international results show that there is a problem with the level of student achievement in Australia. The Programme for International Student Assessments (PISA) tests indicate that while Australian students generally achieve a very high standard of education outcomes, they are declining relative to other countries.

Thirty per cent of the in school variation for student results is attributed to the quality of teaching. It is vital that quality teaching is happening in every classroom across Australia. This starts when teachers are being trained.

The Advisory Group found there is a high degree of variability in the quality of training provided to initial teacher education students. While there are examples of excellent practice, pockets of poor practice in teacher education remain.

3. How many submissions did the Advisory Group receive?

The Advisory Group received over 170 submissions.

4. Who was consulted as part of the Advisory Group's work?

An Issues Paper was released on 17 April 2014 and formed the basis of an extensive public consultation process. Over 30 consultation meetings were held with representatives from the



education community including universities, professional organisations, peak unions and teacher employers.

In addition to reviewing the submissions presented during the consultation, the Advisory Group also reviewed wide-ranging research, evidence and international best practice to reach their findings and recommendations.

5. What did the Advisory Group find?

The *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* Report found there is a high degree of variability in the quality of training provided to initial teacher education students and set out 38 recommendations to address this. These recommendations covered the following areas:

- stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses
- rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses
- improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students
- robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness
- national research and workforce planning capabilities.

The Report concluded universities alone cannot reform the training of our teachers. Successful reform will require collaborative partnerships between universities, schools, school systems, teacher regulatory authorities and governments.

6. How many recommendations were made in the Report?

The *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* Report has made 38 key recommendations for the Australian Government's consideration.

7. Does the Australian Government support the recommendations in the Advisory Group's report?

The Australian Government has carefully considered all the recommendations in the Report. The recommendations propose significant improvement in both the content and delivery of teacher education courses. The recommendations are practical and achievable, and have the potential to make a real impact on the quality of teaching in Australian schools.

The Government notes the Report recommendation for a new national regulator of teacher education courses, but does not believe establishing a new body will necessarily deliver better quality assurance nationally. Instead, the Government will utilise the expertise of existing bodies to achieve this outcome. AITSL will be given greater responsibility for driving improvement in the quality of initial teacher education and will work with state and territory teacher regulatory authorities to increase the rigour of assessment of courses for accreditation.

The Government looks forward to working cooperatively with state and territory education ministers, non-government schools, universities and other key stakeholders to implement the recommendations from the Report.

8. When will changes be made to teacher education courses? What happens now?

The recommendations in the Report are wide ranging. It is the Government's intention that the majority of the Advisory Group recommendations will be developed and delivered within the next two years.

The Government will immediately instruct the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to commence work to progress a number of the Advisory Group recommendations.

The Australian Government will also work with state and territory governments, the higher education sector, teacher regulatory authorities and employers to progress the recommendations.

9. Who were the Members of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group?

The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Minister for Education and Training, appointed eight experts with strong backgrounds and a range of experience in the education field to form the Advisory Group.

Professor Greg Craven, Vice-Chancellor of the Australian Catholic University, was appointed Chair of the Advisory Group and was supported by the following members:

Professor Kim Beswick, Professor in Mathematics Education, University of Tasmania; Immediate Past-President, Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers

Mr John Fleming, Deputy Principal (Junior School Teaching and Learning), Haileybury, Victoria, Deputy Chair Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Mr Trevor Fletcher, Principal, Eastern Fleurieu School, South Australian Government

Ms Michelle Green, Chief Executive, Independent Schools Victoria

Dr Ben Jensen, Chief Executive Officer, Learning First

Professor Eeva Leinonen, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), University of Wollongong

Professor Field Rickards, Dean, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne; Chairman, Asia Education Foundation Advisory Board

10. Where can I find further information about the Advisory Group and the *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report*?

Information on the Advisory Group, including the *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report*, Government response, public submissions and commissioned research is available on the *Students First* website at: www.studentsfirst.gov.au.