



Teach for Australia Pathway: Evaluation Report Phase 3 of 3

Submitted to
Australian Government
Department of Education

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2013

Acknowledgements

This evaluation was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). ACER gratefully acknowledges the assistance and support of DEEWR in conducting the evaluation, in particular the contributions of Jan Febey, Cary Duffy, Ruth Terracini, Jen Hayes and Sally Oatey.

The assistance of staff from Teach For Australia, the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the ACT Department of Education and Training, the Northern Territory Department of Education and Children's Services, and the Victorian Institute of Teaching was greatly appreciated, particularly for the ongoing provision of program documentation and the willingness of all involved to talk about their perceptions and experiences.

Particular appreciation is due to the Associates, their in-school Mentors and school principals from all participating schools, who made time to talk to us frankly about their experiences. We are also grateful for the participation of other school staff members and students of the schools we visited, and especially the in-school coordinators, who took the time to organise the schedule of interviews and focus groups and who helped to make our time in schools enjoyable and productive.

Thanks are also due to our ACER colleagues who spent time in the field and made an important contribution to this report: Jenny Wilkinson, Sarah Buckley and Gerry White, and to our former colleagues for their leadership and groundwork in the first year: Stephen Dinham and Catherine Scott.

The views expressed in the report are based on the contribution of all stakeholder groups and individuals but remain the responsibility of the authors. They do not necessarily represent the views of DEEWR or any individual or organisation involved in the evaluation.

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Acronyms

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank
CS	Clinical Specialist (MGSE role)
DECS	NT Department of Education and Children's Services
DEECD	Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
DEEWR	Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Ed A	Educational Adviser (Joint MGSE/TFA role, Cohort 1 only)
EFTSL	Equivalent Full-Time Student Load
ENTER	Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (replaced by ATAR from 2010)
ETD	ACT Education and Training Directorate
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
KLA	Key Learning Area
LOTE	Languages other than English
MGSE	Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne
NT	Northern Territory
PD	Professional Development
SFO Index	Student Family Occupation Index (DEECD)
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TFA*	Teach For Australia – the organisation (see note)
TFA Pathway*	The Teach for Australia Pathway (see note)
TLA	Training and Leadership Adviser (TFA role)
TQNP	Teacher Quality National Partnership
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching

***Note:** The public name of the program is Teach for Australia. To clarify the distinction between the program name and the Teach For Australia organisation, this document refers to the program as the Teach for Australia Pathway ('TFA Pathway'). This name represents the national program being implemented as a component of the Council of Australian Government's *Smarter Schools – Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership* (TQNP) agreement. The program is a 'new pathway into teaching' (a reform initiative of the TQNP) which comprises the Teach For Australia organisation and the University of Melbourne and is (for Cohort 3) supported by the Victorian DEECD and Catholic Education Office, the ACT DET, the NT DECS and the Australian Government.

Throughout this document 'program partners' is used to refer to the organisations which currently support the delivery and/or funding of the Teach for Australia Pathway: the Teach For Australia organisation; the University of Melbourne; the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the ACT Education and Training Directorate; the NT Department of Education and Children's Services; the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; and the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

The term 'stakeholder' includes the program partners, as well as the Clinical Specialists and Training and Leadership Advisers, the Associates, Mentors, principals and other school staff, and students. For the purposes of this report, the term 'School Personnel' refers to school staff with the exception of Associates.

Executive Summary

This report is the final of three reports of the evaluation of the Teach for Australia (TFA) Pathway, a pilot of an alternative approach to teacher education in Australia. The evaluation was undertaken by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) over the period 2010 to 2012.

Background of the Teach for Australia Pathway

The basic design of the TFA Pathway is as follows:

1. High-achieving university graduates are recruited nationally. Applicants are subject to a rigorous recruitment process and are selected on the basis of qualities and skills suitable to the teaching profession, and the possession of a genuine desire to reduce educational disadvantage.
2. Selected applicants (termed Associates) undertake six weeks of initial residential intensive education prior to commencing a two-year placement as an Associate in a disadvantaged secondary school (the Placement School).
3. Associates undertake a two-year employment-based course involving continued study toward a qualification in teaching; a teaching role with a 0.8FTE reduced load, and the support of an in-school teacher Mentor.
4. Further support is provided fortnightly by a Clinical Specialist (MGSE) and a Training and Leadership Adviser (TFA).
5. Associates are placed in secondary schools in geographic 'clusters', allowing for multiple Associates within a school and within a region to ensure Associates have access to peer-support.
6. The Associate's in-school experienced Mentor also undertakes mentor training, conducted by the University of Melbourne.

Associate teacher education is provided by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at Melbourne University.

The expected outcomes of the TFA Pathway are:

- achieving measurable benefits for students in socially and educationally disadvantaged schools;
- forging new linkages between business, government and non-government education authorities, universities and schools; and
- creating a community of future innovators and leaders for education and society with high regard for socially and educationally disadvantaged school communities.

As an initiative of the National Partnership, the TFA Pathway is intended to contribute to structural reforms to raise the quality of teaching in Australia. The initiative aims to establish appropriate and high quality teacher education through an accredited clinical, employment-based pathway into teaching.

The first cohort of *Teach for Australia* Associates graduated from the two year program in December 2011. The second cohort of TFA Associates commenced in 2011 and, as well as involving Victorian government schools, the program was expanded to include a small number of Associates in ACT government schools and a Victorian Catholic school. The second Cohort of 42 Associates successfully completed the program at the end of 2012.

The 40 Associates making up Cohort 3 commenced their program in 2012. In 2013 Cohort 3 Associates taught in government schools in Victoria, the ACT and the Northern Territory and in two Victorian Catholic schools.

The evaluation

The evaluation of the *Teach for Australia* Pathway was commissioned by the-then DEEWR and commenced in March 2010. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether the delivery of the Pathway can be modified to better achieve intended outputs and outcomes (the ‘formative’ evaluation), and whether the Pathway is achieving expected outcomes (the ‘summative’ evaluation). The formative evaluation was the main focus of the first report (Scott, Dinham & Weldon, 2010). As the Pathway was more fully implemented over 2011 and 2012, the focus of the evaluation shifted more towards the summative issues. The outcomes of the Pathway were a major component of the second evaluation report (Weldon, McKenzie, Kleinhenz & Reid, 2012) and are the main focus of this final report.

Evaluation methodology

ACER employed a mixed method approach including both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the key critical questions. Data was collected from a variety of sources, including interviews and focus groups with stakeholders over three years and online surveys of Associates in their first and second years of the program.

During the final phase of the evaluation in 2012, interviews were conducted with 12 representatives of the program partners, 33 Associates, 17 Mentors, 10 principals, 5 school staff, two Training and Leadership Advisers and 5 Clinical Specialists. Focus groups were held with a total of 53 students, ranging from Year 7 to Year 12. This added to the data collected in 2010 from 88 interviews and focus groups involving 62 students, and in 2011 from 97 interviews and focus groups involving 77 students.

Online surveys of Associates were carried out in November 2010 (Cohort 1), November 2011 (Cohorts 1 and 2), and November 2012 (Cohorts 1, 2 and 3). Comparisons were made between the results from all online surveys: changes in Cohort 1’s views between 2010 and 2012; and differences between the views of Cohorts 1, 2 and Cohort 3 at similar stages in the program.

Phases of the evaluation

Phase 1 of the evaluation assessed the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of the program for Cohort 1 in their first two terms (2010). The first report (Part 1) was designed to provide a summary of data gathered on the operation of the Pathway in its initial stages.¹ Data for that report were collected via site visits with schools and phone interviews with the program partners, the Associates, their Mentors, principals and other school personnel, and the Educational Advisers from April through July 2010. This information was gathered to provide early feedback on how the Pathway was being implemented – to synthesise emerging themes in the delivery of the program and to inform future development and implementation.

¹ See Scott, Weldon & Dinham, 2010.

Phase 2 of the evaluation built on Phase 1 and captured further information on the effectiveness and efficiency of program delivery, including a consideration of changes made to the program for Cohort 2 and the experiences of stakeholders participating in the program for their second year. The report provided a summary of the main findings of the evaluation up to the end of 2011, particularly from interview data collected between April and August 2011, and online surveys of Associates conducted in November 2010 and 2011. It included a preliminary assessment of the evaluation's key questions.²

In phase 1, the strengths of the program from the perspectives of stakeholders were:

- The rigorous selection process for Associates;
- The provision of significant support to the Associates;
- The quality of the MGSE course.

In phase 2, an additional strength of the program became evident:

- The development of a community of Associates and their support for each other.

Structure of the report

This report is set out in three parts. Part 1, *Setting the Scene*, provides an overview of the key aspects of the TFA Pathway, program terminology, and changes made between Cohorts 1, 2 and 3.

Part 2, *Perceptions and Experience of the Pathway*, relates the findings of the evaluation, with particular emphasis on the experiences of Cohort 2 Associates in their second year and Cohort 3 in their first year, and the views of program partners and school personnel in 2012. This section considers elements of the program from the perspective of the various stakeholders involved. It also provides a comparative analysis of the results of the online surveys completed by Cohort 1 Associates in Term 4 of their first (2010) and second (2011) years, and Cohort 2 Associates in Term 4 of their first year (2011). Data from TFA and MGSE are also incorporated.

In Part 3, *Key Questions and Conclusions*, some suggestions are made about potential avenues of improvement drawn from issues raised in Part 2, as part of the formative aspect of the evaluation. Key questions guiding the evaluation are then considered in the light of the evidence collected throughout the evaluation and, where appropriate, comparisons from national and international literature on teacher education.

Phase 3 findings: perceptions and experience of the TFA Pathway

Overall, the Pathway continues to show considerable promise, with all participating schools indicating that they would take another TFA Associate if they had an available vacancy: a strong endorsement of the quality of the Associates.

Recruitment

The recruitment process remains a major strength of the Pathway, as noted by all stakeholders. High quality graduates, many of whom would not otherwise have considered teaching, have been successfully recruited, including from fields where there is a teacher shortage. Some logistical concerns remain although they are not as evident as when the Pathway first started, such as matching Associate subject areas to school needs and ensuring that Associates are willing to be placed in non-metropolitan areas.

² See Weldon, McKenzie, Kleinhenz & Reid, 2012

The selection process has been successful in recruiting resilient Associates and the attrition rate over each Cohort's two years is low. Of the 45 Associates who started in Cohort 1, two left the program in the first year, 43 completed the two years. All 42 Cohort 2 Associates completed the program. Of the 41 Cohort 3 Associates, one left during the Initial Intensive and one during the first year; 39 Associates have continued into their second year. Fifty Cohort 4 Associates were placed in schools in 2013 and were all in the second term of their first year. The current retention rate to date is about 98 per cent.

Associate preparation and education

The Initial Intensive was generally well received across all three cohorts. Changes for Cohort 3 included greater communication from MGSE prior to the Intensive that helped set expectations, and 90 per cent of Cohort 3 Associates also visited their placement school prior to the Intensive.

Many Associates felt that there was too much emphasis on theory and not on practical modelling and material, although there was greater recognition of the importance of theory among Cohort 3 and the difficulty of providing practical experiences in the period in which the Intensive is run. Associates appreciated time spent with experts in their learning areas, and some would have liked more subject-specific input.

The Summer School introduced in the Cohort 2 Initial Intensive was continued and provided Associates with an opportunity to teach school students from educationally disadvantaged contexts who had volunteered to attend the university during their January holidays. Associates noted that the Summer School was valuable in helping them develop as teachers. Associates generally felt well prepared for their initial teaching experience. Nevertheless, the experience of Associates and school personnel suggests that the lack of in-school experience remains a challenge in terms of crafting a balanced Initial Intensive.

Cohort 2 and 3 Associates had less to say about the difficulties of managing their ongoing study than did Cohort 1, which suggests both that expectations were better managed and that the timing of assessments was generally not the issue it had been for Cohort 1. School Personnel tended to express more concern about the demands of the course than the Associates themselves. Associates in the ACT and NT did note that assessment times were occasionally problematic, and that some of the course seemed Victorian-centric. An issue commonly identified by Associates was an ongoing need for assisting students with low levels of literacy.

Associates in schools

The first one to two terms can be highly demanding for Associates as they lack experience of the classroom environment and have had little opportunity to practise skills such as behaviour management. However, Associates are generally well supported and they thrive on challenge. School personnel favourably compared them to other beginning teachers and some were considered to have outstanding attributes and potential as teachers.

Most Associates were managing their teaching commitment well and were also strongly engaged with the school community and co-curricular activities. Some were introducing new activities for students and, as expressed by staff in a number of schools, changing the nature of staffroom discussions. In addition, 61 per cent of Cohort 1 Associates and 42 per cent of Cohort 2 Associates were in leadership positions in their second year, including roles such as Year Level Coordinator.

Associate support

The majority of Associates regarded the support they received in total (from all sources) to be at least adequate and in many cases excellent. Few Associates felt the need for any additional support. Interactions with school personnel and other Associates were considered as important as the in-school Mentor, MGSE and TFA sources of support.

Mentors provided teaching and pastoral support and were key people in introducing Associates to the school community. For a variety of reasons, some Mentors were not always able to provide adequate support in some areas of need. In some instances Associates felt there were not always avenues to express their concern.

Implementation of the Pathway

Stakeholders regard the TFA Pathway as a promising initiative with the potential to attract talented graduates to teaching. As was noted in the first two evaluation reports and confirmed in Phase 3, adjustments in response to feedback are ongoing and generally appear to be effective. The Associates particularly commented on the extent to which both TFA and MGSE were willing to accept critical feedback and modify their approaches accordingly.

Evaluation findings to date show that changes and developments have been responsive to the implementation issues raised by stakeholders and the first two phases of the evaluation. Some issues do remain, particularly in the timing of recruitment and placement, the areas of communication, including between support roles, and the more practical preparation of Associates for entry into schools. Overall, feedback from all parties indicates that the program has major strengths and is well advanced towards delivering effective teachers, albeit in small numbers, in schools where they are needed.

The formative part of the evaluation has been concerned with how the Pathway has been implemented, and the key factors influencing success in terms of achieving its initiatives. Issues that remain are summarised below:

- Late placement in the early phases of the program had considerable impact on some potential Associates choosing the program and on MGSE preparation for the Initial Intensive. Although processes have been introduced to reduce its incidence, this is an issue that requires close and ongoing cooperation among teacher employers, schools and the Pathway.
- Further opportunities to observe and practise teaching prior to placement are desirable.
- It may be beneficial to mandate observation of other teachers during Associates' first semester teaching and to reduce Associates' class teaching loads to enable this.
- It may be appropriate to introduce a course in developing literacy and numeracy among students who are struggling in these domains, to provide pedagogy and resources to Associates in this area.
- Particularly in the first phases of the program there were indications that some Associates were being placed in demanding classes and had a number of different classes to prepare for. There needs to be close cooperation among stakeholders to ensure that Associates' early experiences are with student groups that are less demanding, and that they have fewer different classes to teach.
- There may be a case for ensuring that placement schools have an appropriate formal induction process for new teachers, and particularly for beginning teachers.

- Mentors should be volunteers or willing participants fully aware of the demands of the role.
- It would be preferable for Mentors to be in the same subject area as the Associate they mentor and in geographical proximity (e.g. the same staffroom).
- In those instances where it becomes apparent that Mentors are unable to allocate sufficient time to the mentoring role, particularly in the first two terms, alternative arrangements need to be made as quickly as possible.
- There is a need to clarify the roles of the CS and TLA for those new to the positions, to maintain quality and consistency of practice.
- It may be appropriate for the TLA to withhold discussions on leadership for the first semester, and to clarify ‘leadership’ as a term, as reluctance by some Associates to engage with the leadership aspect of the program may relate to an assumption that ‘leadership’ refers specifically to leadership in the wider school context, and Associates generally do not feel ready for such a role in their first year.

Key Questions

The key research questions comprise a large part of the evaluation analysis. Following the Phase 2 report, it was agreed with the-then DEEWR to present the key questions in a slightly different order and to reword the original key question 5 (now key question 6). The key questions are now in order as follows, with the additional wording in Key Question 6 italicised:

- 1) What are the key factors that influence success in terms of achieving initiative objectives (including identifying barriers to national implementation)?
- 2) Does the employment-based teacher training program, *Teach for Australia*, deliver effective teachers?
- 3) What impact have *Teach for Australia* Associates had on student performance in targeted schools?
- 4) Is the *Teach for Australia* initiative helping to raise the status of the teaching profession?
- 5) Is the employment-based teacher training adopted by *Teach for Australia* a cost effective approach?
- 6) What features of the *Teach for Australia* approach have a positive impact on the quality of teaching *and what aspects of it can inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia?*

Key Question 1: What are the key factors that influence success in terms of achieving initiative objectives (including identifying barriers to national implementation)?

Marketing campaigns and rigorous graduate recruitment have successfully attracted high-quality applicants nationally. The Pathway was seen by stakeholders to have set rigorous standards for applicants’ academic achievement and personal attributes suitable to teaching, such as excellent communication skills. A key aspect is that applicants need to be willing to take regional or rural placements. In the early stages concerns were expressed about the limited number of Associates willing to teach outside metropolitan areas. Changes in this regard are evident, however: in stating their preference in their initial application to the Pathway, 67 per cent of Cohort 4 Associates stated that they would teach anywhere in Australia. One in five (20 per cent) indicated a first preference for rural or remote placement.

About one quarter of Associates had already decided to enter teaching and nearly half may have entered teaching via a university graduate course had they not been successful in their application to TFA. Successful applicants have a similar academic ability and performance

to that of MGSE MTeach candidates. Indeed, TFA Associates have a slightly higher average score in coursework subjects and it is worth noting that they undertake their course while working in schools at 0.8 FTE, whereas MTeach students undertake their course full-time.

The risk of late placement and the timing discrepancy between graduate recruitment and school vacancies is an issue that requires ongoing attention as it is important both for retaining successful applicants and in preparations for the Initial Intensive.

Associates are placed in schools serving disadvantaged communities in metropolitan and regional areas. Qualitative data suggest that Associates are gaining the skills and attributes necessary to be high-quality teachers, and many are taking on leadership positions. Schools have indicated that they would take another Associate if a vacancy was available: a strong endorsement of the program.

Principals have indicated that they are looking for capable leaders of the future – and are keen to retain Associates in their schools after the two years of the program. Particularly supportive were principals of placement schools in rural and regional areas who have struggled in the past to attract younger staff, or retain them for more than a year.

Associates have formed a community of practice and are a powerful source of support and learning for each other. The objective of creating on-going relationships among Associates is embedded in the Pathway to a greater extent than in other forms of teacher preparation. Further research would be required to gauge the impact of this community following completion of the program.

The careful selection of Mentors has proven very successful for the development of the Associates. The few instances of less successful Mentor relationships tended to exacerbate Associate stress during the initial stages of the program. In general the Mentors commented favourably on the training they received.

Recent policy initiatives have removed legislative barriers to the employment-based model except in Queensland where teachers are required to have completed a qualification. Due to placement issues and the ongoing lack of participation by most jurisdictions, and the level of funding set as a result, Associate numbers are considerably lower than the 200 to 225 per year initially intended.

A potential barrier to national implementation is the location of MGSE in Victoria. Meeting the needs of a cohort of Associates due to start teaching in multiple states and territories may stretch available resources. There may also be state preferences for local universities to provide the teacher education components.

The cost of providing the current level of support to Associates through Clinical Specialists (MGSE) and Training and Leadership Advisers (TFA) may also be problematic if the program grows nationally, and particularly if more schools in remote areas participate. The need to cluster Associates for support may also preclude some small and rural or remote schools from participation.

Key Question 2: Does the employment-based teacher training program, Teach For Australia, deliver effective teachers?

The scope of this evaluation did not extend to assessing Associates' effectiveness using purpose-designed performance assessments or other means such as direct classroom observation by trained observers.³ Answers to this question have therefore been inferred on the basis of the Associates' satisfying the requirements of the MGSE course, on their own perceptions of efficacy, on the perceptions of their Mentors, colleagues and principals, many of whom had spent time observing Associates in their classrooms over the two year period, and also on the perceptions of the CS and TLA, experienced teachers and teacher educators who had also observed Associates in the classroom over the two year period.

Given the highly positive nature of these perceptions, it can be said that after a generally challenging experiences in the first one or two terms, Associates are generally considered to be effective teachers within their first year, and increasingly effective in their second year. Their effectiveness is developed within highly supportive contexts, and this support is crucial to the success of the Pathway, particularly in the first one to two terms.

Nearly all Associates indicated a preference for more practical elements in the Initial Intensive, a tool kit of resources and behaviour management techniques to help them 'survive' the first few weeks. Schools were able to support Associates in a variety of ways during this time and the rigorous selection of Associates appeared to be a key factor in ensuring success in the early stages.

The fact that Associates are still undertaking their qualification in the second year provides the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of theory and method, and to put these into practice immediately, ask questions and obtain feedback from both experienced teachers, lecturers and their students.

Key Question 3: What impact have TFA Associates had on student performance in targeted schools?

This is a difficult question and has only been possible to address in partial, anecdotal ways. Quantitative evidence has been sought about the impact of Associates, but schools are only able to provide partial and incomplete data. School personnel shared success stories during interviews and many student focus group participants also noted that Associates had had a positive impact on them.

Associates brought with them a depth of knowledge about their field, about ICT and methods, that school personnel noted had challenged and changed aspects of their own practice. A number of principals noted that student scores in specific subject areas in which Associates were working had risen in comparison with previous years.

³ See House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, p. 7, Ingvarson, Beavis et. al., 2005, and Ingvarson, Beavis, Danielson et al. 2005.

Key Question 4: Is the TFA initiative helping to raise the status of the teaching profession?

This particular question was a part of the research brief although it should be noted that it is not one of the contractual outcomes of the Pathway. The TFA initiative has not been long enough established, and is not a large enough provider, to have made any discernible impact on the status of the teaching profession in Australia overall. It may be some years before any change in status can be detected, and even then it may be difficult to ascertain the extent to which the TFA initiative may be said to have any responsibility for that change.

About half of surveyed Associates had considered teaching in the future and the TFA Pathway had brought these plans forward. Over 40 per cent of respondents would have considered a traditional teacher education pathway and 20 per cent had already decided to enter teaching. About half of respondents considered participation in the program to be of value for a future career beyond teaching.

Over one-third of successful candidates were high achieving graduates with backgrounds in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) fields. The marketing of the TFA program seems to have the potential to encourage graduates in areas of shortage to consider both teaching as a career and teaching in schools that often do not have access to high quality graduates.

Key Question 5: Is the employment-based teacher training adopted by Teach for Australia a cost effective approach?

Due to the lack of comparative data on the outcomes of teacher education courses in terms of teacher effectiveness and teacher retention, it was not possible to conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of the Pathway. Rather, the approach taken was to detail its relative costs and provide stakeholders' views about outcomes.

In terms of teacher education the TFA Pathway involves relatively high financial outlays by government. These relatively high costs are linked to the key elements of the Pathway, as well as the costs of establishing the Pathway and the relatively small number of Associates involved. Any reduction in the quality of the teacher education program is likely to be detrimental to the Pathway, although there may be scope for a reduction in the levels of support provided to Associates. The perception schools have of Associates is very positive and, thus far, every school that has participated in the program would like to continue that association.

Costs for Cohort 1 and 2 included start-up costs that would not be repeated, particularly in the area of recruitment processes. There were also a limited number of vacancies made available by employers as they piloted the program and as such, potential economies of scale have yet to be realised. These factors are likely to have resulted in higher costs early on than would be the case in future cohorts.

Nevertheless, it remains the case that the cost of recruitment, a quality teacher education component and Associate support is high relative to other pathways into teaching. School-based and academic evidence suggests that Associates are greatly valued by their school community. Principals of a percentage of schools have indicated that they struggle to attract young, high-quality teachers and that the program's two-year placement strategy is advantageous to participant schools.

The available evidence, however, suggests that not all universities currently attract highly academically capable candidates, and the issue of placement remains: there is no incentive in traditional pathways for high quality candidates to choose regional, rural and hard-to-staff schools, nor do schools themselves have the budget to advertise or provide incentives to encourage high quality applicants.

While some misgivings about Associates' first few weeks as teachers have been expressed by stakeholders there was one notable caveat and this was a favourable comparison with recent graduates from other programs. Some School Personnel indicated that Associates started slightly behind other beginning teachers but caught up well within the first one to two terms. Others indicated that they were on a par or better than graduates of other teacher education programs with which they had experience even within the first weeks.

The specific focus of the program, beyond getting top tier graduates into teaching, is placing them into schools serving disadvantaged communities, in both metropolitan and regional areas. School eligibility for participation in the program is based on the relative disadvantage of students in both socioeconomic and school performance measures. Generally schools are selected from within the bottom 50 per cent of state or national measures of socioeconomic disadvantage.

The response from participant schools has been very positive. They have been impressed with the calibre of the Associates assigned to them and every participating school with a vacancy has requested another Associate.

The deliberate placement of Associates for two years in schools that struggle to attract high-quality applicants is one of the strengths of the TFA Pathway. The ongoing low number of placements is, however, a cause for concern in terms of cost effectiveness.

A significant proportion of program resources is spent on support. Stakeholders have indicated that high levels of support, particularly in the initial stages of the Pathway, are necessary and are generally effective in helping Associates manage their new role, survive, and thrive in the classroom. The two separate roles of Clinical Specialist and Training and Leadership Adviser has increased the cost of support as a proportion of total program costs. It is not clear at present that the additional resources required in this area are warranted.

Key Question 6: What features of the TFA Pathway have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and what aspects of it can inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia?

Elements of this question are discussed in the other key questions. The most notable features are:

1. The selection process and rigorous selection criteria;
2. The clinical model of practice integrated with theory over an extended period;
3. High levels of support – supportive schools, the in-school Mentor, CS and TLA; and
4. The development of a community of Associates.

In highlighting these elements, it is worth first noting that they form parts of a cohesive program. Consideration would need to be given to the extent to which any of these elements, if implemented elsewhere in isolation from the other elements, would have an impact.

The TFA Pathway selection process recruits graduates with academic achievement substantially above that required by many secondary teacher education courses. The selection criteria include demonstrable ability to communicate confidently, to show resilience, tenacity and optimism, effective organisation, problem solving and openness to learning.

The need for a selection process that assesses a broad range of competencies required for teaching rather than relying solely on previous academic performance has been recognised by previous reports into teacher education.

The TFA Pathway is an employment-based pathway into teaching that requires Associates to complete a two-year course and there has been considerable effort to integrate theory and practice.

Associates are supported directly and formally by the school, with a dedicated mentor. They are also supported by MGSE, both by lecturers and subject area specialists available by email and the Clinical Specialists who regularly observe classes and provide advice on integrating theory and practice. In addition, they are supported by TFA Training and Leadership Advisers who also observe classes and provide feedback using a leadership framework. Associates also support each other and have grown a community of practice allowing them to share practical and personal advice.

Aspects of the evaluation of the TFA Pathway that may inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia include the following:

- Attraction of high quality applicants through appealing to social justice and through a quality, exclusive graduate recruitment process. Includes the attraction of applicants in shortage areas such as science and mathematics.
- Employment-based training, offering high quality training while working and a reasonable salary (which can also attract career changers and other applicants who would not be able to afford to take time out of the workforce to train).
- Partnerships with jurisdictions and schools serving disadvantaged communities to offer courses and incentives to attract quality candidates.
- High quality in-school mentoring, including time-release for mentors may assist in reinvigorating mid-career teachers and improving the confidence and retention rates of early-career teachers.
- An initial lighter teaching load for new graduates, time for planning and reflection, ongoing professional support both in-school and from the university or provider of the initial teacher education, may also assist in early career retention and development.
- The development of closer ties between university course participants and subject specialists, once they are alumni, may have potential benefits.
- The inclusion of units on school leadership may encourage greater awareness and participation for early career teachers in school.
- New employment-based pathways will need to consider the extent of training and supervised practice required prior to commencing an appointment at a school.

Part 1. Setting the Scene

1.1 Introduction

This report (Part 3) covers the third of three phases of the evaluation of the TFA Pathway. The first report (Part 1) was designed to provide a summary of data gathered on the operation of the Pathway in its initial stages.⁴ Data were collected via site visits with schools and phone interviews with the program partners, the Associates, their Mentors, principals and other school personnel, and the Educational Advisers from April through July 2010. This information was gathered to provide early feedback on how the Pathway was being implemented – to synthesise emerging themes in the delivery of the program and to inform future development and implementation.

The second report (Part 2) built on the first and was based on interview data collected between April and August 2011, and online surveys of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 Associates conducted in November 2010 and 2011.⁵ This report captured further information on the effectiveness and efficiency of program delivery, including a consideration of changes made to the program for Cohort 2 and the experiences of stakeholders participating in the program for their second year. That report also provided a preliminary assessment of the evaluation's key critical questions.

This final report is based on the first two reports and on interview data collected between May and October 2012, and online surveys of Associates and principals from all three cohorts conducted in November 2012. As the last of three reports, this report reflects on the effectiveness and efficiency of program delivery across the life of the program to date, including insights gained through data collected from Cohort 1 Associates some months after they completed the program, Cohort 3 Associates (including those placed for the first time in the Northern Territory), and a survey of participating principals. This report also presents a final discussion of the evaluation's key critical questions.

1.1.1. Structure of the report

This report is set out in three parts. Part 1, *Setting the Scene*, outlines the current Australian education context and a brief review of international 'Teach for' pathways. There is also an overview of the key aspects of the TFA Pathway, program terminology, and developments in the program between Cohorts 1, 2 and 3.

Part 2, *Perceptions and Experience of the Pathway*, relates the findings of the evaluation, with particular emphasis on the experiences of Cohort 3 Associates in their first year and Cohort 2 in their second year, and the views of program partners and school personnel in 2012. This section considers elements of the program from the perspective of the various stakeholders involved. It also provides a comparative analysis of the results of the online surveys completed by Cohort 1 and 2 Associates in Term 4 of their first and second years, Cohort 3 Associates in Term 4 of their first year (2012), and principals involved at all stages in the life of the program to date. Data from the TFA organisation and MGSE are also incorporated.

⁴ See Scott, Weldon & Dinham, 2010.

⁵ See Weldon, McKenzie, Kleinhenz & Reid, 2011.

In Part 3, *Considerations, Key Questions and Conclusions*, some suggestions are made about potential avenues of improvement drawn from issues raised in Part 2, as part of the formative aspect of the evaluation. Key questions are then considered in the light of the findings presented in Part 2 and the initial exploration provided in the Phase 2 report. Where appropriate, material from the national and international literature on teacher education is also included.

1.2 The Australian Education Context

This section places the *Teach for Australia* Pathway (TFA Pathway) in context by providing a brief overview of developments in Australia over the past few years, in education policy generally and in teacher education pathways particularly.⁶ Teacher education in Australia has received considerable scrutiny in recent years, at both state and federal level. Commonly proposed reforms include:

- Attracting the best entrants to teaching
- Greater partnerships between schools and universities
- Greater course flexibility
- Attracting high quality and career change applicants
- Improved teacher practicum, including increased duration.⁷

In reviewing the state of Australian teacher education, Dinham noted:

In designing better pre-service programs, the first step should undoubtedly be more time in schools and closer links between school staff and university educators. Every report and inquiry into teacher education advocates these measures. The reality is however, that most teacher pre-service programs operate on the minimum number of days in the field accepted by employers. The simple reason for this is cost. With paid supervision of professional experience, uncommon in most other professions, any increase of time in school has to be funded. ... However, it is not just about time or days in schools. The quality of professional experience is even more important, as is its relationship with what is experienced at university. Merely mandating additional days in schools may not help anything and might in fact be counterproductive, putting pressure on teacher educators, pre-service students and supervising teachers. The language is also important. We should be conceptualising something richer, more active and dynamic than 'prac teaching', hence the preference for the term professional experience.⁸

In 2008, Dinham, Ingvarson and Kleinhenz completed a report for the Business Council of Australia titled *Teaching Talent: The best teachers for Australia's classrooms*. In that report the authors argued that previous attempts to drive improvement in teacher quality and to attract, retain, recognise and reward accomplished teachers had largely failed. Amongst a number of recommendations to reform teachers' salary and career structures, the authors advocated that:

⁶ Some material in this section sourced April 2013 from Educational Policy Outlook: Australia (OECD 2013) http://www.oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK%20AUSTRALIA_EN.pdf

⁷ See, for example, Victorian Parliamentary Education and Training Committee, 2005.

⁸ Dinham, *op cit.*, pp. 12-13.

- teachers be drawn from the top quartile of secondary school graduates and **from high-performing people entering teaching from other fields** [emphasis added].
- teacher education courses and faculties or schools of education be accredited against national standards.
- beginning teachers receive high-quality support and guidance to prepare them for national certification or registration as a competent teacher able to practise anywhere in Australia.
- specialist primary teachers of, for example, mathematics, science, literacy, information and communication technology, and languages, be recruited to support general teachers.
- high-quality, nationally accredited professional development programs for teachers and school leaders be developed to support the national curriculum and national testing.
- staff in schools be supported to use research, including research by schools in schools, to improve practice.
- salary and career structures be restructured to drive and reward higher levels of teacher accomplishment against national standards.⁹

A clear challenge for Australian education is to provide high quality teachers in every classroom and school, but more so, to provide quality teaching and school leadership where it is needed most – in educationally and socially disadvantaged areas.

States and territories are responsible for delivering school education. The national policy framework for education and teacher education is shaped by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) and the Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCTESE). Education policy is further shaped by other bodies:

- The Australian Children’s Education Quality and Care Authority (ACEQCA) provides support for the implementation of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (2012);
- The Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC) is responsible for the Australian Qualifications Framework (1995), which unifies all qualifications into one comprehensive framework;
- The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), established in 2009, develops curriculum, student assessment policies and national data collection, and reports on school education outcomes;
- The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), established in 2010, is responsible for delivering national reforms for teachers and school leaders, and;
- Other stakeholders include universities, unions, professional bodies, industry groups (e.g. Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Industry Group), non-government associations (e.g. Independent Schools Council Australia), and Aboriginal and parents groups.

⁹ Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kleinhenz, 2008.

In recent years, there have been some significant developments focusing on improving the quality of teaching and lifting student achievement. As well as the establishment of bodies such as ACARA and AITSL, these developments include:

- The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008), which set the direction of education for the next 10 years. Objectives include supporting quality teaching and school leadership, promoting a quality national curriculum and assessment, improving outcomes for indigenous and disadvantaged youth, and improving accountability and transparency;¹⁰
- the introduction of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2008 for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9;¹¹
- the National Education Agreement (2009) set a national vision to ensure all students are engaged in schooling, to help raise student achievement and to reduce inequities in education. The agreement was developed through the National Partnerships;¹²
- new financial relationships between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments through the various National Partnership agreements (from 2009), including agreements addressing early childhood education, youth attainment and transitions, improving teacher quality, low SES school communities, and literacy and numeracy, and;
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (from 2010).

The National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality (2009-13) provided funding (AUD 550 million) to states and territories as well as funding for national activities. The broad areas for reform included:

- attracting the best graduates to teaching through additional pathways into teaching
- improving the quality and consistency of teacher training in partnership with universities;
- developing the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to promote excellence in the profession, including requirements for teachers to have; knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of Indigenous students
- national consistency in the registration of teachers to support improved mobility in the teaching workforce;
- developing and enhancing the skills and knowledge of teachers and school leaders through improved performance management and professional learning;
- increasing retention through improved in-school support and rewarding quality teachers and school leaders in rural/remote and hard-to-staff schools, and;
- improving the quality and availability of teacher workforce data.¹³

¹⁰Sourced April 2013 from http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/melbourne_declaration,25979.html

¹¹ Sourced April 2013 from <http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/naplan.html>

¹² Sourced April 2013 from <http://www.coag.gov.au/node/302>

¹³ Sourced April 2013 from <http://smarterschools.gov.au/improve-teacher-quality>

Teach for Australia and Teach Next were Australian Government initiatives under the Teacher Quality National Partnership. One example of the initiatives at state and territory level supported by this National Partnership was the establishment of School Centres of Excellence.¹⁴ The aims of these centres included:

- increasing the capacity in schools to provide effective practicum to pre-service teachers;
- providing quality supervision, mentoring and support to pre-service teachers;
- strengthening linkages between pre-service teacher education programs and the transition to employment as a teacher;
- providing ongoing professional development for, and improving the practice of, current teachers;
- promoting and demonstrating quality teaching, including behaviour management which improves student learning outcomes;
- working with other schools to strengthen the quality of teaching and to improve student learning outcomes, and;
- increasing research capacity of teachers and schools.

Following the Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling¹⁵ published in 2011, the Australian Government introduced the Australian Education Bill in 2012, which outlines a National Plan for School Improvement. As well as proposed changes to school funding, the National Plan seeks to raise the quality of teachers by introducing new requirements, including:

- all new teachers will need to be in the top 30 per cent of the population for literacy and numeracy before they can graduate;
- there will be a new national literacy and numeracy assessment that each teaching student will have to pass before they can graduate;
- there will be a new national approach for admission into teaching courses that will recognise the personal qualities needed for teaching as well as academic achievement;
- from 2016, all undergraduate teaching courses will provide students with at least 80 days of well-structured, supervised and assessed practical experience in schools as part of their course. Graduate-entry students will have at least 60 days practicum, and;
- every teacher will have an annual performance assessment from 2014 onwards as the new Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework is implemented.¹⁶

¹⁴ See for example: Queensland: <http://education.qld.gov.au/nationalpartnerships/centres-excellence.html>; Victoria: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/partnerships/pages/parternationalsteach.aspx> Sourced April 2013.

¹⁵ See <http://www.betterschools.gov.au/review> (Viewed April 2013)

¹⁶ Sourced April 2013 from <http://www.betterschools.gov.au/docs/national-plan-school-improvement>

Further developments nationally include the release of Victorian¹⁷ and NSW¹⁸ education department discussion papers and the Productivity Commission's report on the schools workforce in 2012.¹⁹ All reports considered issues such as the attraction of stronger candidates into teaching, consistent, high quality teacher education and ongoing professional development.

The Productivity Commission and Victorian reports recommended greater flexibility in the interpretation of the discipline-specific knowledge required to enter a postgraduate teacher education course, and greater variation in employment-based pathways into teaching. The NSW government report released in March 2013 following the 2012 discussion paper recommends a minimum level of achievement for people wishing to enter teacher education courses. It also recommends 'provisions for internship requirements and new models of clinical professional experience in schools' as a means of enabling 'earlier entry into teaching for high performing pre-service students'.²⁰

There are currently several broad pathways into teaching in Australia. The three common options are an undergraduate teacher education course, a one to two year postgraduate course (following an undergraduate degree in another field) or a double (often concurrent) degree (an undergraduate course with a degree in teacher education and a degree in another field). Postgraduate courses traditionally have lead to a Diploma in Education although many universities are now offering a Master of Teaching as an option, often in an accelerated mode which can be attractive to those wishing to enter the workforce as soon as possible.

Some postgraduate courses are expected to change due to the development of a national accreditation of initial teacher education programs, endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in 2011. Courses will need to be equivalent to a three-year undergraduate degree plus a two-year graduate entry professional qualification, or an integrated minimum four-year qualification or combined degree comprising discipline studies and professional studies.²¹ Postgraduate diploma courses of less than the equivalent of a two year full-time load (which includes the current Teach for Australia model) may require modification to meet the new requirements, which are being phased in from 2013.²²

The accreditation of teacher education courses is based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, which were drafted in 2009 and validated in a process of surveys and focus group sessions with about 6,000 teachers conducted in the second half of 2010. Launched in 2011, the Australian standards replaced state standards from the beginning of 2013.

¹⁷ DEECD, 2012, sourced October 2012 from

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/about/teachingprofession.pdf>

¹⁸ DEC, 2012, sourced April 2013 from

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/news/greatteaching/gtil.pdf>

¹⁹ Productivity Commission, 2012, sourced May 2012 from

http://www.pc.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/116651/schools-workforce.pdf

²⁰ DEC, 2013, p.9, sourced April 2013 from

http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/news/greatteaching/gtil_blueprint.pdf

²¹ AITSL, 2011, p. 12.

(http://www.aitsl.edu.au/verve/resources/Accreditation_of_initial_teacher_education.pdf)

²² Current Victorian accreditation of the MGSE Teach for Australia Graduate Diploma expires in December 2014.

To be eligible to teach in Australia, teachers must be registered with a state or territory registration authority. A nationally consistent approach to teacher registration was endorsed by all Ministers for Education in October 2011 and is being progressively implemented by individual jurisdictions.²³ Consistent elements include:

- initial period of registration;
- fixed period of registration;
- alternative authorisation to teach;
- discipline and de-registration;
- suitability;
- qualifications;
- English language proficiency, and;
- mutual recognition.

The completion of an initial teacher education program is a requirement of registration, however the ‘alternative authorisation to teach’ element contains the provision, ‘in clearly defined circumstances and under specified conditions, for persons who are not eligible for registration to be employed in roles that would otherwise require registration.’²⁴ This element has the potential to accommodate alternative pathways like Teach for Australia and Teach Next in a nationally consistent regulatory environment.

1.2.1. Models of teacher education

In traditional pathways, trainee teachers undertake courses in theory prior to and in conjunction with spending blocks of time in schools under the supervision of registered teachers. The School Centres for Excellence initiative includes several partnerships between schools and universities that are challenging this concept, particularly the length of time pre-service teachers spend in schools and the quality of the experience they receive.

Models of teacher education that differ from the ‘traditional’ model have been explored for many years, in Australia and overseas. Information is available on programs of teacher preparation that employ an extended internship with a clinical focus which suggests that the inclusion of extended within-school experience enhances the quality of graduates, their commitment to teaching and subsequent retention in the profession.²⁵

An international example is the Five-Year Program at the University of New Hampshire, which has been in operation since 1974. The program is built on what Andrew²⁶ calls the ‘ABC of better teacher education’: selection of the right candidates; the development of a solid professional knowledge base, and a well-planned and well-supervised full-year internship. Selection of the right candidates includes, in this model, the requirement that aspiring entrants to the teacher education program work as teaching assistants under the supervision of qualified supervising teachers. Candidates with the requisite prior educational attainment and high levels of expressed interest in teaching as a career but who

²³ See <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/teachers/registration/registration.html#1>

²⁴ Sourced April 2013 from <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/teachers/registration/alternative-authorisation-to-teach.html>

²⁵ Andrew, Michael D. and Jelmberg, James R. Eds. (2010) *How teachers learn: An educational psychology of teacher preparation*. New York, Peter Lang Publishing

²⁶ Op cit, p. 56.

are not assessed as suitable for teaching on the basis of their placement are not accepted into the program. As a consequence of the stringent selection process and rigorous preparation, graduates of the UNH program are highly regarded and sought-after and have higher rates of retention than teachers prepared by other methods.²⁷

The DEECD and Victoria University Career Change Program uses an internship model with many similarities to the *Teach for Australia* initiative:

- An employment-based selection process (written application, interview, referees)
- Targets people with current industry knowledge and expertise, particularly in maths/science
- Participation in a summer school prior to commencing classroom duties
- On-going support from an experienced school-based mentor
- Paid trainee position in a school
- Two year training course with full registration on successful completion.²⁸

To date, over 320 new teachers have entered the profession through this program.²⁹

The Melbourne University Master of Teaching (MTeach) program follows a clinical model where trainees spend three days of the week at the university and two days in a school. Edith Cowan University's Graduate Diploma in 'Residency Mode' (from 2010) offers students two days a week at a school from the beginning of Term 1, working with an experienced Mentor Teacher and involved in classroom teaching. The academic component is delivered both in school and at the university.³⁰

1.2.2. Teach Next

Teach Next was announced in the 2011-12 Federal Budget and provided an employment-based pathway into teaching for skilled and experienced professionals seeking a career change into the teaching profession. Teach Next aimed to address areas of teacher workforce shortage (e.g. in regional and hard-to-staff schools) and to reduce the number of teachers currently teaching outside their subject areas.

Teach Next was developed by DEEWR after the inception of the TFA Pathway and was similar in that participants completed an accredited postgraduate Diploma of Teaching while simultaneously working in schools. Teach Next involved a number of intensive residential sessions and online education, together with support from a university and a trained in-school mentor for a period of two years.

The first two intakes of Teach Next saw applicants drawn from major fields of study including Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering. Of the applications received, approximately 27 per cent (162 of 591) came from a STEM

²⁷ An unpublished report of an evaluation of the MGSE's M. Teach conducted by ACER also suggests that graduates of that degree are well-regarded and compare very favourably with graduates from other programs.

²⁸ See <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/careers/teaching/incentives/ccpselection.htm> and <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/careers/teaching/incentives/ccpconditions.htm> (accessed 13 May 2010)

²⁹ DEECD, 2012, p.12

³⁰ See <http://www.ecu.edu.au/future-students/postgraduate/our-courses/overview?id=W82> (sourced April 2013)

background. Of the applicants selected to participate in the Teach Next program, approximately 64 per cent (9 of 14) came from a STEM background.

The Teach Next program is dependent on the identification of vacancies by participating jurisdictions. Following the recruitment phase, participants must be matched to a specific vacancy before being offered a place in the program. In intake 1, 14 vacancies were initially identified, but only 6 participants were successfully matched to positions. Similarly, in intake 2, 46 vacancies were initially identified, but only 8 placements were made.

A number of factors, similar in some regards to those faced by Teach for Australia, contributed to the low numbers of participants placed through the Teach Next program, including:

- low number of participating jurisdictions;
- regulatory restrictions, particularly specific subject requirements for approval to teach in identified subject areas;
- legislative conditions that mean beginning teachers can only start teaching with full teaching qualifications;
- difficulties with matching successful applicants' subject expertise to placement schools;
- the timing of the recruitment process, which differs from standard school recruitment so that actual school vacancies are often not identified until after the recruitment process has concluded; and
- some opposition to the employment of teachers under "limited authority to teach" before the completion of their training.

1.3 The Teach for Australia Pathway: Background to the Program

The classroom teacher has been confirmed by Australian and international research as being the major in-school influence on student achievement.³¹ However it has also been noted that teachers and teaching quality can vary widely.³² While socio-economic status (SES) has been found to have a moderate to large effect in respect of predicting student achievement, quality teaching is the best means we have of overcoming the effects of disadvantage so that young people can improve their life chances, with commensurate social and economic benefits to the nation.³³

Concerns over teacher quality, shortages of teachers in certain subject disciplines and geographic areas, particularly low SES, rural and remote, coupled with dissatisfaction with some models of teacher preparation³⁴ have led to an exploration of alternative approaches to attracting and preparing teachers.

In April 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), via the then Productivity Agenda Working Group, identified teacher quality as a priority commitment to be pursued as a National Partnership – the *Smarter Schools - Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership* agreement (National Partnership). In November 2008, COAG announced the

³¹ Hattie, 2009; OECD, 2005; Mulford, & Edmunds, 2009.

³² Andrew & Jelmberg, Eds., 2010.

³³ Dinham, 2008.

³⁴ Dinham, 2006, pp. 3-20.

objective of the agreement – to create a genuinely national, quality teaching workforce by targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ by:

- attracting the best entrants to teaching;
- training them through a world-class pre-service education system;
- placing and supporting quality teachers and leaders in schools where they are needed most;
- developing their skills and knowledge throughout their careers; and
- retaining quality teachers and leaders in our schools and rewarding them for the value they bring to the classroom and student achievement.

The TFA Pathway is one of several facilitation reforms under the National Partnership agreement. The initiative aims to provide a new pathway into teaching via an accredited qualification. It aims to attract new entrants to education and train them via a teacher education program that combines residential education and a supported two-year school placement.³⁵

1.3.1. TFA Pathway Objectives

The objectives of the TFA Pathway are:

- a) attraction of new high-quality entrants from all disciplines to the teaching profession, and working in disadvantaged schools where they can make the greatest difference;
- b) development of a high-quality education and employment-based pathway into teaching that results in a teaching qualification for top graduates;
- c) development of a high-quality teacher-mentor workforce, able to support participating graduates;
- d) retention of a percentage of graduates in teaching beyond their two year initial commitment;
- e) development of an alumni association of graduates who will continue to contribute to education;
- f) strengthening of school and business relationships;
- g) strengthening of the connection between higher education teacher educators and schools; and
- h) improved student outcomes with a focus on measurable increases in levels of students’ academic achievement.

As an initiative of the National Partnership, the underlying basis of the TFA Pathway is to contribute to structural reforms to raise the quality of teaching in Australia. The initiative aims to establish appropriate and high quality teacher education through an accredited clinical, employment-based pathway into teaching.

The employment-based pathway – the *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (TFA)* – is delivered in the context of other reforms under the National Partnership which aim to achieve national consistency in the accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses and in the registration of teachers.³⁶

³⁵ See www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/SmarterSchools (accessed 7 January 2013)

³⁶ ACER has contributed to such developments through work for ATRA, DEEWR, AITSL/Teaching Australia, the Business Council of Australia, the VIT, the NSWIT, and other bodies.

1.3.2. Features of the US and UK programs

Teach For Australia (the organisation) is part of the Teach For All network that currently extends across 26 countries world-wide.³⁷ The most significant overseas initiatives represented in this network are *Teach For America* (US) and *Teach First* (UK). Table 1.1 summarises the main features of the programs in Australia, the US and UK. The Australian initiative is by far the most recent and at this stage is operating on a much smaller scale.

Table 1.1: Features of the 'Teach for' programs in Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom

	Teach for Australia	Teach For America	Teach First (UK)^d
First cohort	2010 – 45 participants	1990 – 500 participants ^a	2003 – 186 participants
2011 Cohort	42 participants placed	>9,000 participants placed	772 participants placed
Graduate Recruitment funding	Federal government	Business and charitable sources, schools (fee per recruit)	Business and charitable sources, schools (fee per recruit)
Accredited teacher education provider – Initial 6 weeks	Yes, by MGSE	No – training is provided by the TFA organisation (which is accredited in some states)	Yes, by a university in the local area
Accredited teacher education provider course leading to teacher qualification	Yes, a 2 year post-graduate diploma, by MGSE, partnering with TFA	Varies – participants must usually pass a content knowledge test or have completed a major related to the subject they teach, then while teaching, complete coursework provided by a local college, a school district or a non-profit such as TFA, depending on state legislation ^b	Yes, a 1 year QTS course through a university partnering with Teach First
Sources of funding for Teacher Education	Federal government	US Government via AmeriCorps service programs grants. Some school districts provide assistance. Participants pay any costs not covered ^c	UK government (DCSF via TDA), schools (fee per recruit)
Funding for in-school support	Yes – 5-day mentor training funded by the federal govt. Mentor time release funded by State government or school budget (Catholic sector)	No – formal in-school mentor training and support is not provided	Yes - Training Teach First teachers is partly undertaken by schools who receive some funding from the UK government. Existing teachers are supported by a university
Funding for participant wage	From school budget	From district/school budget	From school budget
Post-program organisation and funding	Yes – Alumni, initial funding from the Federal government	Yes – Alumni, funding from business and charitable sources	Yes – Ambassadors, funding from business and charitable sources

³⁷ See http://www.teachforall.org/network_locations.html (accessed 10 December 2012).

Notes to Table 1.1

^a Teach For America participant numbers sourced 22 February 2012 from <http://www.teachforamerica.org/our-organization> and <http://www.teachforamerica.org/our-organization/history>

^b Information on teacher certification for Teach For America sourced 22 February 2012 from <http://www.teachforamerica.org/why-teach-for-america/training-and-support/teacher-certification>

^c Costs of teacher education for Teach For America sourced from <http://www.teachforamerica.org/why-teach-for-america/training-and-support/teacher-certification> and http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/apply/state_national.asp

^d Teach First information sourced from Ofsted, 2008. QTS – Qualified Teacher Status, TDA – Training and Development Agency for Schools, DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families. Participant numbers sourced 22 February 2012 from <http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/OurHistory/>

Brief summaries of the US and UK programs are provided below. These programs have been influential in developing the Australian initiative, and the research they have generated is relevant to the current evaluation.

1.3.3. Teach For America

Wendy Kopp was in her final year at Princeton University when she proposed the creation of *Teach for America* in her undergraduate thesis, in 1989. According to the Teach For America website:

She was convinced that many in her generation were searching for a way to assume a significant responsibility that would make a real difference in the world and that top college students would choose teaching over more lucrative opportunities if a prominent teacher corps existed.³⁸ As a 21 year-old, Kopp raised \$2.5 million of start-up funding, hired a skeleton staff, and launched a grass-roots recruitment campaign. During Teach For America's first year in 1990, 500 men and women began teaching in six low-income communities across the country.³⁹

Teach For America is a graduate recruitment organisation that recruits outstanding graduates from all backgrounds and career interests to teach for two years in urban and rural public schools (primary and secondary) in areas of high disadvantage. Its aim is significantly to improve academic achievement 'despite the challenges of poverty and the limited capacity of the school system'.⁴⁰ The organisation is funded primarily through business and philanthropic contributions, although districts are expected to pay a small sum per graduate to cover recruitment costs. Salaries are provided by the school districts.

The initial regional training is designed to help beginning teachers create student achievement-focused, data-driven classrooms from day one. In-person and online sessions focus on how to establish meaningful goals, create long-term plans for the year, and put together detailed plans for the first unit of instruction. Teachers access the 'student achievement toolkit', an online collection of strong examples of plans and other resources to maximise teacher effectiveness.

³⁸ The Peace Corps has a long history of young Americans volunteering to work in developing countries, see <http://www.peacecorps.gov/>

³⁹ http://www.teachforamerica.org/about/our_history.htm

⁴⁰ http://www.teachforamerica.org/mission/mission_and_approach.htm accessed 8 February 2010

Teach For America's regional support network provides ongoing professional development to its teachers to ensure that they succeed as teachers. Each teacher is assigned a regional program director who serves as a source of support, guidance, and feedback during their two-year experience.

At least four times per year, teachers and their program directors engage in extended one-on-one 'co-investigations' about students' progress. These conversations focus on assessment results as well as observations about student learning made by both the teacher and program director. The program director and teacher identify why students did or did not make progress, prioritise key steps the teacher can take to raise achievement, and develop actionable plans.

Teachers meet in content- and/or grade-level-specific learning teams led by successful teachers, including Teach For America alumni and second-year teachers. At these meetings, members discuss ongoing challenges, share best practices, and work to increase their knowledge and skills in specific areas of teaching. These seminars promote professional collaboration and support among teachers.

TFANet, a secure online hub for teachers and alumni, includes resources for teachers and opportunities for members to connect and share ideas. The Resource Exchange allows members and alumni to share, rate, and download successful lesson and unit plans, data tracking tools, and classroom management strategies. Members can also see video examples of excellent classrooms and access advice and resource recommendations from subject- and grade-specific content experts. The Teaching As Leadership Online Navigator allows members to learn more about implementing Teaching As Leadership strategies through videos and testimonials of teachers demonstrating how these strategies work at various proficiency levels.

In the 2012-2013 school year, over 10,000 corps members were in the Teach For America program and teaching in 46 regions across America, spanning 36 states and the District of Columbia. In 2012, the Teach For America program had over 28,000 alumni, of whom 63 per cent were working full time in education. By 2013 the program had reached more than 750,000 students.⁴¹

Independent research showed that, of the Teach for America participants surveyed (62 per cent response rate), 44 per cent of respondents stayed in their initial school, and 61 per cent stayed in the teaching profession, longer than the two years required of them. However, the research also noted that 'few people are estimated to remain in their initial placement schools or the profession beyond 5 or 6 years'.⁴²

The results of investigations into the effectiveness of Teach for America teachers have been mixed. Raymond, Fletcher and Luque studied primary school students in Houston and found that those taught by corps members did significantly better in the state math test than did those who had another new teacher.⁴³ Lackzo-Kerr and Berliner, Darling-Hammond and others criticised the methodology of this research and particularly the lack of comparison with formally certified teachers.⁴⁴ They went on to carry out their own

⁴¹ Teach For America, 2012

⁴² Donaldson, 2008

⁴³ Raymond, Fletcher, & Luque, 2001

⁴⁴ Darling-Hammond, 2002, Education Next, Mikuta, & Wise, 2008, Lackzo-Kerr & Berliner, 2002

research comparing corps members to certified teachers and found generally negative results.⁴⁵ Criticism has been levelled at the methodology employed in each of these papers, as being observational with either inadequate or inappropriate controls.⁴⁶

Mathematica Policy Research released a report in 2004 that used a national, randomised field trial, randomly assigning students within schools to classes. Participants included novice, certified and experienced teachers in the same schools. Students of TFA corps members again achieved higher results in maths.⁴⁷ This research is regularly cited and has a robust methodology, however commentators have noted that the teachers who were not corps members were relatively underprepared, with fewer being certified or having had student-teaching practice experience than members of the Teach for America group themselves.⁴⁸

Of two further investigations in 2006, one found that students of Teach for America teachers did slightly worse in literacy compared to those of certified teachers, with no difference in mathematics, while the other controlled for teacher experience and found no difference in literacy and higher achievement in mathematics.⁴⁹ Boyd *et al.* note in their paper that most differences disappeared as each of the groups gained experience, and that there was greater variation in effectiveness within the different pathways to teaching than there was between them.⁵⁰

A further study by Boyd *et al.* found that the gap between graduate qualifications in disadvantaged schools compared to more affluent schools narrowed between 2000–05, primarily as a result of organisations such as Teach for America deliberately placing graduates in disadvantaged areas. On average these graduates had stronger academic backgrounds than other teachers, and this improved level of graduate qualification was associated with improved student performance.⁵¹

The above US studies were based on primary school teachers and some middle school teachers. A study released in 2007 specifically considered Teach for America teachers in secondary schools in North Carolina. Its findings suggested that Teach for America teachers were more effective than traditionally-trained teachers, as measured by student exam performance, and implied they were more effective than experienced secondary school teachers, particularly in mathematics and science.⁵²

1.3.4. Teach First

In 2001, consulting firm McKinsey & Company were engaged by two business membership organisations, London First and Business in the Community, to make recommendations on how businesses could help improve student achievement in London. The McKinsey team found that the number of excellent teachers in a school was a strong predictor of improved student performance, especially in ‘challenging’ schools. Their

⁴⁵ Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005, Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002

⁴⁶ Education Next *et al.*, 2008, Xu, Hannaway, & Taylor, 2007

⁴⁷ Decker, Mayer, & Glazerman, 2004

⁴⁸ Berry, 2005

⁴⁹ Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006, Kane, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2008 (originally reported as a National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper, No. 12155, 2006)

⁵⁰ Boyd *et al.*, 2006, p. 176

⁵¹ Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, & Wyckoff, 2007, Xu *et al.*, 2007

⁵² Xu *et al.*, 2007

recommendations were based on the Teach For America program: to target top graduates in partnership with businesses and education leaders and to place them as teachers in challenging schools for two years.⁵³

With support from the business community, the government and opposition parties, the Training and Development Agency for Schools and other stakeholders, Teach First was launched in July 2002. Teach First targeted students at major universities in the UK and Ireland and in its first year there were 1,300 applications for 200 positions. A major difference between Teach First and Teach For America is that the training and professional support of Teach First participants is provided by an accredited provider of initial teacher training – Canterbury Christ Church University – a university already providing a variety of teacher training programs to undergraduates and postgraduates.

Selection for the Teach First training program is very competitive, and includes a rigorous assessment and selection process aimed at identifying not only academic ability but the level of the applicant's commitment to teaching, and the Teach First mission. Typically, participants are expected to begin the program with at least a 2:1 degree (Distinction average) in their teaching subject (or closely related).⁵⁴

By 2011, Teach First had placed over 2,520 graduates in challenging secondary schools in the UK and had become number 7 on the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers list. Over 200 alumni are now in middle or senior leadership positions within the teaching profession. The program originated in London but has since expanded to six regions across the UK and now recruits over 700 graduates a year. In 2011 the program also moved into primary schools.

Challenging schools are considered on two scales: those with over 30 per cent of students eligible for free school meals; and schools where less than 25 per cent of students achieved 5 GCSEs (Year 10/11 equivalent, General Certificate of Secondary Examination) above grade C.

Graduates who join Teach First commit to working towards achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) as part of a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).⁵⁵ They begin their training at an intensive six-week 'Summer Institute', which focuses on the essentials of teaching theory and craft, including pedagogy and personalised learning. Participants are also required to complete a 'subject knowledge audit', which is assessed by their tutor before they begin teaching.

From September, Teach First participants work full-time in school, following an employment-based training route and teaching a slightly reduced timetable. Training is provided by school-based mentors, supported by university tutors who visit the schools regularly and run specialist training days at various times in the year. Participants achieve QTS at the end of the first academic year. There are two school-based mentors: the 'subject

⁵³ See http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/what_is_teachfirst/Background and http://www.teachforallnetwork.org/aboutus_history.html (accessed 8 February 2010)

⁵⁴ Sourced from <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/education/project-partners/teach-first.aspx> (accessed 10 March 2010)

⁵⁵ Sourced from <http://graduates.teachfirst.org.uk/our-programme/qualified-teacher-training.html> (accessed 10 February 2010), <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/education/project-partners/teach-first.aspx> and Hutchins, Maylor, Mendick, Menter, & Smart, 2005

mentor', who meets the participant each week to review development and set targets, and who regularly observes lessons, and; the 'professional mentor', who oversees progress and ensures that participants receive ongoing professional development and support.

The QTS award is based on graduates having developed a file of evidence which is reviewed at the end of year one of the program. It includes four written assignments (two at Masters level), weekly written reflections in a journal, observations and a final external assessment.

In year two graduates teach as a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), which allows them to participate in their school's induction program – usually featuring further training, orientations and conferences. They also continue to be closely supported by in-school mentors, university-based tutors and Teach First. A particular aspect of the Teach First program is how it integrates Masters-level work into its training program. During a participant's second year in schools, a structured program of leadership training is delivered to prepare participants for senior positions: whether in education, politics or business. After the two mandatory years of the Teach First program, participants have also partially completed an MA in Education Leadership.

Teach First is a registered charity and receives about half its annual budget from business and charitable sources. It funds all the non-QTS elements of the program. The QTS training (which runs for one year) is funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) on behalf of the government Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This includes staffing, transport and accommodation costs, as well as £2,500 (as at 2008) for each participant to fund school-based mentoring. Participating schools pay Teach First a deposit, plus an amount per term for each participant, to assist with the costs of recruitment and training. The school pays participant salaries using the standard UK scale for unqualified teachers. DCSF also pays a proportion of on-going training costs in the second year, which Teach First forwards to schools to pay for the mentoring participants receive.⁵⁶

In a UK study commissioned on behalf of Teach First, Muijs et al (2010) observed and analysed classroom teaching using the International Systematic Teacher Observation Framework (ISTOF) observation schedule, an instrument developed to measure observable classroom behaviours consistent with effective teaching. Teach First teachers in their second year compared favourably with an international sample of experienced as well as less experienced teachers. They rated highly on classroom management and instructional skills. Their lessons were well prepared and well paced, and pupils were engaged, with time on task levels of over 84 per cent in all cases. Overall, the standard of teaching by Teach First teachers observed was good to excellent as evidenced by the ISTOF rating means being above 3 or 4.⁵⁷

An Ofsted inspection and set of visits and discussions in 2006-07 judged the quality of the London-based Teach First programme. Ofsted (2008) concluded that although trainees found their immersion into teaching exceptionally challenging, around a half achieved the Standards for QTS to an outstanding level, a third to a good level and the others to a satisfactory level. Teach First trainees were found to have made a positive contribution to

⁵⁶ Ofsted, 2008 and http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/teach_first_supporters/funding (accessed 10 March 2010)

⁵⁷ Muijs et al. 2010, pp. 20-25.

the schools visited, and participants remaining in their schools for a second year or more were starting to have a notable impact.

1.3.5. Teach For All

In 2007, Teach For America and Teach First came together at the Clinton Global Initiative and launched Teach For All, a global network of organisations establishing the Teach For America model in their respective countries. At the time of writing, 26 countries (including America, Britain and Australia) were in the Teach For All network, which also included Germany, India, Chile, Estonia, Peru, Lebanon, and more recently, New Zealand.⁵⁸

1.3.6. Teach for Australia Pathway: Key Features

While TFA has a number of similarities with Teach For America and Teach First, the Australian model has been modified to ensure the pathway provides an accredited alternative employment-based pathway into teaching. In Australia, the two-year commitment to teach in disadvantaged secondary schools is a commitment to study for two years in an employment-based course that combines a supported in-school placement and initial and ongoing residential study.

The Pathway provides a greater level of support to Associates, compared with overseas models, through the provision of an in-school Mentor, a Clinical Specialist and a Training and Leadership Adviser, plus the support of staff at the Teach For Australia organisation and the University of Melbourne.

The basic design of the TFA Pathway was as follows, and in large measure the pathway still operates in this manner:

1. High-achieving university graduates would be recruited from all Australian states and territories to participate in the initiative in at least two states over four years.
2. Applicants would be subject to a rigorous graduate recruitment-style recruitment process and would be selected on the basis of qualities and skills suitable to the teaching profession, and the possession of a genuine desire to reduce educational disadvantage.
3. Selected applicants would undertake six weeks of initial residential intensive education prior to commencing a two-year placement as an Associate in a disadvantaged secondary school (the Placement School).
4. On successful completion of the Initial Intensive education, Associates would commence in their Placement School in Term One of the following school year. Associates would undertake a two-year employment-based course involving continued study toward a qualification in teaching; a teaching role with a 0.8FTE reduced load, and the support of an in-school teacher Mentor and an Educational Adviser.

⁵⁸ Information about Teach For All is available on their website: www.teachforallnetwork.org (accessed 7 January 2012)

5. Associates would be placed in secondary schools in geographic ‘clusters’, allowing for multiple Associates within a school and within a school-region to ensure Associates have access to peer-support.
6. The Associate’s in-school experienced Mentor would also undertake mentor training, conducted by the University of Melbourne. Mentors could choose to undertake an assessed version of the training or a non-assessed version.

Associates would be employed by the responsible jurisdictional education authority or school. The teacher education would be provided by the University of Melbourne, including the Initial Intensive and ongoing study during the Associate’s placement. On successful completion of the two-year program, Associates would be awarded an accredited qualification in teaching – the *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (TFA)* from the University of Melbourne.

The structure of the TFA Pathway is briefly outlined here. Where necessary, more detail is provided in the appropriate sections of Part 2.

Recruitment

The graduate recruitment program requires graduates to make an initial written application followed by a phone interview and attendance at a selection day. The initial selection criteria (core competencies) were, in no rank order:

- 1 **Achievement:** History of achievement in academics and extra-curricular activities. Demonstrable leadership skills/potential. Sets aspirational goals and consistently reaches them.
- 2 **Resilience:** Ability to increase effort when faced with obstacles and overcome them with tenacity and optimism. Relishes a challenge and doesn’t give up. Driven to succeed.
- 3 **Humility and Learning:** Recognises limits of experience and understands own strengths and weaknesses. Open to learning from others and actively seeks opportunities to do so. Respects alternative view points.
- 4 **Communication and Influencing:** Clear and confident communicator with ability to influence and motivate others. Can adapt style to suit varying audiences. Has presence and commands attention. Strong active listener and two-way communicator.
- 5 **Organisation:** Able to plan and prioritise activities and tasks to effectively meet deadlines. Focuses on outcomes and continually tracks progress to ensure success.
- 6 **Problem solving:** Able to think critically, analyse information and generate creative and relevant solutions to problems. Can identify causal relationships.
- 7 **Commitment to TFA mission:** Commitment to improving educational opportunities for those in areas of disadvantage. Believes that ALL children have the ability to learn. Wants to make an impact.

The selection criteria have changed over time and are currently (again in no rank order):

- 1 **Achievement:** Have you gained significant, measurable results in school and university, extracurricular activities, and/or work? Have you demonstrated leadership in your endeavours?
- 2 **Commitment to impact:** Are you eager to bring about change and make a difference in the lives of the students you teach? Do you passionately believe in the power of education?
- 3 **Communication and influencing ability:** Are you a clear and confident communicator, and are you able to influence and motivate others? Are you an active listener? Do you want to build these skills?
- 4 **Problem solving:** Are you able to think critically, analyse information and generate relevant solutions to problems? Do you want to build these skills?
- 5 **Organisational skills:** Are you able to plan and organise your activities to effectively meet deadlines?
- 6 **Resilience:** Are you willing to work hard with resilience and optimism to overcome obstacles? Do you relish a challenge and are you driven to succeed?
- 7 **Humility and Learning:** Do you show respect towards the perspectives and experiences of others, particularly those from different backgrounds? Are you open to learning from others and do you seek out opportunities to do so?

In the first year, only those who had graduated within the last five years were eligible to apply. This restriction was lifted for the following years. The initial phone interview was also added in the second year.

The selection day consists of activities such as individual interviews, group activities, a problem-solving test and a sample teaching lesson. The TFA organisation designs and implements the recruitment process; however, the selection days also involve relevant departments, school principals, MGSE and corporate partners.

The recruitment process used in the TFA Pathway is unique in that it specifically targets characteristics of applicants that are seen as desirable in teachers – for example, resilience and communication skills. Traditional pathways into teaching in Australia do not have this mechanism for identifying personal attributes in applicants.⁵⁹

The Initial Intensive

Successful applicants, called Associates, attend an initial six-week residential course run by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne, and the Teach For Australia organisation (TFA). The Initial Intensive included time at a Portal school where Associates observed teaching and school life. This was replaced from 2011 (Cohort 2) with the Summer School which brought students from years 9 and 10 into the university for up to 9 days over the summer period and enabled Associates to develop and practise their teaching skills.

Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching

Associates undertake a two-year formal education program broadly derived from MGSE's Master of Teaching (MTeach) program, the design and content varied to account for the demands of the Initial Intensive and Associate on-going development while teaching a 0.8

⁵⁹ The TFA recruitment process remains the Intellectual Property (IP) of Teach For All.

FTE load over two years, and placement into schools serving socially and educationally disadvantaged communities.

In total, there are four residential intensives:

- Six-week pre-placement intensive in December/January, pre Year 1 (Initial Intensive)
- Four-day mid-year intensive in July of Year 1 (Mid-Year 1 Intensive)
- Four-day third intensive in December at the end of Year 1 (End-Year 1 Intensive)
- Four-day mid-second-year intensive in July of Year 2 (Mid-Year 2 Intensive)

Following successful completion of the course, worth 150 points, Associates are able to complete a further 50 points in specific courses within five years of the Diploma to obtain a Master of Teaching qualification from the University of Melbourne.

Costs to Associates (from 2013)

The 2012 recruitment process for Cohort 4 (due to start in 2013) saw the introduction of an Associate contribution of \$5,000 towards the cost of the Postgraduate Diploma, payable in two annual instalments of \$2,500. The contribution is eligible for the FEE-HELP loan scheme, which means that Associates can choose to defer the full amount and repay it once they reach the required income threshold.⁶⁰ From Cohort 4, Associates will also have to organise their own lunch during all intensives and fund travel to the mid and end of year intensives. They will need to pay for university materials and resources and they will also be liable to cover the cost of any failed subject.

The TFA Program Framework

The Teach for Australia Pathway experience, including teacher education and support, is set within a leadership framework with the initial goal of improving student outcomes and the long term goal of building inspirational leaders to contribute to education from all sectors. The leadership framework was initially represented by six areas based on the Teach For America framework known as “Teaching As Leadership”:

1. Set big goals
2. Invest others in working hard towards those goals
3. Plan purposefully
4. Execute effectively
5. Continuously increase effectiveness
6. Work relentlessly

The Teach For Australia Program Framework finalised in November 2009 reworded these areas. Associates:

1. Set high aspirations
2. Engage others
3. Prepare purposefully
4. Implement effectively
5. Reflect and improve
6. Are resourceful and resilient

⁶⁰ Information about the FEE-HELP loan can be accessed from:
<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-payingmyfees/fee-help/>

Within these areas, appropriate Associate attributes and skills have been developed, providing a rubric by which Associates may be assessed, and Associates, Mentors, schools and other stakeholders may be made aware of the expectations applied to Associates. This rubric is used extensively by the Training and Leadership Advisers with the aim of improving teaching practice.

The TFA Program Framework also underpins a leadership development program created by TFA. It is an individualised program that supports Associates' leadership development in both education and outside of education. The aim is to develop inspirational leaders who can effect change for educational equality from all sectors of society. Leadership subjects have been incorporated into both the Postgraduate Diploma (for Associates) and Professional Certificate (for Mentors) programs.

Support

Associates have an in-school Mentor who is given time release of 0.1 FTE in the first year and 0.05 in the second year. The Mentor receives five days of training from MGSE and the role involves mentoring both professionally and personally. The Mentor is the primary and ongoing source of support for Associates in terms of school policy and community, and resources. Most Mentors also observe and provide feedback on teaching, and on behaviour management, and share knowledge about students as need arises.

Cohort 1 Associates in their first year also had the support of an Educational Adviser, a role jointly managed by TFA and MGSE. From Cohort 2 (and Cohort 1 second year) on, this role was split into the MGSE Clinical Specialist role and the TFA Training and Leadership Adviser role. Both roles visit Associates approximately once a fortnight and observe classes, provide feedback and assist with any issues the Associate might raise.

1.4 Evaluation methodology

ACER employed a mixed method approach constituting both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the key critical questions. During 2010-2012, ACER collected data from a variety of sources. These are outlined below. Quantitative methods were used to gather information to benchmark and track particular aspects of interest (some of which were identified by qualitative methods); for example the development of skills and attitudes.

Qualitative data give richness and depth to the evaluation findings, capturing aspects not accessible to quantitative investigations. They also provide a means to test and confirm potential relationships revealed by the quantitative analyses.

2010/2011/2012 Data collection	
April-August	Qualitative phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation stakeholder interviews • Associate interviews • Focus groups with Educational Advisers (2010), Clinical Specialists, Training and Leadership Advisers (from 2011) • Telephone interviews with principals of Placement Schools, Mentors, staff from: ACT ETD, DEECD, DEEWR, MGSE, NT DET, TFA, VIT
July-August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Studies of 5 Placement Schools (per year)
October - November	Quantitative Phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Census of Associate Teachers • Year 3: Online Survey of Principals
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review on employment-based teacher training and other comparative programs • Administrative records of Teach For Australia and the University of Melbourne, including data analysis and other relevant sources • Media coverage mapping

1.4.1. Methods of data collection

The phase of the research reported here was designed to gather data concerning:

- stakeholders' reasons for joining the Pathway;
- stakeholders' experiences of becoming involved in the Pathway;
- the operation of the Pathway in its first and second and third years, including stakeholders' perceptions of its current processes and its future promise; and
- stakeholders' intentions for future involvement/developments.

This report provides a synthesis of the information gathered from the Structured Interviews and the case study visitations conducted in Phase 1 (2010) and the first year of Phase 2 (2011), and those conducted in Phase 3, covering the qualitative data-collection in 2011 and 2012, as well as a comparative analysis of the results from quantitative census surveys of Cohort 1 Associates during Term 4 2010 and Cohort 1 and 2 Associates during Term 4 2011, and Cohort 1, 2 and 3 Associates during Term 4, 2012.

Structured interviews (telephone and focus group) with key TFA Pathway program partners (DEEWR, DEECD, ACT ETD, VIT, TFA and MGSE), other stakeholders (Principals, Mentors, Educational Advisors (2010), Clinical Specialists (2011), Training and Leadership Advisers (2011 and 2012) and program participants (Associates) were carried out by the evaluation team.

The purpose of the interviews was to: a) sensitise the evaluation team to the key issues and their emphases, and b) for participants to elaborate and expand on issues arising from the literature, broad intentions of the program, program outcomes and their own experiences with the program.⁶¹

The interview schedules for various groups overlapped in their content. This was done because it provides an opportunity to gather and analyse data on the same issues from multiple perspectives, i.e. triangulation. It also allowed context to be explored and understood in greater depth than with a survey. The text of the questions used in interviews for each stakeholder group in 2012 is in the Appendices.

Interview subjects such as Associates, Mentor Teachers, Principals and other staff were selected by convenience sampling, with a preference not to interview participants more than once over the course of the evaluation in order to canvass views and experiences as widely as possible across these groups. Program partner interviews were selected in consultation with the relevant organisation.

Interviews were recorded by hand and electronic transcripts made. An 'exit' or debriefing interview was conducted on a voluntary, confidential, anonymous basis with two Cohort 1 Associates who left the program at the end of Term Two 2010, and one Cohort 3 Associate who left the program at the end of Term Two 2012, prior to completion of the TFA Pathway. Exit interview information is not contained within this report to protect confidentiality.

Case study visitations to five Placement Schools, three metropolitan, two regional, were conducted in 2010. In 2011, six Placement schools were visited, two in Canberra, one Catholic and two government schools in metropolitan Victoria and two regional Victorian schools. In 2012, six Placement schools were visited, two in Canberra, one in the Northern Territory, a government and a Catholic school in metropolitan Victoria and a government school in regional Victoria. These involved interviews/focus groups with Associates, Mentors, Principals, other staff, and students. Questions used in interviews were the same as those used in telephone interviews.

Table 1.2 shows the tally of stakeholders interviewed and Table 1.3 shows the number of participants in focus groups. Student focus groups included students ranging from Year 7 to Year 12.

No parent focus groups were available in 2011 or 2012. In 2010, some principals expressed concern about informing parent groups primarily because media commentary on the Teach for Australia pathway had described schools to which Associates would be assigned as 'disadvantaged'. Principals were reluctant to have their school associated with such a term in the minds of the school community. That concern was not expressed in 2011 or 2012. Principals who commented felt that it did not seem appropriate to place the TFA Associate in the spotlight in terms of parents (or students for that matter) by highlighting the pathway by which they had entered the school as the school community were not told about the background of any other new teacher to the school. That is, parents were usually told the

⁶¹ All interviews are confidential and no names of individuals and/or schools are identified in any correspondence or reports. Where interviews were audio recorded, these were used by the evaluation team as a memory aid only. Full transcripts were not made. Audio recordings will be stored securely for the duration of the project and at the conclusion all recordings will be destroyed.

name of a new teacher and the area they would be teaching, but not which school they had last worked at, or the university where they had gained their qualification. Principals felt it appropriate to treat Associates in the same way. Students, too, were aware only that Associates are teachers.

Table 1.2: Stakeholders interviewed by phone or face-to-face in 2010, 2011 and 2012

Telephone and face-to-face interviews	2010	2011	2012
DEECD	1	1	1
DEEWR	1	1	1
MGSE	4	4	3
TFA	3	4	5
VIT	1	1	1
ACT DET	-	1	1
Cohort 1 Associates	30	14	6
Cohort 2 Associates	-	19	9
Cohort 3 Associates	-	-	18
Cohort 1 Mentors	22	6	-
Cohort 2 Mentors	-	14	6
Cohort 3 Mentors	-	-	11
Cohort 1 Principals	9	3	1
Cohort 2 Principals	-	7	4
Cohort 3 Principals	-	-	5
School staff	13	15	5
Educational Advisers (2010 only)	4	-	-
Training and Leadership Advisers (from 2011)	-	4	2
Clinical Specialists (from 2011)	-	3	5
Total	88	97	84

Table 1.3: Student and parent focus groups in 2010, 2011 and 2012

	2010	2011	2012
Number of parents interviewed	1	0	0
Number of students interviewed	62	77	53

Associate surveys were carried out in Term 4 in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Comparisons have been made between the results of all online surveys. The comparisons are of two kinds: changes in the views of a cohort between their first and second years (and cohort 1 looking back in the year following completion of the program); and differences between the views of each cohort at similar stages in the program.

A **Principal Survey** was also carried out in 2012 and all principals whose schools have participated in the program were invited to respond.

Appendix 1 contains the online survey provided to Cohort 1 in November 2012. This survey was available for three weeks and Associates received three reminder emails. Appendix 2 contains the survey provided to Cohort 2 in November. This survey is comparable to the survey provided to Cohort 1 in their second year in 2011. Appendix 3 contains the survey provided to Cohort 3 in November. This survey is comparable to the surveys provided to Cohorts 1 and 2 in their first year. Appendix 4 contains the survey provided to principals in November 2012.

Table 1.4 shows the composition of respondents for all surveys. The response rate fell slightly for Cohort 2 in their second year (67 per cent), however all Associate survey response rates are very high for an online survey. The principal survey response rate is

lower (50 per cent), however principals receive a high number of requests to complete surveys over a year and this response rate is still higher than is the case for most voluntary online surveys. Given the small number of participants overall, results of this survey should be treated with caution.

Table 1.4: Number of survey respondents 2010 - 2012

Respondents	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Population	Response rate	Mean age
Cohort 1 Year 1 2010	13	15	8	36	44	82%	25.6
Cohort 1 Year 2 2011	13	20	0	33	43	77%	26.3
Cohort 1 Year 3 2012	15	15	0	30	43	70%	--
Cohort 2 Year 1 2011	15	20	0	35	42	83%	26.2
Cohort 2 Year 2 2012	13	15	0	28	42	67%	27.1
Cohort 3 Year 1 2012	17	17	0	34	39	87%	26.0
Principals 2012	--	--	--	21	42	50%	--

1.4.2. Analysis

All interview transcripts were typed and filed in e-folders on ACER's intranet server. After all transcriptions were complete a series of documents were created which aggregated comments on specific aspects and issues by each group of stakeholders. Content analyses were performed on each set of comments by an ACER team member. The documents were forwarded to other team members, without the results of the content analyses, for independent analysis for themes and issues. Independent judgements were compared, collated and results finalised.

Online surveys were conducted using ACER's secure online server. Once finalised, data were downloaded as standard CSV (comma delimited) files, cleaned and reformatted for use with SPSS Statistics.

Part 2. Perceptions and Experience of the TFA Pathway

2.1 Introduction

Part 2 of this report considers stakeholder perceptions and experience of the TFA Pathway based on interviews conducted across the three years of the evaluation (2010-2012) and online surveys of Cohorts 1-3 in their first year, Cohorts 1 and 2 in their second year, Cohort 1 in their third year, or first year post-program, and principals of schools involved in one or more of the cohorts. For information on the methodology, total interviews conducted and online survey participation, please refer to the methodology section in Part 1.

2.2 Participating in the new pathway

2.2.1. Shaping the program and working together

The third year of the TFA Pathway (2012) was the third year of participation for Victorian government schools, the second year for Victorian Catholic schools and ACT government schools, and the first year for NT government schools. On the whole, Pathway processes and procedures are well established and continue to undergo refinement, and program partners have well-established modes of communication. From the school perspective, all principals who participated in the 2012 survey agreed or strongly agreed that the program was well organised.

Differing legislation and policies in each state and territory present different requirements each time a new school system becomes involved. This results in slightly different parameters for each jurisdiction in areas such as Associates' level of responsibility and the subjects Associates are allowed to teach. For example, Associates in Victorian government schools are para-professionals and their responsibility is limited in some ways; they may not be solely responsible for students outside the school, such as on an excursion. Associates in Northern Territory government schools are not subject to this limitation. In the case of NT government schools Associates are 'on probation' with the education department. This 12 month probationary period applies to all teachers taking up teaching positions in the NT for the first time (it is not limited to new teachers), or returning to teaching positions after a period of three years or more.

2.2.2. Reasons for getting involved

Interviews with all stakeholders in the year they joined the program included questions as to why they or their organisation/school became involved in the TFA Pathway. This question was also canvassed with Associates in the annual online surveys.

Associates

The attraction of the TFA Pathway appears to have two major elements: the social justice and values espoused by the Pathway and the opportunity to teach immediately without full-time study, earning a salary. For those Associates already interested in teaching, pragmatic influences often seemed to outweigh the importance of TFA's social justice 'mission'. The financial side was clearly important both to those who had completed or were just completing an undergraduate degree and to those who had been in the workforce and were looking for a change.

I read an article in The Age and that's what got me interested. I was working at [...]. The social justice slant appealed and so did the financial side - I'd been in the workforce for 6 years so going back to uni and having no money for a year was not appealing.

I enjoyed teaching [...]. I contacted [...] to ask if there were any teacher training programs that were paid, as I didn't have the funds to go through a course. They pointed me to TFA.

I decided to apply because I was working in education [...] and I was interested in developing a broader range of skills in education but I didn't want to go to uni full time. So I was looking for an alternate pathway. I felt TFA was the best pathway for me because it was a more practical environment-it fitted in with a career path where I was already working full time.

For those Associates who had not considered teaching or for whom teaching had not been of immediate interest, the mission, challenge and values of the TFA Pathway were clearly attractions; though again, the employment-based nature of the Pathway – the ability to earn a living while earning a qualification – was an important element. Graduates or professionals who may have several career opportunities open to them may be less likely to apply to a program that appeals to their values or sense of social justice if it does not also meet their needs (which in many cases was the ability to earn a living and not to have to return to education full-time). In this sense, the TFA Pathway has to offer something more than a traditional teacher education pathway because such a pathway has either already been rejected or simply was of little interest to this group.

Survey results corroborated the interview findings. Associates were asked to indicate which reasons for applying for admission to the TFA Pathway were true of them. In addition, they were asked if they would have applied to a 'traditional' teaching program if they had not been selected. Results are presented in Table 2.1, in order from the highest percentage agreeing to the lowest, for Cohort 3 Associates.

Table 2.1: What did you find attractive about the Teach for Australia Pathway?

	Percentage agreeing		
	Cohort 1 2010	Cohort 2 2011	Cohort 3 2012
<i>I was attracted to the Teach for Australia program because:</i>	%	%	%
I wished to contribute to reducing educational disadvantage	72	88	82
I could go straight into teaching without further fulltime study	61	68	77
I was attracted by the opportunity to be part of a movement seeking to redress educational disadvantage	-	-	71
I was attracted by the opportunity to earn a salary while training	64	71	62
I was attracted by the emphasis on leadership development	-	-	50
Participation would be of value for my future career, beyond teaching	47	56	44
I had decided to enter teaching	19	21	44
I had thought of teaching later but TFA made me want to teach now	47	59	29
<i>If you had considered teaching as a career would you have considered a traditional teaching program if you had not been accepted by TFA?</i>			
Yes – would have considered a traditional program?	42	49	35

Note: Respondents could indicate more than one factor so the percentages sum to >100%. Two reasons were asked of Cohort 3 that were not asked of the other cohorts.

The reason for applying most strongly endorsed by all cohorts was ‘to contribute to reducing educational disadvantage’. The higher numbers of Cohort 2 and 3 respondents indicating this reason may indicate a greater clarity in program goals and marketing than was the case for Cohort 1. About three-quarters of Cohort 3 Associates also indicated that they were attracted by the opportunity to be part of a movement seeking to redress educational disadvantage. Many interviewees did not cite these as the most important reason for the initial application, suggesting that this emphasis may be in part attributed to Associates establishing connections with each other and a closer identification with the Pathway and its goals through participation in the Initial Intensive and beyond.

The opportunity to earn a salary while teaching and to go straight into teaching without further full-time study were reasons for choosing the TFA Pathway in the majority of Associates in all cohorts, which corroborates interview findings that the alternative, employment-based nature of the Pathway was particularly appealing.

About half of all respondents in Cohorts 1 and 2 indicated that they would have considered teaching at some stage in the future but that the TFA Pathway opportunity ‘made me want to teach now’. Only 20 per cent of respondents from Cohorts 1 and 2 had made a definite decision to teach. Interestingly, this is more or less reversed for Cohort 3, with 44 per cent indicating they had decided to enter teaching and 29 per cent indicating that the TFA Pathway ‘made me want to teach now’. Just under half of the respondents from Cohorts 1 and 2 and 35 per cent of Cohort 3 indicated that they would have applied to a traditional teacher training program had they not been selected for the TFA Pathway.

An evaluation of the Teach First program in the UK (a model comparable to the TFA Pathway), surveyed participants and found a dual appeal for successful applicants. On the one hand, Teach First offered the opportunity to make a difference in challenging and disadvantaged environments. On the other, the two-year commitment was seen as a means of keeping career options open rather than training for a single profession.⁶² The attraction of keeping career options open was not asked directly in interviews with TFA Pathway Associates in their first year..⁶³ However, about half of survey respondents from both cohorts did indicate that they considered participation in the TFA Pathway to be of value for a future career other than teaching. This area is further discussed in the section on Associates’ plans for the future (see section 2.12).

School Personnel

A survey was sent out to all principals participating in the TFA Pathway in November 2012. Further details can be found in Section 1.3.1 and Appendix X. Principals were asked to indicate how important each of 15 factors was in their school’s decision to employ an Associate for the first time. Answers could be given on a five point scale where 1 = *not at all important* and 5 = *very important* with a further option if principals were *not aware* of a given factor. For summary purposes Table 2.2 shows only the combined percentages of principals who chose the two highest options on the scale.

⁶² Hutchings *et al.*, 2005

⁶³ Many Associates interviewed stated that they had no clear idea what they wanted to do at the end of the two years – it was too early to say. Some were also very aware that their principal and colleagues were putting a lot of time and effort into them and wanted them to remain beyond the two year program. For these reasons, the item ‘keeping career options open’ was not included in the questionnaire.

Table 2.2: Factors in schools' decision to employ an Associate for the first time

	Important/ Very important %
The Associates' 2-year commitment to the school	100
The Associates' stated desire to make a difference	100
Associate subject expertise	95
The anticipated academic quality of the Associates	90
Confidence in the TFA selection process	90
The level of external support given to Associates	85
The Mentor training by the University of Melbourne	85
The training provided to Associates by University of Melbourne	80
Opportunity for the school to contribute to teacher training	75
The anticipated leadership potential of the Associates	70
Opportunity to reinvigorate existing staff	70
Endorsement of the program by other principals	65
The level of funding support provided by the Department	65
An alternative method of recruitment for a hard-to-staff school	55
Associate experience in a previous career/industry	55

As in previous years, the key attraction of the TFA Pathway for the majority of principals interviewed was the recruitment of new teachers with a strong academic background who were enthusiastic, resilient, determined, and who wanted to work in disadvantaged settings. Table 2.2 shows that the Associates' stated desire to make a difference and their two-year commitment to the school were considered important by principals as well. For some principals, it was also primarily another avenue of recruitment as attracting teachers was an issue at their school. Awareness of the program and its potential benefits resulting from successes at other schools and principal networking were also factors in some new schools joining the program.

School personnel also appreciated the opportunity to take on new teachers with life and industry experience, with many interviewees believing that the average Associate had spent some time post-degree working in their field. While this was sometimes the case, more than half of all applicants and about 40 per cent of Associates are recruited in the year they complete their degree, so their industry experience is minimal. As such, there may be some scope for further clarity in material presented to school personnel about the recruitment process.

In the first year of the Pathway 39 out of 45 Cohort 1 Associates were supernumerary; that is, wages were funded centrally rather than from school budgets and the majority of Associates were additional staff for the (Victorian government) schools involved. In subsequent years, all schools have met salary costs from their own budgets. All Cohort 2 and 3 Associates filled school vacancies and, in many cases, schools which had taken part in previous years had or intended to request further Associates, which is a strong endorsement of the success of current Associates in their schools. Those schools which did not take additional Associates indicated that they did not have vacancies or an Associate in the relevant field could not be found for them. No principal or senior school staff member has indicated that they would not take further Associates as a result of any dissatisfaction with Associates in their schools or their experience of the TFA Pathway.

Principals were also asked to indicate how important each of 15 factors was in their school's decision to employ an Associate for the second (or third) time. As with the previous question, answers could be given on a five point scale where 1 = *not at all important* and 5 = *very important*. For summary purposes Table 2.3 shows only the combined percentages of principals who chose the two highest options on the scale. The recruitment process, the anticipated academic quality of the Associates and their two-year commitment to the school were important or very important to all participating principals.

Table 2.3: Factors in schools' decision to employ an Associate after the first time

	Important/ Very important %
The anticipated academic quality of the Associates	100
The TFA selection process	100
The Associates' 2-year commitment to the school	100
The Associates' stated desire to make a difference	94
The quality of previous Associates	93
Associate subject expertise	88
The anticipated leadership potential of the Associates	88
The training provided to Associates by University of Melbourne	81
Opportunity for the school to contribute to teacher training	81
Opportunity to reinvigorate existing staff	81
The level of external support given to Associates	81
The Mentor training by the University of Melbourne	75
The level of funding support provided by the Department	69
Associate experience in a previous career/industry	63
An alternative method of recruitment for a hard-to-staff school	56

Interviews with some school staff and Mentors in Cohort 2 and Cohort 3 schools indicated that they had expressed immediate enthusiasm for the program; however, the more common initial response was one of cautious scepticism, although there did not seem to be the within-school opposition and wider media controversy that was noted at the inception of the program in 2010. Any initial wariness tended to have dissipated by the time of the interviews in Term 3: this was clearly related to the perceived qualities of the individual Associates with whom staff had contact. This indicates that, for many school staff at this stage, opinions of the TFA Pathway were a reflection of how successful individual Associates were seen to be.

While over time it is likely that school staff will come to view the TFA Pathway as distinct from its embodiment in a given individual, at this point the weight of the success or failure of the Pathway in the eyes of many School Personnel is based largely on the perceived quality of individual Associates.

2.2.3. Becoming a Placement School: The schools' experience

Since the TFA Pathway began in 2010, 43 schools have been involved, taking a total of 125 Associates over three cohorts.⁶⁴ Currently, a further nine new schools have been confirmed for the 2013 intake (Cohort 4), bringing the total number of schools involved to

⁶⁴ Schools with multiple campuses or who have amalgamated are counted once. Schools where Associates have started are included: in one case an ACT school accepted a Cohort 3 Associate who did not complete the Initial Intensive. That school is not included here.

52. Table 2.4 shows the distribution of each cohort by system and jurisdiction. Thirteen Victorian government schools took Cohort 1 Associates in 2010. A further 17 schools participated in 2011 and 5 Cohort 1 schools also took Cohort 2 Associates.

Of the 17 additional schools participating in 2011, one was a Victorian Catholic school and four were ACT government schools. In 2012, two NT government schools took Cohort 3 Associates as well as two more Victorian Catholic schools and three more ACT government schools. Two ACT schools involved in Cohort 2 took additional Associates in Cohort 3. It is anticipated that NT Catholic and independent schools will participate from 2013 (Cohort 4).

Table 2.4: System and jurisdiction school and Cohort numbers by year

Year	Location and system	New schools	Repeat schools	Associates
2010	Victorian Government	13	-	45
	2010 totals	13	-	45
2011	Victorian Government	12	5	34
	ACT Government	4	-	5
	Victorian Catholic	1	-	3
	2011 totals	17	5	42
2012	Victorian Government	6	10	24
	ACT Government	3	2	6
	NT Government	2	-	6
	Victorian Catholic	2	0	4
	2012 totals	13	12	40
2013	Victorian Government	4	13	41
	ACT Government	3	3	5
	NT Catholic	1	-	2
	NT Independent	1	-	2
	2013 totals	9	16	50

The face-to-face interviews indicated that principals and program partners felt that schools had been provided with a good understanding of the pathway prior to commencement. All the principals who responded to the on-line survey indicated that schools had been provided with sufficient information to make an appropriate decision on whether to participate in the program (see Table 2.33). Most other school personnel agreed, although there have been a few cases in each cohort where staff felt that they had not been included in either the decision-making or information-dissemination processes. This was less common in each subsequent cohort and more common in jurisdictions new to the Pathway.

As was the case in 2010 and 2011, all school personnel reported in 2012 that initial scepticism tended to dissipate when staff met and worked with the Associates, the majority of whom had become accepted and respected in their schools.

2.3 Recruitment of Associates

The process of Associate selection is outlined in Part 1. This section concentrates on the results of that process and a consideration of the demographics of applicants and successful candidates.

Table 2.5 shows that applications remained stable over the first three years of recruitment, averaging around 750 applicants. On that basis, 2012 applications for 2013 (Cohort 4) dropped by 28 per cent.

The most obvious change to the program for 2013 was the introduction of a fee payable by Associates towards the course fee of MGSE's Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching. Other costs to be covered personally by Cohort 4 Associates include travel costs to and from intensives (three) other than the Initial Intensive.⁶⁵ Some applicants may have become aware of these costs prior to application through talking to TFA representatives. Some may have found out on being made an offer to participate.

Other changes to the program at that time included the TFA organisation altering its recruitment strategy to focus on a smaller number of universities and increase the quality of applications. Some potential applicants may have self-selected out if they felt they did not meet the selection criteria for the program. In addition, the 2012 attraction campaign commenced later than in previous years.

Table 2.5: Background of applicants to the TFA Pathway

	2009 for 2010 Cohort 1	2010 for 2011 Cohort 2	2011 for 2012 Cohort 3	2012 for 2013 Cohort 4
Applications	751	788	729	546
	%	%	%	%
Male	43	45	42	41
Graduate in year of application	46	43	50	53
Based in Victoria	58	58	56	50
Arts (inc English)	38	39	34	40
Business and commerce	20	15	19	12
Law	10	6	10	10
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	33	40	37	38

The percentage of applicants considered to be eligible for offer has increased over each of the four years from 8 per cent in 2010 to 17 per cent in 2012. TFA note that the quality of their marketing and 'messaging' has improved, highlighting the requirements of the Pathway, as has the recruitment process, leading to a greater quality of application and more applicants that 'meet the bar'. Nevertheless, growth in applicant numbers would be a requirement if the Pathway is to maintain the quality of its Associates through an expansion period.

The drop in applicant numbers does not appear to have affected the broad backgrounds of candidates, based on available indicators. Just under half of all applicants (Table 2.5) and successful applicants (Table 2.6) are male. In comparison, about one quarter of teacher graduates nationally is male.⁶⁶ However graduation figures include courses for primary teachers. The results from the Staff in Australia's Schools survey carried out in 2010 show that 43 per cent of the current national population of secondary teachers is male.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ The fee payable is \$5,000 in two instalments. Further costs payable by Cohort 4 (but not by previous cohorts) include study materials and resources such as the internet, lunch costs during all intensives and travel to the Initial Intensive and on to their school for those who live in Victoria and within 500kms of Melbourne.

⁶⁶ Data sourced from DEEWR Table 21: Award Course Completions for All Students Enrolled in Courses for Initial Teacher Training by State, Higher Education Provider, Mode of Attendance, Type of Attendance and Gender, 2001-2008. Available from (for example, 2008): <http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEStatistics/Publications/Pages/2008FullYear.aspx> (accessed 9 February 2010)

⁶⁷ McKenzie, Rowley, Weldon & Murphy, 2011, p. 27.

Additional analysis of SiAS data shows that only 36 per cent of teachers who have been teaching for five years or less are male.⁶⁸ This suggests that the TFA Pathway is attracting about the same proportion of male applicants as are working as secondary teachers, but somewhat more than are currently entering the profession.

TFA has also focussed on encouraging applications from graduates in maths and science fields. The Pathway was not specifically intended to be a means of meeting teacher shortages; however, there is known demand for these fields in eligible schools across all states and the focus of the Pathway has changed over time. It does seem that TFA's marketing and recruitment strategies are appealing to graduates in these fields. Currently, over a third of all applicants to the Pathway have at least a bachelor degree in a STEM field. In the 2011 recruitment year (for Cohort 3), 9 per cent of all applications had a LOTE major in their degree. Table 2.6 also shows that of successful applicants to the TFA Pathway for 2011 (Cohort 2) and 2013 (Cohort 4), the largest group (43 per cent and 46 per cent respectively) were from STEM fields.

The recruitment process has been seen to be a major strength of the program by all stakeholders in interviews across all three years. The program was seen to be attracting high quality applicants and to have set rigorous standards for applicants' academic achievement and personal attributes. All stakeholders who commented were positive about the quality of Associates recruited through the selection process.

One concern expressed in the area of recruitment was that of matching Associate subject areas to school needs. TFA noted that some Associates could not be placed as vacancies could not be found for them, while DEECD noted that there were more interested schools that had identified vacancies (particularly in STEM areas) than there were Associates with appropriate subject areas. This is reflected in the data shown in Table 2.6. For the first three years, the number of offers to eligible applicants rose while, at the same time, the number of Associates placed in schools fell. Recruitment for Cohort 4 suggests a reversal of this trend. Placement can be problematic due to discrepancies between the recruitment cycle and the timing of school vacancies. TFA note that their experience of placement over the life of the program to date and the data now available from four years will enable a more accurate assessment of demand, which should result in greater alignment between vacancy and applicant subject area, and fewer unplaced candidates. This issue is also likely to diminish if there is strengthening school demand for Associates.

Another concern with matching Associates to vacancies, expressed in interviews with DEECD, was the willingness of Associates to be placed outside metropolitan areas. TFA noted that after the first year of the program considerably more emphasis had been placed on recruiting individuals who were more flexible in their placement preferences; however, DEECD also noted that difficulties appeared to remain in placing Associates in regional areas of Victoria.

⁶⁸ Source: Unpublished data from the *Staff in Australia's Schools 2010* survey conducted by ACER on behalf of DEEWR.

Table 2.6: Demographics of successful applicants to the TFA Pathway

	In 2009 for 2010 Cohort 1	In 2010 for 2011 Cohort 2	In 2011 for 2012 Cohort 3	In 2012 for 2013 Cohort 4
Applications	751	788	729	546
Selected as eligible for offer	63 (8%)	75 (10%)	98 (13%)	94 (17%)
Accepted	52 (7%)	65 (8%)	61 (8%)	58 (11%)
Deferrals ¹	7	--	--	--
No suitable vacancy	--	22	20	8
Placed ²	45 (6%)	42 (5%)	41 (6%)	50 (9%)
Of those placed (C1, C4) or eligible for offer (C2, C3):	%	%	%	%
Average ENTER (or equivalent) score	95.4	95.8	96.6	94.5
Male	40	42	48	47
Placed outside a metropolitan area ³	33	45	33	22
Graduate in year of application	--	60	57	62
Home base in Victoria	71	67	56	56
Arts (inc English)	35	38	37	34
Business and commerce	20	10	10	14
Law	17	9	18	6
STEM	28	43	32	46

Notes to Table 2.3

¹ Two of the 7 deferrals from Cohort 1 recruitment were placed in Cohort 2. The remaining five chose not to participate in the program. Deferrals were not offered from Cohort 2 recruitment.

² The number of Associates placed refer to those who were accepted into the program and placed at a school, and who started the Initial Intensive. In Cohort 1, 2 of the 45 Associates left the program during their first year at the school. In Cohort 3, 1 of the 41 Associates left the program before completing the Initial Intensive and 1 during the first year.

³ Willingness to be placed anywhere/in a non-metropolitan area is captured in the TFA application form; however, TFA have noted that candidates are often not as flexible as they initially stated. The figures provided here are the percentages of Associates actually placed in a non-metropolitan area. These figures are partly due to school demand and vacancies. There were more non-metropolitan vacancies available than were filled in Cohort 2. There was higher demand from metropolitan schools in Victoria for 2013. TFA noted that there were Associates willing to be placed in regional or remote areas but fewer opportunities in 2013.

In stating their preference in their initial application to the Pathway, 67 per cent of Cohort 4 Associates stated that they would teach anywhere in Australia. One in five (20 per cent) indicated a first preference for rural or remote placement.

Teacher supply and demand differ by state and territory. In Victoria, where the majority of Associates are currently based, there is a shortfall of secondary teachers; however, difficult-to-fill vacancies have fallen by half between 2001 and 2010 and in 2009 there were downward trends in all areas except maths.⁶⁹

Given the current size of the TFA Pathway and the fairly small base of schools currently involved, it is evident that the recruitment and selection process needs to be tailored to ensure best fit to likely school vacancies, and this has been one reason for the focus on STEM subjects. The TFA Pathway is also constrained by its commitment that Associates be placed in schools serving socially and educationally disadvantaged areas. Under current eligibility criteria, about half of all schools nationally are eligible to participate. An additional factor is the preference to cluster Associates together in schools, particularly in regional areas, to ensure that Associates have access to peer support.

⁶⁹ DEECD, 2010.

The selection process has been successful in recruiting Associates who remain in the program for the two-year period. Of the 45 Associates who started in Cohort 1, two left the program prior to completion. No Cohort 2 Associates left prior to completion and by the end of their first year only one Cohort 3 Associate had left, leading to an overall retention rate within the program to date of 98 per cent.

With very few exceptions, within schools the recruitment process was considered to be very successful. One Cohort 2 school did note that for them the TFA Pathway seemed to be something of a gamble, in that they did not have the opportunity to interview candidates and gauge their fit to the school in the usual way. This school had had mixed success with their Associates; however, on the strength of the exceptional quality of one of those Associates and on the ‘off-chance’ that they would get someone of similar quality again, they were willing to consider placing another Associate in the future.

On the whole, principals who had observed the recruitment process were very impressed and Cohort 2 and 3 principals echoed the comment of a Cohort 1 principal that he would happily have taken almost all of the shortlisted candidates he had met, who he felt were outstanding. Principals highly praised Associates’ communication and interpersonal skills, their positive attitude and their enthusiasm. As noted in Tables 2.2 and 2.3 nearly all principals considered the recruitment process to be an important factor in their decision to initiate and continue their relationship with the TFA Pathway.

2.3.1. Timing of placement

Recruitment occurs prior to placement to ensure that the timing of the recruitment process is similar to that of other organisations that use graduate recruitment, thus enabling the TFA Pathway to be presented as a viable alternative to other graduate destinations. One result of this form of recruitment is that it is not directly linked to vacancies, as vacancies are not generally confirmed until late in the year.

This timing of the placement of Associates in schools and the subsequent late confirmation of their teaching subjects continues to be an issue. Late placement affects the number of eligible applicants who choose to take up the offer, as uncertainty about their placement results in some applicants choosing alternatives. TFA have noted this issue and the uncertainty and ambiguity generated for candidates. In 2013, there is an intention to make offers to candidates based on quotas and to waitlist other candidates, who will then only be considered if there is a withdrawal or if a placement becomes available. This method has the potential to reduce the uncertainty for unplaced eligible candidates by clarifying the likelihood of a place becoming available based on the candidate’s subject areas and geographic preferences.

Late placement also places considerable strain on MGSE’s admissions processes and, in the case of Associate Learning Areas (teaching subjects to be taught over the course), the late finalisation of Learning Areas has resulted in MGSE hiring staff with expertise in these subject areas as late as the second week of the Initial Intensive.

2.4 Associate preparation and education

The clinical practice model adopted by the TFA Pathway features a teacher education component whose delivery is quite different to that of traditional pathways. Associates attend an Initial Intensive prior to the start of the school year. The Initial Intensive is held in December and January. The Initial Intensive is run by MGSE and TFA at the University of Melbourne. Accommodation and food are provided during this time and the Associates spend much of the day and evening together studying.

Due to the timing of the Initial Intensive, visits to schools to observe regular classes are generally not possible.⁷⁰ To provide Associates with an opportunity to plan and to teach students, and receive feedback from MGSE staff, a Summer School takes place at the university and is attended by volunteer students in years 9 and 10 over a few days in January.

Following the Initial Intensive, which includes an introduction to their academic courses, Associates continue their degree through an online learning platform, with support from MGSE lecturing staff and Clinical Specialists who regularly observe them in the classroom. Associates also participate in a further three residential intensives at the University of Melbourne: the first Mid-Year Intensive which takes place during the school holidays in July; the End-Year Intensive which takes place in December of their first year; and the second Mid-Year Intensive which takes place in July of the second year.

Views on Associate preparation and education are considered in the following sections.

2.4.1. The Initial Intensive

The Initial Intensive received more variable evaluations in the second year of the program than was the case in the first year. MGSE noted that the attitude of Cohort 2 Associates at the start of the Initial Intensive was different; that they did not seem to be as excited and enthusiastic as had been the case with Cohort 1, and that their expectations seemed to be different and in some cases, somewhat negative. A less positive view of the Initial Intensive was evident in some interviews with Cohort 2 Associates:

We didn't have a lot of communication from MGSE prior to the Initial Intensive so in some ways we didn't know what to expect and I think we were a bit negative going in - we were expecting to be pushed really hard academically.

MGSE responded to this feedback and introduced an information evening and a teleconference for Cohort 3, in order to set expectations and answer questions.

⁷⁰ About 90 per cent of Associates visited their placement schools prior to the Initial Intensive. All Associates received course information from MGSE which included a recommendation that they visit their placement schools for a minimum of 3 days, together with lesson observation templates for use during their classroom observations. Some Associates were also given time release from the Intensive to undertake placement school visits. Due to the timing of these visits at the end of Term 4, it can be difficult for Associates to observe regular classes before starting work in their school.

Table 2.7 shows the results of some of the questions asked in the Initial Intensive evaluation questionnaire conducted by MGSE at the end of the Intensive across three cohorts.⁷¹ It is clear that satisfaction levels were very high in Cohort 1 and, in comparison, considerably lower in Cohort 2. There were a number of issues that may have caused the lower results in Cohort 2, such as delays in confirming enrolments, library borrowing rights and access to the Learning Management System (LMS), caused by the introduction of a new admissions procedure across the university. These issues were not experienced by Cohort 3, who also received more information from MGSE and who may have had a clearer understanding of expectations. It is certainly the case that the Cohort 3 evaluation of the MGSE component of the Initial Intensive is considerably more positive than for Cohort 2.

Table 2.7: MGSE evaluation questionnaire completed at end of Initial Intensive

MGSE end of Initial Intensive evaluation questionnaire	Agree/Strongly agree		
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Overall, the sessions in the PostGrad Dip (TFA) in the II were well taught	100	77	92
The lecture and workshop sessions were intellectually stimulating	100	69	85
Teaching staff showed an interest in the academic needs of Associates	98	85	97
The academic and program management team showed an interest in the welfare and support needs of Associates	100	67	87
My learning in this Intensive has increased my understanding of the role of a teacher	-	-	100
Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of the learning experience in this intensive	100	69	-

Cohort 3 comments on the Initial Intensive were much the same as with Cohort 2, although generally more positive. Many Associates felt that there was more theory than practice and that there could have been some more practical components; however, they also recognised the importance of theory and the difficulty of providing practical experiences in the time frame and period in which the Initial Intensive was run:

The II prepared me for teaching, particularly the MGSE learning area course. There was more theory than practice. I would have thought there would be more practical elements early on at the expense of some of the theory. But on the whole I felt well prepared.

There was a lot of theory. I'm not sure how you could put more practical experiences into it – I felt that I didn't have enough teaching experience.

I thought the II was a really great overview - educational practice and theory etc. I thought we were well equipped - I was ready to go into the classroom before the end. There could perhaps have been more practical consideration of planning and programs.

⁷¹ The wording of some questions was different for the evaluation of Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 and thus some questions were not directly comparable.

Cohort 3 Associates were required to visit their placement school for observation prior to the Initial Intensive and 90 per cent had done so. One Associate noted:

I did two observations before the Initial Intensive, plus I had teaching experience from uni so I had some background and experience. So I could see perhaps more easily what MGSE were doing and where they were going.

This opportunity to observe classes appears to have provided some experience from which Cohort 3 were able to respond to the theory presented by MGSE to a greater extent than Cohort 2. Nevertheless, the lack of in-school experience remains a challenge in terms of crafting a balanced Initial Intensive. As one principal noted when comparing Associates with other beginning teachers:

There's a big difference initially, of course. Not having been in the classroom, they don't have any practice, they don't have the tools of the trade – they've had no dry run in a class with support. So it will always be different for Associates in the first semester. They have to be helped a lot more.

One Cohort 3 Associate commented:

I was least prepared for behaviour management, but short of getting in there and doing it, I struggle to know how you could be better prepared.

2.4.2. The Summer School

The Summer School was introduced in the Cohort 2 Initial Intensive. It replaced the Portal School arrangement provided for Cohort 1 Associates which gave them three days in a school to observe teaching and school life. The aim of the Summer School was to provide Associates with more of an opportunity to teach and interact with students prior to their placement than had been provided by the Portal School arrangement. It also gave Associates the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons in groups, and receive feedback about their performance from lecturers.

The Cohort 3 Summer School ran for 5 days in January 2012 and was attended by 103 volunteer students from years 9 and 10 from mainly low-SES schools. The program was developed and delivered on-campus by MGSE. As was the case with Cohort 2, Cohort 3 Associates were very positive about the experience, rating it as one of the most effective areas of professional learning of the Initial Intensive (see Table 2.8).

2.4.3. Curriculum and student ability

Two areas of concern came through in regard to the Initial Intensive and the overall structure of the course. Firstly, there continue to be issues for Associates teaching outside Victoria. MGSE were able to address concerns about jurisdiction-specific contexts by introducing 'State/Territory Days' in the first week of the Initial Intensive where representatives from each authority covered issues such as policy directions and initiatives, structure of schooling and curriculum, structures within schools, and so on. There were fewer complaints from Cohort 3 Associates in this regard; however, there was still a sense that material was often Victorian-centric. This was to an extent off-set by participating schools, and there is an argument that schools should bear some responsibility for

inducting Associates (and other beginning teachers) into state requirements, for example around student assessment and reporting.

The second concern is related directly to the MGSE course and the TFA Pathway's specific criterion that Associates teach in schools serving educationally disadvantaged communities. One Associate neatly summed up the issue:

I think we should do more on literacy - even the kind of early literacy that you would do in a primary course that would be adapted for use with the older kids - and that's not just for NT Associates - Victorian Associates say they need the same thing - and regardless of subject area. It's the issue that's facing all of us because many of the kids in low SES are so far behind - we need to know how to bring them up and bridge the gap. But MGSE focus on secondary - they assume the kids can read and write at their grade level.

This area came up a number of times in interviews across all states and it has the potential to present a considerable challenge to MGSE in terms of the content of the TFA Postgraduate Diploma.

2.4.4. The TFA components of the Intensives

During the Initial Intensive, TFA provided activities designed to bond the cohort and build Associate awareness of and commitment to addressing educational disadvantage by striving for significant outcomes with their students. TFA also introduced their leadership model and the Leadership Development Framework used by the Training and Leadership Advisors (TLAs) to identify strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice. TFA staff, the TLAs and guest speakers ran these sessions. TFA also provided practical sessions on classroom practice run by guest speakers. TFA has responded to feedback from Associates and has revised its offerings accordingly. On the whole, these sessions were very well received by Cohort 3 Associates. One Cohort 3 Associate commented:

TFA prepared us better - TFA sessions were practical, things like beginning lessons - different hooks; concrete examples. A [Cohort 1] Associate taught a lesson he'd used, modelled the teaching and stopped after each section to tell us why he was doing it that way - they gave us basic strategies and information about things we needed to know such as getting keys, finding the photocopier etc, ready for day 1, and developing a class culture in the first weeks.

Associates also appreciated the variety of guest speakers and topics available at the Mid-Year Intensive. Some Associates in all cohorts have been somewhat sceptical about some aspects of TFA presentations about the mission and goals of the TFA program and the role of Associates as change agents, while others have been very supportive of and receptive to it.

2.4.5. The Mid-Year Intensive and ongoing study

The Mid-Year Intensive is a four-day residential course that takes place in July of the first and second years, as part of the two-year graduate diploma program. It includes face-to-face instruction by MGSE staff and a variety of speakers on educational subjects provided by TFA.

Associates tended to be more positive about the Mid-Year Intensive than the Initial Intensive:

The Mid-Year Intensive was more useful than the Initial Intensive - there was more choice in sessions you could attend and having taught for a while I had more personal experience and context to make sense of the sessions.

Mid year – I enjoyed the learning area subjects from MGSE. I also enjoyed the peer-led (C2/C1) sessions – they looked at what they'd actually done in class and I found that relevant.

Most Associates found the coursework interesting and relevant, and they were appreciative of those areas that were explicitly linked to their work in the classroom:

The course is explicitly linked - some of the work I do for the course includes doing assessments for class, for example, which I have to do anyway - but as it is also for the course it made me take more time, think more deeply about it, deeper than I might otherwise have done, so that was very useful.

Some concerns were expressed that some coursework was Victoria-centric, and that assessments to be completed by Associates were matched to the Victorian school timetable, which was not always convenient for those outside Victoria. Extensions were acknowledged although there was some frustration that they had to be requested each time.

2.4.6. Perceived effectiveness of support for professional learning

In the online surveys conducted annually in November from 2010 to 2012, Associates in their first year (Cohorts 1, 2 and 3) were asked to rate the effectiveness of various sources of support for their professional learning on a four point scale where 1 = *very ineffective* and 4 = *very effective*. Associates in their second year (Cohorts 1 and 2) were also asked to rate the effectiveness of sources of support during their second year. For summary purposes, results in Table 2.8 show the percentage of first-year respondents in each cohort who considered each aspect of support effective or very effective. Table 2.9 shows results for respondents in their second year and Cohort 1 respondents still in teaching in their third year who were asked to rate support now that they had completed the program.

Some changes were made to questions in each survey to accommodate changes in the structure of the support and subjects offered over each cohort. TFA sessions and the subject that incorporated the Summer School were most highly rated by Cohort 3 and the placement school visit and professional practice subject also received high ratings.

The Learning Areas subjects received a lower rating from Cohort 3 in their first year and Cohort 2 in their second year. This is not one but multiple subjects, as it is split into the Associates' teaching subject areas so the average result hides considerable variation, with some subject areas very well received and others considered ineffective.

Table 2.8: Associate perception of the effectiveness of support for professional learning in their first year

	Effective/very effective %		
	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	Cohort 3 2012 %
Year 1			
Information and support provided by <i>Teach for Australia</i>	86	88	88
The <i>TFA</i> 'Leadership Framework'	46	53	-
Portal school placement	68	-	-
Placement school visit	80	62	91
(Leadership and) Practical skills sessions provided by <i>TFA</i>	63	73	(94)
ISO support	51	-	-
The Summer School	-	76	-
University of Melbourne subjects			
<i>Learning Areas</i>	77	75	53
<i>Linking Curriculum and Pedagogy (Inc. Summer School)</i>	-	47	(94)
<i>Individualising Learning and Teaching</i>	86	50	65
<i>Language and Teaching</i>	91	76	59
<i>Leadership</i>	46	-	-
<i>Professional Practice and Portfolio</i>	-	74	91
<i>Social and Professional Contexts</i>	86	65	74
<i>Non-subject-specific sessions</i>	-	65	79

Table 2.9: Associate perception of the effectiveness of support for professional learning for Cohorts 1 and 2 in their second year, and Cohort 1 teachers looking back in third year

	Effective/very effective %		
	Cohort 1 2011 %	Cohort 2 2012 %	Cohort 1 2012* %
Year 2			
Teaching in placement school	100	100	95
Professional mentoring provided by school	-	-	85
Professional development provided by school	85	79	-
Information and support provided by <i>Teach For Australia</i>	81	96	80
The <i>TFA</i> 'Leadership Framework'	33	57	45
(Leadership and) Practical skills sessions provided by <i>TFA</i>	73	(93)	(65)
TLA	-	-	80
CS	-	-	80
University of Melbourne subjects			
<i>Learning Areas</i>	85	79	55
<i>Individualising Learning and Teaching</i>	85	46	90
<i>Leadership</i>	36	-	30
<i>Addressing Educational Disadvantage</i>	-	93	-
<i>Professional Practice and Portfolio</i>	85	78	75
<i>Social and Professional Contexts</i>	51	36	80

* These questions were only asked of the Cohort 1 Associates who were teaching in 2012.

2.4.7. Balancing ongoing teaching, ongoing study and personal life

Associates were asked about balancing the ongoing demands of work, study and personal life, which they rated on a four point scale where 1 = *very difficult* and 4 = *not at all difficult*. Table 2.10 shows that fewer Cohort 3 Associates found the balance very difficult. About one quarter of Associates in all cohorts in their first year found the balance difficult. By the second year, about 30 per cent of Associates were still finding balancing the demands of work, study and personal life difficult or very difficult.

Table 2.10: Associate perception of their ability to balance demands of work, study and personal life

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	Cohort 3 2012 %	Cohort 1 2011 %	Cohort 2 2012 %
Very difficult	24	27	15	6	14
Difficult	30	27	24	30	21
A little difficult	42	24	49	46	29
Not all difficult	3	21	12	18	25
	100	100	100	100	100

Note: Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100.

These figures are corroborated by interviews. Associates had high expectations of themselves and, in the first year particularly, many spent long hours on lesson plans and student assessment. They recognised that the MGSE study was important but many admitted to (for the first time) doing the minimum required on some assignments because they put their students first and curriculum development and lesson planning took up time they were aware they should have been setting aside for study. Many commented that personal life was virtually non-existent.

Mentors and other school personnel also noted this difficulty, particularly for first year Associates. In some cases, mentors and principals felt that the demands of the MGSE course were too high and one principal suggested that there should be no university requirements at all in the first term, with the 0.2 FTE time-release to be mandated for in-school observation of other teachers and classes.

Some schools timetabled Associates to teach the same subject to more than one class in an attempt to alleviate the amount of preparation Associates were required to do, while others used a team-teaching approach for some lessons. Associates themselves, while they often found the workload and work-life balance difficult, acknowledged that they had expected this to be the case and they were coping with it, and even thriving on it.

Associates ability to cope with the workload was more noticeable in the second year, where they were better able to manage their teaching requirements and the difficulties they were experiencing had more to do with managing the leadership roles and additional commitments within the school that they had taken on, most of them by choice.

Associates were also asked to rate whether the 0.2 FTE time release from school activities was sufficient to allow them to complete all requirements of their study and employment. They were asked whether the school timetabling of their 0.2 release had been done in a way that assisted them to use the time effectively to meet their study obligations. Table 2.11 shows that in each year, more first-year Associates have indicated that the time release was sufficient and in Cohort 3, three-quarters felt timetabling was effective. A quarter of Associates in their second year felt the time release was not sufficient.

Table 2.11: Associates' views on time release and timetabling

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Cohort 1 2010	Cohort 2 2011	Cohort 3 2012	Cohort 1 2011	Cohort 2 2012
Time release	%	%	%	%	%
Not at all sufficient	6	6	0	6	4
Not really sufficient	49	24	18	21	25
Sufficient	46	68	77	64	68
More than sufficient	0	3	6	9	4
	100	100	100	100	100
Effective timetabling	64	61	74	73	75

Note: Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100.

2.5 Support for Associates

The majority of Associates across all cohorts and year levels regarded the support they received in total (from all sources) to be at least adequate and in many cases excellent. Many Associates were very impressed by the level of support provided both within and external to the school and felt little need for additional support. In fact, a few expressed mild concern that too much support could be overwhelming and that it took time to negotiate an appropriate balance of support among all parties involved.

Associates were asked about their experience of support in the Term 4 online surveys. They were asked to rate how important each of several sources of support were for their professional development on a four point scale where 1 = *not important at all*, 2 = *somewhat important*, 3 = *important*, and 4 = *very important*. The results are provided in Table 2.12 (for Associates in their first year) and table 2.13 (second year).

Table 2.12: First-year support to develop as a teacher

	Important/very important %		
	Cohort 1 2010	Cohort 2 2011	Cohort 3 2012
	%	%	%
Interactions with other <i>Teach for Australia</i> Associates	94	79	94
Interactions with other staff at my placement school	100	100	91
Interactions with my Mentor teacher	64	82	85
Interactions with my Clinical Specialist	-	61	82
Mid-year Intensive	-	-	70
Interactions with my Training and Leadership Adviser	-	73	67
Professional learning (outside school)	62	70	67
Online communication/support from TFA	-	36	66
Ongoing formal training, e.g. at MGSE	62	49	52
Interactions with <i>TFA</i> staff (and events)	(44)	30	52
Professional learning in school	62	58	49
Interactions with University of Melbourne staff	50	18	30
Online communication/support from MGSE	-	18	18
Interactions with my Educational Adviser	79	-	-
Online communication/support	35	-	-

Average responses have differed somewhat with each cohort; however, it is clear that the majority of Associates consider interactions with other Associates, staff at their placement schools, Mentors, Clinical Specialists and Training and Leadership Advisers to be important or very important in their development as a teacher in the first year.

Looking back on their experience, Cohort 1 Associates still in teaching rated interactions in the school community and with other Associates as the most important aspect of their support. This is to be expected as Associates in their second year are quite comfortable in their teaching role and have daily contact with students and school personnel. Access to external support staff is clearly important to a majority but there appears to be less reliance on external support in the second year for developmental purposes. Cohort 2 in their second year tended to rate most forms of support more highly than did Cohort 1.

Table 2.13: Second-year support to develop as a teacher

	Important/very important		
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 1
	2011 %	2012 %	2012 %
Interactions with other staff at my placement school	91	93	100
Interactions with other <i>Teach for Australia</i> Associates	91	89	100
Interactions with students	-	-	100
Interactions with school leadership team	-	-	85
Professional learning (outside school)	58	79	75
Interactions with my Training and Leadership Adviser	64	75	70
Interactions with my Mentor teacher	58	67	75
Ongoing formal training, e.g. at MGSE	49	67	65
Professional learning in school	58	64	80
Professional learning from TFA	-	-	65
Online communication/support from TFA	15	61	25
Interactions with my Clinical Specialist	52	57	70
Team teaching	-	-	55
Online communication/support from MGSE	24	54	20
Interactions with <i>TFA</i> staff (and events)	(27)	54	20
Interactions with University of Melbourne staff	27	43	35
Online communication/support from Associates	64	-	-
Interactions with my Learning Area Tutor	43	-	40

Associates were also asked to rate how satisfied they were with the level of feedback they were receiving from designated support staff, on a seven point scale where 1 = *highly dissatisfied* and 7 = *highly satisfied*. For summary purposes responses were re-coded as ‘dissatisfied’ and ‘satisfied’. For clarity, those who indicated ‘neutral’ are not included.

Table 2.14: Percentage of Associates satisfied and dissatisfied with feedback received

	Satisfied/highly satisfied %				
	Year 1			Year 2	
	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	Cohort 3 2012 %	Cohort 1 2011 %	Cohort 2 2012 %
Mentors	67	58	79	64	56
Educational Advisors	91	-	-	-	-
Clinical Specialists	-	70	77	64	68
Training and Leadership Advisers	-	67	80	67	71
Learning Area Tutors	-	-	-	42	-
Other school staff	76	61	72	88	64

2.5.1. Clinical Specialist and Training and Leadership Adviser

In the original program design, two separate support roles were envisaged: a University Clinical Specialist; and a TFA Professional Development Coach. In 2010, the position of Educational Adviser embodied these two support roles. The Educational Adviser was employed by TFA but co-recruited and co-managed with MGSE. The Educational Adviser (Ed A) played a critical role in providing the link between the MGSE academic subjects and the practical experiences of the Associates in school, supporting the Associates and providing observation and assessment of their classroom practice and the development of their professional practice portfolio. Educational Advisers were also responsible for fostering relationships and developing the partnership between the schools and the program.

For 2011, the Ed A role was split along the lines originally envisaged, with MGSE employing a Clinical Specialist (CS) and TFA employing a Training and Leadership Adviser (TLA). The majority of the role previously performed by the Ed A is now undertaken by the MGSE CS. The TFA TLA has primarily a personal development and pastoral care role. The TLA also works with Associates through the Leadership Framework, building their capacity, and developing their vision and goals and their commitment to the Teach For Australia movement.

There were clearly some instances where the CS was more valued by the Associates than their TLA, and the reverse was also the case. This variation is due as much to relationships and the personalities of individuals as to the roles each is meant to play, and there is considerable overlap in roles as a result. This is generally seen to be a positive in that it provides greater support to the Associates.

In Cohort 3, Associates were much clearer about the roles of the CS and TLA than was evident among Cohort 2. Both roles depend upon the development of relationships and so it remains the case that Associates tend to value one source of support over another, and this also includes relationships with their formal in-school Mentor and other school personnel. The CS and TLA were also valued as a source of support external to the school, enabling Associates to discuss issues they may not have felt comfortable raising with colleagues.

Some schools new to the program still appeared unclear about the role of the TLA. The CS and the Mentor have a formal role to play as some of their observations of Associates are used in MGSE course assessments, so there is a requirement that they establish a working relationship for this purpose. The TLA is there primarily to support the Associate and their role in relation to school personnel appears to have less clarity.

The CS and the TLA generally appear to have good working relationships and many work together in a variety of ways, particularly in terms of coordinating their visits to Associates and discussing the needs of Associates and how they may best be supported. There can still be occasions where Associates feel that they are being asked to do the same things twice, resulting in an inefficient use of their time and effort for little additional benefit.

There has been turnover in staffing for both the CS and TLA roles, and this does have the potential to disrupt Associate support. It takes time for a newcomer to develop into either of the roles, both in terms of developing relationships with the Associates and personnel at their schools, and in gaining experience in and an understanding of the roles themselves, including an understanding of the TFA Pathway and the ways in which it differs from traditional pathways.

The CS and TLA were regularly mentioned by Associates in all Cohorts as a source of support and there was generally an understood divide in the roles, with the CS primarily providing feedback on teaching methods and assisting with university assignments, and the TLA providing personal and leadership development and pastoral care. Many Associates also appreciated the different angles from which their classroom practice was viewed by the CS and TLA, with the use of the Leadership Framework by the TLA as a reflective and personal development tool generally viewed positively by Associates. That said, a notable number of Cohort 3 Associates indicated that they felt the introduction of the Leadership Framework and discussions of leadership were more appropriate later in the year than in the first semester.

2.5.2. In-school Mentor

Mentors provided support both with the Associates' teaching and pastorally. Mentors tended to be the key people in introducing Associates to the school community and, particularly in regional areas, to the wider community. In regional areas, Mentors have assisted in areas such as finding accommodation, establishing friendships and providing emotional support.

Mentors also provided advice and assistance with curriculum, resources and materials, student management issues and techniques, they observed classes and provided constructive feedback. In many cases, Mentors were based in the same key learning area (KLA) and the same subject department and for many Associates they were the primary, ongoing source of support.

In many ways, the role of the Mentor is the key support role in the TFA Pathway, particularly during the first term. Unlike the CS and TLA, Mentors know the local environment, know the students, and they are on-site every day (The CS and TLA visit approximately fortnightly). Unlike the CS and TLA, however, the Mentor role is voluntary (although supported through designated time release) and the method of recruitment is up to participating principals.

Generally, the quality of Mentors has been perceived as high by Associates and the majority of Associates have been well supported and greatly value their Mentors. The majority of Mentors use their own personal time to develop a relationship with their Associate, above and beyond the formal, mandated time. In a few cases, Mentors reported that they were not given the time allocation specified as part of the program, or that the time they were given had replaced time they should have received for other roles, making it difficult for them to provide adequate opportunities for their Associate to discuss issues with them. In the same way, timetabling in some cases prevented the Mentor, the Associate or both from observing each other's classes. Some Mentors also expressed concern that their other responsibilities in the school did not enable them to allocate the allotted time to the Associates.

The importance of the Mentor is recognised by stakeholders and in Victoria, for example, where the TFA Pathway is now in its fourth year, DEECD has ensured that each participating school has a solid understanding of the Mentor role. Most Mentors from all jurisdictions attend training at MGSE prior to beginning their role and they also meet their Associate at the Initial Intensive during that training. Associates are also now encouraged to visit their placement school prior to the Initial Intensive and many Mentors begin to develop a relationship then.

It remains the case that for a few Associates, the mentoring relationship has not been particularly satisfactory or useful. Mentors who taught in different areas, or were themselves new to the school, or were mentoring more than one Associate, were not always able to provide adequate support in some areas of need. There were cases where mentors were chosen very late and were unable to attend the training, although this is partly due to issues with late placement of Associates. There were also cases where staff who attended the mentor training did not take on the mentoring role. In the Northern Territory, there is also the potential for confusion as there may be two in-school mentors: one for the TFA Pathway and another for the mandatory probationary period. There were also cases where Mentors were 'too busy' due to other senior roles in the school and while relationships were cordial, no structured mentoring occurred.

In some of these cases, there seemed to be no clear resolution process at the school level. Understandably, Associates did not want to 'rock the boat' in the early days of relationship building with other staff. There was also uncertainty about the extent to which it was the Associate's responsibility to request and organise time with their Mentor, and this tended to be exacerbated where the Mentor was a senior staff member with additional responsibilities. Given the importance of the Mentor relationship and the initial need for Associates to learn school policies, practices and the norms of daily interaction with other staff, in the few cases where there were difficulties with the mentoring relationship this had the potential to place undue additional stress on Associates.

Associates in this kind of situation were generally able to talk to their CS and TLA; however, these individuals may have limited influence on the school executive in terms of finding workable solutions, and they were not able to assist with the kind of daily questions raised by internal issues. In such cases, Associates noted that they had the support of informal mentors in their staffroom and their KLA, and these informal structures had taken the place of the intended support structure.

By the time Associates were in the third term of their second year of teaching, the Mentor relationship had become largely collegial in a more normal day-to-day sense. Discussion tended to centre on curriculum rather than classroom issues or student management and the discussion of issues was often reciprocal. Some mentors commented that "[the Associate] is mentoring me!". In some cases, discussion had moved to leadership and student welfare rather than classroom teaching and some Associates were very appreciative of the encouragement and support they had received in their decisions to take on leadership roles in the school.

2.5.3. Other school staff

In almost all interviews, Associates were very positive about the school community. They found staff to be friendly, helpful and collegial; an important resource for support and advice, personally and professionally. As noted above, where Mentors were not able to provide some aspect of support, Associates were able to turn to other school staff, hence most felt well supported even in the few instances where the Mentor relationship had not worked as planned. Indeed, survey results show that, of all interactions canvassed, 'interactions with other staff at my placement school' was important or very important to nearly all respondents in their first year (See Table 2.12).

Other teachers in the same subject department or KLA were often happy to assist with resources, department heads and year level coordinators assisted with behaviour management. Many Associates had the opportunity to observe other classes, and had also been observed by teachers other than their Mentor, and all had found these learning opportunities stimulating and beneficial.

2.5.4. Other Associates

As noted in the Phase 2 report, one of the strengths of the TFA Pathway is the bond shared between the Associates. They are all 'in the same boat' and they have found other Associates to be a considerable source of support, both personally and professionally:

Having support of 41 Associates you can ring after a bad day – helps keep you motivated – you get great ideas – from C2 and C1 sometimes. It's been sensational.

As well as the formal online networking opportunities provided by TFA, Associates have created their own informal network:

There's a TFA site where we can share resources, but we also have a [...] site we've set up and a lot of Associates post there – stories about students, venting about bad days, requests for resources and help with teaching, etc. There is a real sense of community and we support each other.

Such relationships are embedded in the TFA Pathway model, and this is one of its distinctive features. The residential intensives, the deliberate clustering of Associates in schools and regional areas, the cohort building by TFA, marketing strategies that highlight social conscience issues, and TFA's sense of mission in their specific targeting of educational disadvantage, are all likely to play a role in developing Associates' strong sense of community. Although other forms of teacher preparation may lead to on-going bonds existing among graduates, they probably would not eventuate to the extent evident so far in the TFA Pathway.

The bond tends to be strongest amongst Associates in the same Cohort, and those (across Cohorts) who are in the same school. Some Cohort 2 and 3 Associates have shared accommodation with Associates from a previous cohort, and while such sharing does not always work, in many cases, the opportunity to debrief at the end of the day and receive both encouragement and advice from someone who has already been in the same position (and who knows the same people) and survived, is invaluable.

2.6 Mentor selection and training

Stakeholders commented that schools had been provided with greater clarity over the selection and role of Cohort 2 and Cohort 3 mentors, yet the process of selection varied considerably between schools, as was the case in 2010, as did the extent to which Mentors were supported in their role.

The majority of Mentors interviewed were asked to take on the role:

I was asked to get involved as my subject area is the same so it seemed like a good idea. We're in the same faculty - he teaches [...] and I teach [...]. And I was happy to do it. I was also appreciative of the opportunity to undertake PD - the 5 day course was attractive.

I was tapped on the shoulder. [...] I'd done mentoring before. I had no hesitation once I met the people involved (which happened before the Initial Intensive).

Most of those asked saw it as an opportunity and were comfortable with the request. Many were experienced teachers who had mentored in some capacity previously. A number also expressed an interest in being involved with new programs and in trying new things. Some indicated that they enjoyed a challenge and some also said they felt that it was important to support the next generation of teachers.

A few Mentors were told they would be undertaking the role with very little explanation of what the role entailed. At least initially, these Mentors were not comfortable with the request:

I was directed to be involved by the principal. I thought I'd gain more work.

I was asked by the principal. I didn't initially see myself as gaining anything from it, although I have.

A smaller number of teachers volunteered to participate as a Mentor:

When we heard that one of the Associates coming to the school would be a [...] teacher I was interested in being a Mentor. Also, other [...] teachers were mentoring VIT [provisionally registered] teachers so they were already busy. And I wanted an overview of the new program as well.

Some Mentors had an understanding of the role, but many others were not made fully aware of their role or the nature of the program until they attended a course at MGSE during the Initial Intensive. A few Mentors had no knowledge of the program at all until they undertook the MGSE course.

One principal noted that one of the issues facing schools in selecting Mentors is that mentors have to be nominated prior to meeting Associates, which had led to some 'mismatches' due to personality differences. The same principal also noted that, as a fairly small regional school, the available pool for mentors and the time release required effectively limited the number of Associates the school could accommodate.

Cohort 2 and 3 Mentors' views of the MGSE training were much the same as those of Cohort 1: generally positive, with some dissenting opinions and a few caveats.

No Mentors interviewed were taking the more involved assessed option offered by MGSE. The majority cited time as the primary disincentive, and some Mentors gave their age or existing qualifications as a reason not to undertake the assessed version of the course.

Almost all of the Mentors indicated that they had developed professionally through the role and that they would recommend involvement with the TFA program to other suitable mentors. One mentor noted how the mentoring program had affected both him and the school's attitude to new staff:

I think [mentoring has assisted my own professional growth] - made me reflect on things I did. For example, I've told [my Associate] that you've got to get work back to the kids quickly - then realised I don't always do that. Sometimes it's easier to know what you should do than it is to do it. Also, everyone now gets a mentor in this school when they're new here - you realise that they don't know everything and it's important to have someone to ask questions of about school context.

2.7 Associates and their placement schools

2.7.1. Induction

Associates' introduction to their schools and their experience of orientation and school inductions varied considerably:

The school has 8 or 9 new teachers this year, 5 are new grads. So the induction program has been very good – 1 day before school started, then a few Mondays throughout Term 1. We covered things like writing reports, yard duty, discipline policy. It was well structured.

We came in 3 days before term started, and I got my desk. We didn't have an induction process. It wasn't very organised. I felt I didn't know much about the school.

Table 2.13 shows that the majority of Associates in all cohorts received a formal induction to the school and for about a third of those who did, the induction was tailored for them. Most Associates who received an induction found it helpful or very helpful.

Table 2.15: Induction and assistance for Associates prior to Term 1

	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	Cohort 3 2012 %
Received formal induction	89	74	82
Received modified induction	34	35	33
Induction helpful/very helpful	88	85	74
Received some/plenty assistance prior to Term 1	70	63	69
Assistance was fairly/very helpful	61	61	63

Some Associates in Cohorts 1 and 2 had the opportunity to visit their school prior to the Initial Intensive, meet the principal and some of the staff, and observe classes. Such initial orientations were highly valued and this was mandated for Cohort 3, resulting in 90 per cent of Associates visiting their schools prior to the Initial Intensive and most of the others visiting during the intensive.

Some schools had comprehensive inductions for new staff, in which Associates participated, while others had Professional Development days prior to the start of term but little or no formal induction to the school for new staff. In some schools, the majority of staff were aware of the TFA Pathway from the outset whereas in other schools most staff appeared quite unaware of the nature of the pathway:

Community response has been fair. Who we are could have been better communicated to staff. Staff didn't really understand the program, it wasn't clearly known. All the Associates were anxious about how we would be received by our schools – in this school it hasn't really been an issue.

On the whole, Associates were very positive about the welcome they received at their placement school. The majority of Associates interviewed had not experienced any negativity from school personnel about the TFA Pathway:

The school community responded to us quite well, the younger teachers are quite engaged. Hasn't been too much negativity though a lot of staff are union. Union reps will ask questions, but not too much.

Yes definitely, I felt welcome and there was no negativity about TFA at all.

2.7.2. Current Teaching Context

Associates were asked to rate aspects of the climate of their current school on a five point scale where 1 = *very poor* and 5 = *very good*. Results were summarised for reporting and are presented in Table 2.16 with the percentage of Associates who reported that aspects of school climate were good or very good.

Table 2.16: Associate perceptions of school climate

	Good/Very good %				
	Year 1			Year 2	
	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	Cohort 3 2012 %	Cohort 1 2011 %	Cohort 2 2012 %
Level of collegiality and staff relations	61	66	55	71	56
Staff relationships with students	57	56	42	57	41
Level of support given to teachers	36	50	32	32	19
Level of support you have received	61	75	68	65	52
Level of support given to students	59	50	50	61	44
Emphasis on teaching and learning	54	56	45	53	33
Level of resources	32	50	55	29	37
Facilities, grounds and buildings	36	38	45	36	33
Communication, formal and informal	25	41	26	32	27
Leadership in the school	36	38	29	42	26
Opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge	61	50	39	58	48
Opportunities for decision-making, leadership	32	31	36	45	15
Relationships with parents and the community	32	47	29	13	33

First year Associates in all cohorts rated most highly the level of support they received and the level of collegiality and staff relations. On the other hand, most indicators suggest that Associates' perceptions of school climate were quite low and for most indicators, perceptions were lower in the second year.

School climate can have a notable impact on Associates' experience of teaching:

This is the best place I've ever worked in. The teachers are really genuine – great colleagues and friends. I haven't felt put down or singled out. I'm treated like any graduate teacher.

It's difficult. There is lack of school leadership. A fight broke out in my classroom. Girls were violent, pulling each other's hair. I didn't get a lot of support.

I'm the only [subject area] teacher. I go on line and develop my own [subject area] curriculum. I've also joined the professional association. No one at the school can help me. We don't have a proper curriculum. I base my planning on the VELs. I need stronger school leadership. I have no peer support.

I've had my ups and downs. I knew it would be difficult. But you learn so much. If I stay in teaching I'd want to be in a more supportive environment. Somewhere I could develop.

2.8 First year Associates in schools

Associates from all cohorts have (with few exceptions) become well respected and valued members of staff in their placement schools.

2.8.1. Student perceptions

When asked how students have responded to the Associates (and vice versa), many school personnel prefaced their comments with the caveat that the students had not been told about the TFA Pathway:

To the students, they're just first year teachers. Students take any teacher on face value – whether they're good at their job and respect students. Students have reacted very well to them because they're professional in what they do.

Based on the perceptions of Mentors and other school personnel, student responses to the Associates were generally positive while at the same time as variable as they would be with any teacher. Students have responded to some Associates very well, although nearly all school personnel commented on issues the Associates have faced with behaviour management:

At the start there was a lot of teacher-centred learning - kids weren't able to give feedback, and initially the Associates had no relations with the students, no background knowledge about students and the issues they face - and they come from a different kind of school, so there were some students who would say they didn't like their teacher. But over time the Associates have built up confidence,

they've trialled new things in the classroom, and students are responding positively.

The students interviewed during Term 3 from 2010-2012 were largely enthusiastic about the subjects Associates were teaching. They felt they were known as individuals, that their teacher cared about them, knew what level they were at, and gave them opportunities to participate in lessons. The ability to keep order in the classroom varied and some students found that frustrating. These students often commented that they were more engaged in Associates' classes than classes with other teachers and that class (and non-class) activities tended to be more varied than many of their other classes. Some students also commented positively on the relative youth of the Associates compared to many of their other teachers.

School personnel tended to compare Associates to teachers in their first year of teaching. Only in rare cases did school personnel consider their Associate to be comparable to a more experienced teacher, although a few Associates were considered to be exceptional:

We have had an experience of the TFA initiative at the highly positive end – our Associate is really good – in some ways better than me. She doesn't have my years of experience/professional knowledge but she is exceptional. She's significantly beyond the level of a recent graduate. I'm cynical about the Dip Ed – mine got me to the stage where I could begin to learn how to teach in my first year out. MGSE has given her a good theoretical framework and she has the ability to be flexible when elements of the theory don't work in practice. She's capable of modifying what she gets in her course to suit her classroom. Her pedagogy and interaction with the kids is well developed – I assume the selection process may partly account for that – they do seem to choose people who thrive in the classroom.

In the majority of cases, Associate performance was being judged positively by Term 3, although there was recognition that lack of classroom and teaching experience made the first few weeks or the first one to two terms quite difficult (depending upon the Associate and their school context):

There's been an enormous change in the 2nd semester. My Associate is repeating the same classes she did in first semester so there is less pressure on her in terms of preparation. She was very content driven initially. Now she has the content under control she's concentrating more on student learning rather than her teaching.

There was a difference between Associates and grads at the start, but it's not so noticeable now. Initially they were very much teacher focussed – delivery based. That's how my Associate kept things under control. She was very regimented, that gave her security and confidence, that she knew what was going to happen for the next hour. She has now moved on from that and is becoming more student focussed.

Not when they first arrived. Particularly in science and the use of equipment in the classroom – they had no mental picture of what a secondary class looked like – no picture of what it should look like, no experience in a class. Behaviour management was top of the list of skills that weren't really there, also pacing of

content, adaptation of content to the class context, differentiation in class/across year levels. These things have improved now.

2.8.2. Extracurricular involvement

There was wide variation in the extent to which Associates became involved in their Placement Schools, outside of the classroom. Variation was due in part to individual Associates but also to the context and opportunities of their schools. Many school personnel noted that they did not expect too much of Associates as yet, as they were still growing their confidence in the classroom. At least one principal had made it clear to Associates that they were to concentrate on the classroom and not take on other roles initially.

In general, School Personnel reported that the Associates' qualities had resulted in them taking up, or being offered, roles in schools more quickly than many beginning teachers. Quite a number of Associates had already become extensively involved in their schools and, in the case of Associates in regional areas, in the broader community. Associates were coaching sports teams at the school and in the community, and some were also playing in teams in the community. They were involved on various committees, organising and participating in excursions, school camps, school productions, and staff functions.

In the annual November surveys, Associates from both years, in all cohorts were asked to indicate their involvement in a variety of school activities outside the classroom, and whether they were involved as a participant or a leader. Overall, 90 per cent of first year respondents in all three cohorts had participated in a co-curricular activity and over a third had led an activity. Table 2.17 shows that Associates were involved in many activities during their first year, and Table 2.18 shows that levels of leadership increased in the second year.

Table 2.17: First-year Associate co-curricular involvement

	Cohort 1, 2010		Cohort 2, 2011		Cohort 1, 2011	
	Participate %	Lead %	Participate %	Lead %	Participate %	Lead %
Clubs e.g. chess, science,						
public speaking	21	25	27	10	39	35
Sports	46	13	31	6	43	21
Art, performing art, school						
productions	26	0	26	3	39	11
Coaching/tutoring	58	4	50	15	48	30
Camps and excursions	74	19	48	19	61	40
School-wide committees	46	8	26	0	66	14
Student Representative						
Council or similar	8	15	16	3	11	25

Table 2.18: Second-year Associate co-curricular involvement

	Cohort 1, 2011		Cohort 2, 2012	
	Participate %	Lead %	Participate %	Lead %
Clubs e.g. chess, science, public speaking	39	35	20	30
Sports	43	21	42	8
Art, performing art, school productions	39	11	42	4
Coaching/tutoring	48	30	46	25
Camps and excursions	61	40	52	44
School-wide committees	66	14	56	8
Student Representative Council or similar	11	25	4	15

2.9 The experience of second year Associates

Second year Associates had become confident teachers and were valued members of staff at their schools. In many cases, Associates had taken on leadership roles within the school, some of which required the principal to choose among potential candidates and attracted additional remuneration (e.g. Year Level Coordinator).

2.9.1. Perceptions of second year Associates as teachers

School personnel who worked closely with the Associates had noted their development and had recognised and accepted them as fellow teachers:

She's definitely changed and developed. She's at a point where she's comfortable – understands her teaching style and classroom role. I don't think she has any PD requirements beyond those we all have – keeping up with curriculum advancements. She has no special requirements or issues.

They're regarded as another teacher – better than some, not as good as others. They're just teachers in the school.

Connects theory and practice. I can see a different level of confidence and capacity in dealing with staff/students/parents. Huge development from last year. A lot of self awareness – knows what he needs to change when things don't work. There really don't seem to be gaps in what they need re PD at present. They have good relationships with staff/students.

In some cases, Associates were seen to be outstanding members of staff:

Really developed – she's amazing – she's differentiating, etc. Best PD for her was to be given more challenging roles – she's already more competent than our leading teachers. She could do a leading teacher role at this point. I should say that I'm talking specifically about this Associate – I'm not suggesting all Associates are this good – she is one of a kind. I'd compare [another Associate at the school] to other beginning teachers – she's had more issues.

2.9.2. Second year Associates in leadership positions

In the annual November survey, Associates in their second year were asked whether they had held a leadership position during the year, and whether they would be in a leadership position in their third year. Sixty one per cent of respondents in Cohort 1 and 41 per cent in Cohort 2 indicated that they had held a leadership position during the year. Of those, 65 per cent in Cohort 1 and 42 per cent in Cohort 2 were in a position that attracted additional pay.

As a comparison, a 2010 survey of Victorian Provisionally Registered Teachers (PRTs) for the VIT indicated that 17 per cent of the sample were holding a position of responsibility (of these, 29 per cent held positions of co-curricular responsibility involving areas such as debating or sports teams, 17 per cent were coordinators of the school production, 16 per cent were faculty/domain leaders and 16 per cent were single subject leaders).⁷² Associate leadership positions ranged across a breadth of school roles and responsibilities as shown in Table 2.19.

Table 2.19: Examples of second-year Associates' leadership roles and responsibilities

Role title	Role responsibilities
Cohort 1 (2011)	
SRC Co-ordinator, Debating Co-ordinator	Coordinating student leadership groups, school debating and public speaking, working party member on student services committee.
Head of Humanities	Managing a team of approximately 15 staff; designing curriculum; auditing assessment; budgeting
MY Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator; Year 8 Program Learning Outcomes Manager	Organising and facilitating internal and external debating and public speaking training and competitions. Organising extra curricular activities for Year 8 cohort; in charge of ILPs, cohort data collection for improved learning outcomes.
Production Director	Creating and directing the school's theatrical production.
Team Leader and Campus Environment Officer	Team Leader is like a year level coordinator. It involves managing a budget, planning and running meetings, dealing with discipline issues that arise with the 125 students in my team, being part of the Leadership Team, etc.
Assistant Head of English	Resource management and curriculum development.
Year 12 Assistant Coordinator (Acting); College Communications and Publicity Coordinator	Coordination: organising major events for Year 12; managing student behaviour/welfare etc. Publicity: various minor publicity tasks (brochures etc); development of College Yearbook
Year 8 Coordinator	Student management, contact between parents and school, support teachers to build relationships with their students
Careers Coordinator	looking after the VET program-advising students on subject selections, future career choices-Year 12 VTAC applications-maintaining the school's MIPS data
Head of Humanities Learning Area; Year 8 Level Manager (job share)	1) Humanities: Curriculum development and implementation; professional development of teachers within department; provision of department with resources. 2) Year 8 YLM: Pastoral and academic welfare of Year 8 students

⁷² Richardson, 2011, p. 21. All Victorian PRTs who were granted full registration in 2010 and early 2011 (1456) were invited to participate in the survey. Not including those who could not be contacted, the final response was 536, or 40% of the available sample (p. 12). Responses were not weighted so can only be considered relevant to the sample group and not the wider population of PRTs in Victoria.

Cohort 2 (2012)	
Student Leadership Coordinator	Facilitating the activities of the SRC. Participating in the Student Wellbeing Standing Committee.
Year Coordinator	Pastoral care for the year group, leading pastoral care teachers, truancy checks.
Mathematics Domain Leader, Staff Notebook + iPad coordinator, Triad Leader	Developing mathematics curriculum, testing and professional development. Running staff ICT Professional Development. Assisting 2 staff members implement Powerful Learning teaching strategies
Associate Year 11 Level Coordinator, Overseas Charity Trip Coordinator	- Year Level Coordinator: Communicating with parents about student behaviour/progress; working with students & teachers to resolve behaviour issues; - Trip. Organised overseas charity program that will see 10 Year 11 students travel to Vietnam
Events Co-ordinator	Organise year level events such as camps, formals, graduation, etc.
Humanities Curriculum Coordinator	Coordinating and preparing the curriculum of the Humanities Year 10 faculty.
Graduation coordinator	Organising and leading the graduation night for the senior campus.

Thirty six per cent of Cohort 1 and 31 per cent of Cohort 2 respondents also indicated that they would be in leadership positions in their third year. These roles included:

- Humanities KLA and Leading Teacher: E-Learning and Ultraset
- VCAL Co-ordinator
- VCE Excellence Program Coordinator
- House leader and Environmental Co-ordinator
- Teaching & Learning Leader; SRC Co-ordinator
- Year 8 Program and Learning Outcomes Manager
- Program and Learning Outcomes Co-ordinator
- Key Learning Area Head (Science)
- Year 7 Program and Learning Outcomes Manager
- Careers, VET & MIPs Co-ordinator
- Year Level Manager/VCE Co-ordinator
- Wellbeing Pathway Coordinator
- Year 9 Coordinator

2.10 Professional efficacy and knowledge

2.10.1. First year Associates' self-perceptions

Associates are academically talented and reflective individuals. They are used to success and tend to be highly self-critical. Whatever pressure other stakeholders perceive them to be under, Associates also hold *themselves* to high standards. As such, many of them were quite critical of their own performance in their roles.

Associates' comments tended to express concern at their lack of prior experience of schools, and the challenges of time management, classroom management and student engagement:

Not doing rounds is a disadvantage – having no prior experience. Your first few weeks are your rounds. You have to 'do it' – learn it quickly. The first term is tough. Though everyone says that the first year is tough for everyone. There are

new grads here this year as well and I don't think I was much worse off than them, nor was I in a better position. We felt much the same – we were in the same boat.

The first six months were very consuming. Everything was new and this has made me more tired and more time poor. I feel I have no work/life balance and this contributes to making me a less effective teacher. I came into the school expecting to have a huge impact but classroom difficulties (e.g. engaging students etc...) took up most of my time, which I think is a problem for many of the people in the program – as high achievers, Associates are not used to the many failures that were common in the first six months of teaching. Classroom management – dealing with discipline issues and simultaneously keeping lessons engaging – and maintaining a high level of organisation were the biggest challenges in the first term of teaching.

Huge shock on the first day. Year 11 [class] was fine. But 2 very large (30 in one class, 25 in another) Year 10 [...] classes – hard just to get the kids to sit down and listen. I went from smiling to frowning straight away – I cried after. TFA puts across the idea that you can make a difference – you get the idea that 'every student wants to learn' and it's just not like that. Now I have a routine – I can't say my approach has really changed – the structure is much the same. I have different classes this term with the same material so I have to do less planning. I'm getting feedback that the students are enjoying it. Initially I pitched [...] too high – they had no idea what I was talking about.

A number of Associates noted that their own schooling and experiences had been very different and this tended to be more marked for those Associates in regional and remote areas. The majority of Associates, however, did report that they were enjoying teaching, and particularly the relational, interpersonal aspects:

I'm getting very disengaged students engaged – that is both the most challenging and the most rewarding thing – that and seeing them succeed at tasks.

I'm really enjoying it. Having students come up and say they never understood [...] before, seeing behaviour change as students who weren't doing very well start succeeding – that's a real reward.

Time with the kids has been great. I don't have to send kids out – I know if they're getting loud/boisterous it's because I haven't pitched the lesson to their level. Building relationships with the students has been great – they value my opinion.

2.10.2. Second year Associates' self-perceptions

Second year Associates noted that their confidence as teachers had increased and that they were much more comfortable in class. Most noted that their relationships with students and other staff had also improved. They felt more relaxed and flexible, and increasingly able to 'think on their feet' in the classroom when things did not go to plan. They knew their students better and were better able to deal with student behaviour and engagement. They were better at preparing lessons and at targeting them to students at different levels. They tended to be more organised and better at assessment:

My teaching has changed significantly. A lot has changed to be where I am now. It's hard to pinpoint where I've most developed. I can see how experience plays a significant role. I can see how I'd do it differently – my reflective ability is more refined. I have a greater knowledge of what works and what doesn't with the demographic I have. I play to my strengths. I've learnt to have respectful/calm relationships with students and be non-confrontational, applying and adopting research and pedagogical technique. I like to do the research and find out what others are saying on an issue – I've been reading books on indigenous students, those with autism, ESL, but they are often not entirely relevant to an actual class situation.

I don't have to worry about developing my teaching persona – who I am as a teacher, which all teachers go through in their first year. So it's much more about practice – how quickly I can engage the students, how far I can push them. It's less about who I am, how I manage students, more playing with how I engage students and make use of content.

I'm much more relaxed now. The first 6 months were crazy. Then in the second half of last year I started to feel better. Started to build up a bank of ideas. I now have a much better feel for the curriculum. My teaching is effective now. I make use of data to track students' progress and engage in frequent reflection. I set goals with the students and get them to articulate their goals.

Several Associates noted that they were focussing their professional development opportunities on areas of interest such as developing cross-curricular links to address student literacy, formative assessment, understanding generational poverty, quality questioning and leadership development.

2.10.3. Associates' perceptions of their efficacy as teachers

Teacher efficacy has been defined as 'the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance'⁷³ or as 'teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated'.⁷⁴

A published instrument, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES-short form)⁷⁵ was employed to measure Associates' estimates of their efficacy as teachers. Associates were asked to rate their efficacy on a nine point scale where 1 = *not at all* and 9 = *a great deal*, when they commenced teaching (defined as the first full week of teaching in their first year) and at the time of completing the survey (mid Term 4). Cohort 1 in their second year were asked to rate their efficacy from the beginning of their second year and at the time of completing the survey (mid Term 4).

Perception scales such as this need to be treated with some caution because the scales are subjective.⁷⁶ For example, research has shown that respondents to such scales who are not very knowledgeable of the subject tend to assume that, on average, they are better than average. It is not uncommon for scores on such a scale to fall as respondents in the early

⁷³ Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly & Zellman, 1977, in Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998.

⁷⁴ Guskey & Passaro, 1994 in Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998

⁷⁵ Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001a, and see Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b.

⁷⁶ Scott, Burns & Cooney, 1994

stages of a course realise how much they do not know.⁷⁷ As such, asking respondents to consider their knowledge (or in this case, efficacy) ‘now’ and at an earlier point in time allows the respondent to indicate to what extent they feel they have improved. Hence, ‘growth’ scores between then and now may be more accurate indicators of development than are the actual positions indicated on the scale.⁷⁸

It is also important to note the context of the schools where Associates are teaching, as they are placed in schools serving disadvantaged communities. This may affect efficacy and perceptions of self-efficacy, and comparative data does not take school context into account.

Growth scores were calculated as the difference between first year Associates’ rating of themselves looking back to when they started and their ‘now’ ratings. ‘Now’ ratings and growth scores are reported in Table 2.20 for each item of the Efficacy scale, in order from highest to lowest based on the average of all cohorts’ ‘now’ score at the end of their first year.

There were only minor differences between the cohorts, and no statistically significant differences were found. First year Associates from all three cohorts rated themselves as comparatively more effective in areas such as providing alternative explanations and controlling disruptive behaviour. The felt they were less effective in areas such as helping families to assist their children to value education and motivating students. The highest growth area across cohorts in their first year was behaviour management. Cohort 2 and 3 Associates also indicated higher growth scores in using a variety of assessment strategies.

Table 2.20: First-year Associates: aspects of efficacy, now and change scores

	Cohort 1, 2010		Cohort 2, 2011		Cohort 3, 2012	
	‘Now’ mean	‘Growth’ mean	‘Now’ mean	‘Growth’ mean	‘Now’ mean	‘Growth’ mean
To what extent can you:						
Provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	7.0	2.2	7.6	2.1	7.4	2.4
Control disruptive behaviour in the classroom	7.0	3.0	6.7	3.1	7.2	3.2
Craft good questions for your students	6.7	2.0	6.8	2.8	6.8	2.9
Get students to follow class rules	6.7	2.6	6.6	2.9	6.8	2.9
Calm a student who is disruptive or noisy	6.6	2.8	6.5	2.5	7.0	3.2
Establish a classroom management system with each group/year level of students	6.7	2.7	6.5	2.9	6.7	3.1
Use a variety of assessment strategies	6.4	2.1	6.8	3.0	6.7	3.2
Get students to believe they can do well in school work	6.5	1.9	6.6	2.4	6.4	2.7
Implement alternative strategies in your classroom	6.5	2.4	5.7	2.2	6.7	2.9
Motivate students who show low interest in school work	5.8	2.0	5.8	2.2	6.6	3.0
Help your students to value learning	5.9	1.7	5.5	1.6	6.2	2.5
Assist families in helping their children do well at school	4.8	1.5	4.6	1.7	5.6	2.1

⁷⁷ Kruger, 1999, Kruger & Dunning, 1999

⁷⁸ See also Wilson & Ross, 2000 on temporal-past comparisons.

Second year Associates were also asked to rate themselves based on two points in time: from the start of their second year and ‘now’ (‘now’ being November, or Term 4 of their second year). Table 2.21 shows that on individual indicators, Associates again felt that their levels of growth were similar to that of their first year.

Table 2.21: Second-year Associates: aspects of efficacy, now and change scores, and Cohort 1 teachers in third year, ‘now’ scores

	Cohort 1, 2011		Cohort 1, 2012	Cohort 2, 2012	
	‘Now’ mean	‘Growth’ mean	‘Now’ mean	‘Now’ mean	‘Growth’ mean
To what extent can you:					
Provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused	7.9	2.3	7.9	8.3	2.9
Control disruptive behaviour in the classroom	8.0	2.9	8.0	7.7	3.6
Craft good questions for your students	7.8	2.9	7.9	8.0	3.1
Get students to follow class rules	7.7	2.5	7.9	7.5	3.3
Establish a classroom management system with each group/year level of students	7.9	2.9	7.8	7.6	3.1
Use a variety of assessment strategies	7.6	2.6	7.6	7.9	3.6
Calm a student who is disruptive or noisy	7.8	2.9	7.9	7.4	3.4
Get students to believe they can do well in school work	7.4	1.9	7.5	7.5	2.7
Implement alternative strategies in your classroom	7.3	3.0	7.4	7.1	2.9
Motivate students who show low interest in school work	7.0	2.0	7.1	7.3	3.0
Help your students to value learning	6.9	1.9	7.2	6.9	2.4
Assist families in helping their children do well at school	6.2	2.2	6.6	5.8	2.2

In addition, respondents were asked to rate their overall effectiveness as teachers now and for teachers generally. Once again, a nine-point scale was employed for both items and results are also shown in Table 2.22. Cohort 1 and 2 Associates towards the end of their second year were considerably more confident about their efficacy as teachers than they were at the end of their first year.

Table 2.22: Overall self-efficacy and perceptions of general teacher efficacy

	Cohort 1, 2010 ‘Now’ mean	Cohort 2, 2011 ‘Now’ mean	Cohort 3, 2012 ‘Now’ mean	Cohort 1, 2011 ‘Now’ mean	Cohort 2, 2012 ‘Now’ mean
Overall self-efficacy	5.9	6.2	6.5	7.4	7.5
Teachers efficacy generally	6.1	5.9	6.0	6.4	5.9

The wording and mean results for each item on the scale are presented in Tables 2.20 and 2.21 as an indication of how the notion of teacher efficacy has been constructed in this instrument. Greater validity is attached to three subscales: efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management, each of which are based on the combined totals of four of the items in the scale.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ See Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001a, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001b, and Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006.

Results for the subscales are shown in Table 2.23 for first year Associates and Table 2.24 for second year Associates and Cohort 1 Associates teaching in their third year. Cohorts 1 and 2 had much the same results at the end of their first year, somewhat below the averages provided by Tschannen Moran and Woolfolk Hoy⁸⁰ for teachers with up to three years of experience in the subscale of Student Engagement and slightly below in the other two subscales.

Table 2.23: First-year Associates: efficacy subscale scores

Efficacy subscales	Cohort 1 2010 'now' mean	Cohort 2 2011 'now' mean	Cohort 3 2012 'now' mean	Tschannen- Moran 2006 'Novice' ^a	Tschannen- Moran 2006 'Career' ^b
Efficacy in Student Engagement	5.7	5.6	6.2	6.57	6.69
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.99	7.58
Efficacy in Classroom Management	6.8	6.6	6.9	7.03	7.61

Notes to Table 2.21

^a Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006, See Table 2. Means are based on a sample of 74 novice teachers, where 'novice' is defined as current teachers with three or fewer years of experience.

^b Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006, See Table 2. Means are based on a sample of 181 career teachers, where 'career' is defined as current teachers with four or more years of experience.

Table 2.24 shows that towards the end of their second year, however, Cohort 1 and 2 results were about the same or higher than the means reported by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2006) for teachers with at least four years of experience in all areas.

Table 2.24: Second-year Associates, and Cohort 1 teachers in third year: efficacy subscale scores

Efficacy subscales	Cohort 1 2011 'now' mean	Cohort 2 2012 'now' mean	Cohort 1 2012 'now' mean
Efficacy in Student Engagement	6.9	6.9	7.1
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	7.6	7.8	7.7
Efficacy in Classroom Management	7.8	7.5	7.9

These findings are consistent with the findings of an evaluation of the impact of Teach First, in which the researchers drew comparisons between Teach First teachers and international studies of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) from the US, Canada, Cyprus, Korea, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Hong Kong. The mean scores in the self-efficacy scale used in this study showed that the Teach First teachers scored higher in most areas, in particular motivating students, controlling student behaviour and crafting questions. Like the TFA Associates, they scored lower on assisting families, and the researchers speculated that this may have been due in part to the highly disadvantaged nature of the schools they were working in.⁸¹

2.10.4. Associates' professional knowledge

Associates were also asked to rate their effective knowledge of 16 aspects of professional practice that were selected to reflect the content of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) graduate teacher attributes. Again, Associates were asked to rate themselves at the

⁸⁰ Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, The paper noted that the efficacy scale is more likely to have validity for inservice teachers rather than preservice teachers 'who have yet to assume real teaching responsibilities' (p.801). This caveat does not apply to Associates.

⁸¹ Muijs et al. 2010, p.,15.

commencement of their first teaching assignment following completion of the Initial Intensive and currently. A four-point rating scale was used where 1 = *very ineffective* and 4 = *very effective*. Difference scores, reflecting respondents' estimates of their growth since commencing teaching, were calculated. Mean 'now' scores and growth scores are reported in Table 2.24, presented in order from highest to lowest based on the average of both cohorts' 'now' scores.

Table 2.25: First-year Associates' professional knowledge now and change scores

	Cohort 1, 2010		Cohort 2, 2011		Cohort 3, 2012	
	'Now' mean	Growth Mean	'Now' mean	Growth Mean	'Now' mean	Growth Mean
Student relations	3.5	0.8	3.6	1.0	3.7	0.9
Establish relations with colleagues	3.4	0.4	3.6	0.7	3.4	0.4
Legal and ethical obligations	3.2	0.5	3.4	0.4	3.3	0.5
Treating students equitably	3.1	0.3	3.3	0.4	3.5	0.5
Content knowledge	3.3	1.0	3.4	0.7	3.1	0.9
Resources and ICT	3.3	1.0	3.3	1.0	3.2	1.1
Engaging learning tasks	3.3	1.1	3.2	1.1	3.2	1.1
Pedagogical content knowledge	3.2	1.2	3.3	1.1	3.0	1.0
How students learn	3.2	1.0	3.1	0.8	3.1	1.1
Designing assessment	3.0	0.8	3.2	1.3	3.0	1.1
Classroom management	3.1	1.0	2.9	1.1	3.2	1.4
Monitor progress and make adjustments	2.8	0.8	3.2	1.1	3.0	1.2
Student diversity	3.1	0.7	2.8	0.5	3.1	0.6
Feedback	2.9	0.7	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0
Assessing prior learning	3.0	0.8	2.9	0.9	3.0	1.0
Establish relations with parents and the community	2.8	0.6	3.0	0.8	3.1	0.8
How children develop	3.0	0.7	2.8	0.5	2.8	0.8

Relationships with colleagues, understanding legal and ethical obligations and treating students equitably were areas where Associates (on average) felt they were effective from day one. By Term 4 of their first year, Associates in all Cohorts felt that they were most effective at developing student relationships.

Areas in which most development had taken place included classroom management, pedagogical content knowledge and providing students with engaging learning tasks. On average, Associates rated assessing prior learning, establishing relations with parents and the community, and how children develop as the areas in which they needed to improve their professional knowledge.

2.11 Leadership coaches

In their second year, interested Associates were paired with a Leadership Coach: an experienced person in a leadership position from a sector aligned with an Associate's interests (business, government, education, etc.) who was willing to provide additional mentoring. TFA noted that:

The Coaches will work with the Associates to accelerate their personal development and transition beyond the program into their career pathways of choice. They will assist an Associate to reflect upon their experience, enrich their self-awareness, and articulate their self direction in order to grow into an influential leader.

Those Associates who had established a relationship with a Leadership Coach felt they had benefited from it, particularly in allowing them the opportunity to consider their future plans:

It's really good, I get along well with my coach and we meet up once a month. He's in the [] sector. It doesn't relate to my teaching, except to the extent that I can debrief about things that are happening occasionally – sometimes good to get a completely external perspective. He has assisted me in thinking about my future plans.

My Leadership Coach works in []. She's great. Catch ups with her have been good for me to reflect on my teaching, the way teams work at school, my role as a leader. I don't think it's impacted on my classroom practice. It helps to reflect on what I want to achieve with my life in/out of school.

It's been great. We mostly just discuss ideas and my pathway for next year. He has a lot of connections I could follow up. He's very accomplished in areas outside teaching. He has management experience so we have discussions about group cohesiveness and greater performance outcomes and I've been able to discuss these ideas with him and apply to the classroom where relevant.

For some Associates, the pairing was not particularly successful. The voluntary aspect of the coaching and a lack of clear structure meant that some Associates felt fully responsible for maintaining the relationship. In some cases, only one meeting had taken place. Though for some it had been useful, many Associates did not consider it a large part of the program and had gained little from participating. In some cases, Associate expectations seemed to differ from the intent as articulated above by TFA. Some Cohort 2 Associates noted:

There is not much structure to the Leadership Coach support. TFA is not working enough to support us to obtain leadership positions in and outside the school.

TFA have noted that significant changes have been made to the coaching program in 2013 to address these issues. Most Leadership Coaches did not appear to impact upon Associates' classroom practice, even in cases where Associates had asked for a Coach from the education sector. None of the Associates interviewed made mention of the role of the Coaches in developing their leadership skills.

2.12 The future

2.12.1. Associates' plans for the future

Associates were generally very positive about the pathway and greatly respected the dedication and goals of Teach For Australia. Most also praised the support they received and the ongoing education from MGSE. The attitudes of Cohort 1 Associates had also evolved, with some who were initially somewhat sceptical of the TFA 'mission' and who did not anticipate any ongoing involvement with the organisation after the two years, now intending to be active alumni.

It was interesting to note that several Associates in both cohorts felt that the intent of the pathway (or their perceptions of that intent) had changed somewhat from its origins:

[Cohort 2] I started out thinking that the program was looking for career-focused people or “bright sparks” and now I feel that it is more about building a commitment to teaching and educational change.

[Cohort 2] The program is moving more towards a pathway into teaching program when it was initially sold as a 2 year program which you then leave. The focus now is more on keeping us in teaching.

[Cohort 1] Some of us at the last intensive talked about these issues till 4 in the morning. Two people found the program wasn’t working for them as a corporate stepping stone. They expected it to get them a high flying job, but it didn’t look like that was going to happen. [] I don’t want people to see it that way and I think more Associates now agree with me. They have got into teaching and a lot of Associates missed their kids during the holidays. Probably about half now feel the way I do.

In the annual November online survey, first year Associates from each Cohort were asked a series of questions about their current plans. The results are shown in Table 2.26 and Table 2.27. The first two questions asked how likely Associates were to complete the two year program and how likely they were to continue teaching beyond the two initial years (both on a four point scale where 1 = *very unlikely* and 4 = *very likely*). All respondents from both cohorts indicated that they were likely or very likely to complete the program. Those who intended to continue teaching after the program were higher in Cohorts 2 and 3 than in Cohort 1. Of the Associates who responded, the great majority indicated that if they did not continue teaching, they would likely work to address educational disadvantage through another career path.

Table 2.26: First year Associates' plans to complete the program, continue teaching and address educational disadvantage through other careers

	Likely/Very likely		
	Cohort 1, 2010 %	Cohort 2, 2011 %	Cohort 3, 2012 %
Complete the program	96	100	100
Continue teaching beyond the two years	75	87	83
If not teaching, address educational disadvantage through a different career path	90	96	96

Fewer than half of Associates in their first year who intend to continue want to stay in their current schools, although nearly as many are undecided at this point. Sixty to 70 per cent plan to seek promotion and about the same numbers are considering continued study.

Table 2.27: Associates' plans to stay at their current school, to seek promotion and to undertake further study

	Cohort 1, 2010			Cohort 2, 2011			Cohort 3, 2012		
	Yes	Unsure	No	Yes	Unsure	No	Yes	Unsure	No
If continuing, would like to stay at current school	33	48	19	47	31	20	39	52	10
If continuing, plan to seek promotion	74	26	0	63	34	3	73	23	3
Further study in teaching/education	68	25	7	72	25	3	58	26	16

Associates in their second year were also asked about their plans for the future, in a series of questions that asked them to indicate whether they intended to stay at their current school, whether they had positions for the year following their completion of the Pathway (ongoing or contract) and whether they intended to continue teaching. Results are presented in Table 2.28. A greater number of Cohort 2 Associates were intending to stay at their current school; however, the lower numbers in Cohort 1 may have been due to their supernumerary positions: many Cohort 1 Associates were aware that there was no vacant position available for them at their placement school.

Table 2.28: Second year Associate plans for the future

	Cohort 1 2011 %	Cohort 2 2012 %
Staying on at current school	29	50
Have applied to teach elsewhere	29	20
Are likely to continue teaching	26	7
<i>Total likely to continue teaching</i>	84	77
Are not likely to continue teaching	16	23
	100	100

Associates were also asked if they would recommend the TFA Pathway to others who are considering teaching and others with similar interests and competencies to their own. As shown in Table 2.29 and Table 2.30 the majority of Associates in all Cohorts would recommend the Pathway to others considering teaching, and Cohort 1 figures rose in their second year. Sixty five per cent of Cohort 3 would also recommend the Pathway to others who were not considering teaching, although only 41 per cent of Cohort 2 Associates in their second year would do so.

Table 2.29: First-year Associates: recommending the TFA Pathway to others

	Cohort 1, 2010		Cohort 2, 2011		Cohort 3, 2012	
	Yes %	Unsure %	Yes %	Unsure %	Yes %	Unsure %
Would you recommend TFA to						
Others considering teaching	64	33	94	7	82	18
Others not considering teaching	-	-	-	-	65	20
Others with similar interests/competencies	75	22	91	6	82	18

Table 2.30: Second-year Associates: recommending the TFA Pathway to others

	Cohort 1, 2011		Cohort 2, 2012	
	Yes %	Unsure %	Yes %	Unsure %
Would you recommend TFA to				
Others considering teaching	77	23	96	4
Others not considering teaching	-	-	41	33
Others with similar interests/competencies	87	13	85	15

2.12.2. Cohort 1 after completing the Pathway

Cohort 1 Associates completed the pathway at the end of 2011. They were asked to complete a final survey in November 2012. Of those who responded, 67 per cent were still teaching (53 per cent of respondents were in ongoing positions, 10 per cent were on contract) and 33 per cent were not teaching. Twenty seven per cent had completed the Masters component of their course and a further 62 per cent intended to complete it.

When asked how long they intended to stay in teaching, 50 per cent of those Cohort 1 respondents who were currently teaching said that teaching was their career, 15 per cent said they would teach for ‘a few years’, 5 per cent just to the end of this year, and 30 per cent were unsure.

Table 2.31 shows where Cohort 1 respondents were in November 2012. As can be seen, the majority are still at their placement school. Of those no longer at their placement school (27 per cent of respondents), 75 per cent said that their new school did not serve educationally disadvantaged students.

Table 2.31: Cohort 1 Associates’ employment as at November 2012

	Cohort 1 in 2012 %
Teaching at placement school	40
Teaching at a government school	17
Teaching at a Catholic school	3
Teaching at an independent school	7
<i>(Teaching)</i>	<i>(67)</i>
Not teaching, intend to return within 2 years	3
Not teaching, intend to return within 5 years	13
Not teaching, intend to return in 5-10 years	7
Not teaching, unsure if will return	10
<i>(Not teaching)</i>	<i>(33)</i>
	100

Cohort 1 Associates were also asked if their experience of the TFA Pathway and teaching in a school had changed their career plans and if so, in what way. It was clear from the responses that many Associates had become committed to a career in education and that this was a considerable departure from the path they had considered prior to their application to join the TFA Pathway. Table 3.32 provides a selection of responses to this question.

Table 2.32: Cohort 1 Associates' career plans as a result of participation in the TFA Pathway

Has your experience of the TFA pathway and teaching in a school changed your career plans? In what way?

Yes. I am now in the education profession and plan to stay.
I would like to stay in education.
I left a career in [] and entered one in education. This year, I taught at MGSE and am now living in [] tutoring with the Prison University Project. The TFA pathway changed my career plans significantly.
It made a career in teaching a viable option for me despite being in a professional career. Realistically to move into teaching I'd have needed to study part-time over 3-4 years, and I'm not sure I could have done that at the same time as being in consulting.
Yes. I am now pursuing academic research into the economics of education, with a view to returning to Australia and resuming a career in school education
Yes, I never thought I'd be a teacher, and now I aspire to become an entrepreneur in education.
Yes, I am now committed to a career in education.
My experience with TFA has probably increased how ambitious I am about the sorts of roles and projects I take on in my school. It has also definitely increased my commitment to work in a disadvantaged school setting.
Yes, I still want to maintain involvement in education even if it's beyond the classroom.
I had envisioned becoming a teacher, and so applied for TFA with that goal in mind. Through my experience with TFA I have had the opportunity to create and lead professional development sessions with peers and fellow associates; so I am now planning to pursue an eventual career in teacher education and coaching work.
Yes, I would never have become a teacher otherwise, particularly if I had to take a year off (from a high paying job) to have no salary, in order to pursue a career I was not sure I was interested in.
Yes. Now working in training and development, when otherwise would be in finance. It has changed my goals and given much perspective to long term career plans.
Yes - I previously would not have considered a career in education at all, given my engineering background. My experience in the TFA pathway has led me to commit to working in education for at least the next few years, if not more.
Yes, I'm planning to pursue school leadership in the coming years. Will see how far I can go while I feel like I've still got something to contribute.
Yes it has. I will be coming back to teaching after a few years. I am going back to the [] sector in 2013.

2.12.3. The 2012 Principal Survey

A survey was sent out to all principals participating in the TFA Pathway in November 2012. Further details can be found in Section 1.x and Appendix X. Some relevant results are included throughout Part 2 of this report; however, for clarity and ease of location, a selection of results is brought together in Table 2.33.

Principals were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements rating their experience of the TFA Pathway overall, on a five point scale where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. Table 2.33 shows the percentage of principals indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

Table 2.33: Principal agreement with statements about the TFA Pathway

	Agree/ Strongly Agree %
The TFA program is well organised	100
The school has benefited from involvement in the TFA program	100
Associates are well supported by the TFA Training and Leadership Adviser	100
Associates have integrated well into the school	100
Schools are provided with sufficient information to make an appropriate decision on whether to participate in the program.	100
The employment-based nature of the TFA program is an effective way to train teachers	100
TFA Associates have positively impacted on student achievement	95
TFA Associates have positively impacted on student engagement	95
Associates have had a positive impact on other teachers	95
Subject to vacancies, our school would like ongoing involvement in the TFA program	95
The MGSE Mentor training has had a positive impact on participating teachers	95
Associates demonstrate leadership skills	95
Associates are effective teachers in their second year	95
I would recommend the TFA program to other principals	95
Associates are well supported by the MGSE Clinical Specialist	90
The TFA focus on leadership has been beneficial to the school	90
The level of external support provided to Associates is appropriate	90
Associates are effective teachers within their first 6-12 months	90
Schools are provided with an appropriate level of support if an issue arises with one of the Associates	84
The TFA program is cost-effective at the school level	70
Associates are effective teachers within their first 6 months	65
We would reconsider involvement in the TFA program if all the Associates left teaching after 2 years	60
We would reconsider involvement in the TFA program if all the Associates left the school after 2 years	45

2.12.4. Stakeholder views of the future

Program Partners tended to view the future in terms of potential structural and ideological barriers to the continuation of the Pathway rather than in terms of measures of success such as Associate retention in the workforce, greater interest in the Pathway at school-level or the creation of alumni who may become leaders and innovators. They indicated a variety of potential barriers to the long term viability of the TFA Pathway. The Pathway was conceived as a national program and TFA recruit from all states and territories; however, Associate placement is currently only occurring in government schools in three jurisdictions and in Catholic schools in one jurisdiction.

Implementation of the Pathway in some states remains unlikely for a variety of reasons. For example, in Queensland, legislative changes in teacher registration requirements remain necessary. In Western Australia, while the legislation has recently been amended to support employment-based teaching programs, the TFA Pathway requirement to cluster Associates and place them in low-SES schools has prevented participation to date in both the government and Catholic sectors. In New South Wales, opposition to the placement of unqualified teachers is the main reason for non-participation.

At the time of the Phase 2 report, the Teach For Australia organisation had been refused Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) endorsement by the Australian Tax Office (ATO). The DGR endorsement is a tax status held by charities that allows businesses and individuals to

receive tax concessions when they donate. This had the potential to constrain the level of financial support TFA has been able to access from business, although in-kind support and partnerships with business in some aspects of the program (such as recruitment and leadership development) have shown growth. DGR status has now been granted which means that there is greater potential for TFA to receive corporate funding.

MGSE have also noted that they have access to DGR funding so there may be the option of funding some aspects of the qualification (such as, for example, accommodation and travel, or guest speakers, or the entire cost of the course for an individual Associate) through corporate or philanthropic sponsorship. There may well be potential for further collaboration and exploration between MGSE and TFA within these areas.

TFA and DEEWR have noted that business investment and philanthropic support are not commonly part of education programs in Australia. This is particularly the case in the area of redressing educational disadvantage, which is seen as an essential responsibility of governments. As such, it is not clear how much additional funding may be forthcoming with the granting of DGR status.

Most stakeholders also noted an active teacher union resistance to the Pathway. This was commented on at school level in some cases, particularly in the first year in Victoria, and there continued to be reports of staff concern and union resistance from some personnel in schools new to the program for Cohort 3. Some Program Partners noted that union resistance was a considerable ongoing barrier to participation in some states. Teachers unions support the registration and teacher education course accreditation requirements of regulatory bodies at state and national levels. In participating schools, initial local union branch resistance had softened, and staff who were interviewed reported that this was initially because of the desire of most teachers to offer them support and then the perceived high calibre and strong work ethic of the Associates.

Part 3. Key Questions and Conclusions

3.1 Ways to Improve Implementation of the Pathway

The formative part of the evaluation has been concerned with how the pathway has been implemented, and the key factors influencing success in terms of achieving its initiatives.

A number of the considerations presented in the Phase 1 and 2 reports have been implemented or resolved and have not emerged as themes in interviews in the third year.

Associates are now expected (subject to placement timing) to visit their placement school prior to the Initial Intensive. MGSE and TFA continue to monitor and revise components of the course and intensives and Associates in all cohorts have been impressed with the flexibility shown and the response to feedback. Expectations of the course are made clearer to Associates prior to program commencement. Expectations of participant schools and mentors are also clearer and materials have been developed and revised to assist in this area. The 0.2 FTE allowance for Associates was provided in one or two blocks in the majority of cases, although occasional difficulties in this area remain.

Current and ongoing implementation issues are presented below.

Pre-program

- Late placement continues to have considerable impact on potential Associates choosing to undertake the program and on aspects of MGSE preparation for the Initial Intensive. It may be necessary over the long term for TFA and jurisdictions to consider alternative means of ensuring placement is confirmed or guaranteed at an earlier date.

Initial Intensive and postgraduate diploma

The Pathway in its current form puts high levels of pressure on Associates initially due to their inexperience in the field and the complexity of the teacher's role. Associates survive, and even thrive; however, the first weeks tend to be highly stressful and efforts to mitigate that initial pressure deserve ongoing consideration. Clearly, any extension to the initial 6 week Intensive or additional opportunities for Associates to observe experienced teachers or to teach under supervision prior to commencing in a school would have considerable cost implications. Nevertheless, the pressure placed on Associates to succeed in highly challenging environments with virtually no experience is immense, and seems to be an unnecessary burden with potentially serious consequences for students and Associates, should there be Associates not up to the challenge.

The next five points are all concerned with ways to mitigate the initial expectations and pressure on Associates.

- The Summer School appears to have been quite successful since being introduced for Cohort 2; however, more opportunities to observe and practise teaching prior to placement remain desirable.

- It may be beneficial to mandate observation of other teachers during the first semester, and to change the timing of MGSE course requirements so that Associates can spend more time on school activities in the first months of their initial year.
- Associates are placed in schools serving disadvantaged communities. A number of Associates (in all subject areas) have indicated that many students have considerable literacy or numeracy problems, and that they feel ill-equipped to adequately respond. It may be appropriate to introduce a course or unit designed to provide pedagogy and resources to support Associates in this area.

Associate Placement and Teaching Load

- Where possible, consideration should be given to the classes the Associates are asked to teach in the first semester. As noted in previous reports, while it may be difficult in the context of juggling school timetables, it would be preferable if Associates' early experiences are with student groups that are less demanding or at least a mix of year levels, including some 'easier' classes. Also where possible, it would be preferable if Associates were given fewer subjects or had repeat classes at the same year level, to reduce the extent of lesson planning required in the initial terms. Associates should not be given classes that require experienced specialist teachers.
- There may be a case for ensuring that placement schools have an appropriate formal induction process for Associates (and other new and beginning teachers) to ensure all new staff have sufficient opportunity to understand school policies and procedures, and other areas of significance to the school. This is particularly so where the new staff have no first-hand experience of the jurisdiction or school system concerned.

The Mentor Role

Mentors were generally not 'volunteers' in that they were asked by their principal and agreed to participate. Mentors tended to be recruited for pragmatic reasons such as the Associate filling a vacancy in the same KLA, and principals responding to the request that they ensure that the mentor was an experienced teacher, recognised for the quality of their practice, who would be willing and able to act in that capacity. In most cases, Mentors were quite comfortable with the method by which they were selected and most felt that they were given a choice. Most appear to have been approached because their attitude, ability and likely enthusiasm for the position were recognised by the principal or school executive.

Where the few issues have occurred with Mentors or between Mentors and Associates, these tend to be either because the Mentor is not able or willing to allocate the necessary time to the role, or because either the Mentor or the Associate is not entirely able to overcome differences in personality or philosophy. These difficulties may not come to light until the first few weeks of placement and it is unlikely that they could ever be entirely eliminated. As the Mentor is an important factor in the success of the program, it would therefore seem valuable to retain the suggestions relating to the success of this role, as noted below, for continued consideration.

- Mentors should be volunteers or willing participants fully aware of the demands of the role. Consideration should be given to the information provided to potential Mentors about the role prior to their acceptance of it. A number of Mentors in each cohort have agreed to the role without an understanding of the requirements or of the nature of the TFA Pathway.
- With due consideration of the point above, it would be preferable where possible to have a Mentor in the same subject area as the Associate they are mentoring and in geographical proximity (e.g., the same staffroom).
- Both the Mentor and the school should be able and willing to allocate sufficient time to the mentoring role, most particularly in the first two terms. Some method of reporting on the provision and use of the allocated time might be considered.

Other Support roles – the Clinical Specialist, the Training and Leadership Adviser and the Leadership Coach

- There may be scope to clarify the CS and TLA roles for those new to the position, to maintain quality and consistency of practice.
- It may be appropriate for the TLA to withhold discussions on leadership with Associates for the first semester. It may also be worth clarifying the term ‘leadership’ as it applies to classroom teaching as it may be that some reluctance on the part of Associates to engage with the Leadership Framework relates to an assumption that ‘leadership’ means taking on leadership in the wider school context, for which many feel they are not yet ready.

Aside from the issues surrounding the Associates’ initial experience of teaching, it is clear at this point that most implementation issues that remain are primarily at the school and individual level, and that they occur only in some instances. As with any program that runs across several jurisdictions and more than fifty schools and other organisations, each in its own different context, participants are likely to have quite different experiences. The support roles of Mentor, CS and TLA are perhaps most susceptible to differences in implementation. The role of the Mentor has been considered above. The formal requirements of the CS and TLA have continued to gain clarity as the program has developed; however, personnel changes, coupled with distance and part-time constraints, have an impact on the extent to which those requirements are met.

One clear indicator of the success of the implementation of the Pathway is the very high retention rate of Associates over their two-year program commitment: the issues noted here may be put in perspective by acknowledging that to date, 98 per cent of Associates across three cohorts have completed their first year, and all Associates who have completed the first year have gone on to complete the second.

Post-pathway network development

The TFA alumni program provides an ongoing network for Associates. There may be some scope for improving networks among schools and principals involved with the Pathway. One principal made the following suggestion:

There should be a network of TFA schools so that if one school is unable to employ an Associate once their 2 years is up, other schools in the program should be told so that if they have a vacancy they can invite the Associate to apply – I would love to pick up another Associate, I would definitely want the opportunity to interview them – but I need to know they are available – and they would need to know which schools are interested in them.

The same principal also commented that they would like an opportunity to meet other principals involved in the program at least annually to share experiences, they would like an opportunity to observe the Initial Intensive, and an opportunity to meet some of the people involved at TFA and at jurisdiction level.

It seems likely that facilitation of such networking, observation and sharing opportunities has the potential to strengthen relationships between the Pathway and principals (and possibly also school executive and mentor teachers), to provide further opportunities for Associates who want to remain in the classroom, and to establish a wider evaluative network of interested and experienced school personnel ‘on the ground’ who can provide valuable input and suggestions concerning the ongoing development of the Pathway.

The key question guiding the formative part of the evaluation is as follows:

Key Question 1: What are the key factors that influence success in terms of achieving initiative objectives (including identifying barriers to national implementation)?

The initiative objectives were clearly laid out in the funding agreements. The expected outcomes of the TFA Pathway were:

- a) attraction of new high-quality entrants from all disciplines to the teaching profession, and working in disadvantaged schools where they can make the greatest difference;
- b) development of a high-quality education and employment-based pathway into teaching that results in a teaching qualification for top graduates;
- c) development of a high-quality teacher-mentor workforce, able to support participating graduates;
- d) retention of a percentage of graduates in teaching beyond their two year initial commitment;
- e) development of an alumni association of graduates who will continue to contribute to education;
- f) strengthening of school and business relationships;
- g) strengthening of the connection between higher education teacher educators and schools; and
- h) improved student outcomes with a focus on measurable increases in levels of students’ academic achievement.

As an initiative of the National Partnership, the underlying basis of the TFA Pathway was to contribute to structural reforms to raise the quality of teaching in Australia. The initiative aimed to establish appropriate and high quality teacher education through an accredited clinical, employment-based pathway into teaching.

The outcomes above can be concentrated into five objectives:

1. the attraction of high-quality graduates into teaching through an employment-based pathway, adding to the quality and variety of the teaching workforce;
2. getting high-quality teachers into schools serving disadvantaged communities and achieving measurable benefits for students;
3. forging new linkages between business, government and non-government education authorities, universities and schools;
4. creating a community of future innovators and leaders for education and society with high regard for socially and educationally disadvantaged school communities; and
5. developing experienced teachers as teacher-mentors.

It is important to note that the initiative aim to establish high quality teacher education through an accredited clinical, employment-based pathway is a considerable departure from the original ‘Teach for’ model in the US, which does not itself lead to a recognised teacher qualification. The partnership between TFA and MGSE from the inception of the initiative can be seen as a significant factor contributing to the success of program establishment and delivery in Australia. The model also requires significant financial resourcing and is unlikely to have been established without a partnership between the Commonwealth and state governments.

It is also worth noting that the Australian Government objectives for the Teach for Australia program have changed over time, with more emphasis being placed on the retention of teachers beyond the life of the program and in meeting subject area shortages. Both areas create some tension for the TFA Pathway as the American model on which it is based seeks to take on high-quality graduates from any subject area who meet the program requirements, and typically requires them to teach for the two years they are in the program before the possibility of moving on to other career paths, as advocates for change and equality in education.

3.1.1. Key factors influencing the achievement of initiative objectives

1. *The attraction of high-quality graduates into teaching through an employment-based pathway, adding to the quality and variety of the teaching workforce.*

The extensive marketing, brand awareness campaigns and the graduate recruitment method has been successful in attracting high-quality applicants nationally, and from diverse backgrounds. Stakeholders also agree that the recruitment process itself is rigorous and has been successful in recruiting high-quality graduates from the applicant pool.

The TFA Pathway had the clear precedents for the recruitment model from the US and UK models, both of which are among the top ten graduate recruitment organisations, alongside companies such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte and KPMG.⁸² Teach For America candidates are also expected to pay some fees out of their own pocket.

The Teach For Australia organisation appears likely to continue the graduate recruitment success of its overseas partners: TFA has been awarded the ‘Best Graduate Development Program’ in the AAGE Graduate Recruitment Industry Awards, and this year appeared in 27th place on the list of ‘Aspirational Employers’ as voted by Australian graduates in an annual AAGE survey. Data from TFA also show that on-campus presence and targeting of specific groups (such as science and mathematics graduates) has also met with success.

The number of Associates placed in schools remains considerably lower than was first envisaged and it is clear from survey responses that about one quarter of Associates had already decided to enter teaching and nearly half may have entered teaching via a university graduate course had they not been successful in their application to TFA.⁸³

Publicly available data does not disaggregate by university course; however, data provided by MGSE allows a direct comparison between TFA Associates and MGSE MTeach Teacher Candidates in terms of academic ability. This is particularly relevant as Associates undertake an adapted version of the MTeach program. The data shows that the two groups have a similar academic ability both on entry (comparative Grade Point Average (GPA) scores) and, as shown in Table 3.1, in average performance in coursework subjects. TFA Associates have a slightly higher average and it is worth noting that they undertake their course while working in schools at 0.8 FTE, whereas MTeach students undertake their course full-time.

Table 3.1 MGSE MTeach (Secondary) and MTeach (TFA) student subject results by stream

Average subject results by stream	2010	2011	2012
Master of Teaching (Secondary)	76.0	77.4	77.0
[Total enrolment, EFTSL]	[841.0]	[890.4]	[1,268.9]
Master of Teaching (TFA)	80.4	80.0	83.9
[Total enrolment, EFTSL]	[33.75]	[63.6]	[61.3]

One of the arguments against the TFA Pathway, based on the American and UK models, is its apparent endorsement of a short-term career in schools and the expectation that many Associates, on completing the program, will leave to pursue careers in other fields. In Australia the program has been marketed to schools as a government-sponsored alternative pathway into teaching. The potential short-term aspect of the program tends to receive one of two responses from principals:

Every principal would want them on staff – but they’re not going to stay. Why do they go into the program for only 2 years? They could have applied for an ongoing position here – and if they’d got it, would have then been able to work for 6 months and then could even apply for leave without pay – they would have been in a much better position and with a guaranteed job – they should have done that at least – it would have given them options. If a majority of Associates leave after 2

⁸² In 2011-12, the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers listed Teach First at 7 and in 2012 Teach First were looking to recruit 1,040 graduates. Sourced 25 January from <http://www.top100graduateemployers.com>

⁸³ See Table 2.1

years I would change my opinion of the program – we spend a lot of resources training and supporting them – if they go it's a waste of time. Many Principals aren't far off retiring. We're looking for capable leaders of the future – looking for succession.

It's clear that the vast majority of Associates will be moving on to something else when they finish the 2 years. From a selfish point of view it's not ideal to have Associates leave after 2 years. We put a lot into them. The flip side of that is that within the 2 years we get a very positive outcome. So I'm content to continue involvement even if Associates do leave after 2 years. If Associates stay as a classroom teacher, that's a great outcome. But if they leave and, whatever they go into, they have a greater awareness of the challenges faced by schools and teachers – I think that is also a good outcome.

While it would be unwise to generalise, the second position tended to be a pragmatic response from principals in regional and remote areas, a number commenting that they had difficulty retaining other young teachers for even a year, had difficulty attracting new staff generally, or felt that the quality of other applicants was extremely low.

Of the respondents to the principal survey conducted in November 2012, 95 per cent indicated that they would like ongoing involvement in the TFA Pathway, with 100 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that their schools had benefited from the program. That said, 45 per cent indicated that they would reconsider involvement in the program if all Associates left the school after two years and 60 per cent would reconsider if all Associates left teaching after two years.

There is no doubt that principals and school personnel consider the Associates to be of a high quality and to have made a difference in the lives of students and the school, in a variety of ways. It is also clear that while school staff recognise that Associate success is due in no small part to the hard work of the Associates themselves, schools are communities and Associates would not have been as successful without the support, training and resourcing of the school communities of which they have been a part. Principals accept that they have a responsibility to support new teachers; however, many argue that it is also reasonable to expect a greater return on their investment than the two years Associates are required to spend in the classroom – if not through continuation as a teacher in their school, then at least in another school serving an educationally disadvantaged community. Given media coverage to date, it is likely that this aspect of the TFA Pathway will continue to be closely scrutinised into the future, and a high exit rate may result in some schools choosing not to partner with the Pathway.

2. Getting high-quality teachers into schools serving disadvantaged communities and achieving measurable benefits for students.

The qualitative data gained over the three-year period of the evaluation, through phone interviews with principals and Mentors, 17 school visits and interviews on site with school personnel and over 200 students does suggest that the high quality graduates selected for the TFA Pathway are gaining the skills and attributes necessary to be effective teachers. This issue is further discussed in response to Key Question 2. Due to placement issues and the ongoing lack of participation by most jurisdictions, and the level of funding set as a

result, Associate numbers (about 45 per year) are considerably lower than the 200 to 225 per year initially intended.

Experience gained in recruitment to date has allowed for greater clarity in promoting program expectations such as a willingness to be placed outside metropolitan areas, and currently about a third of Associates are placed in schools serving disadvantaged communities in regional areas. For the program to expand nationally a growing number of successful applications would be required. It is also likely that a greater number of applicants would need to be willing to take a regional or rural placement.

Associates are being placed in schools serving disadvantaged communities in both metropolitan and regional areas. Principals in some cases have noted that they generally have a small applicant pool of new teachers and the TFA Pathway has provided them with high calibre new staff. In all cases, schools have indicated that they would take another Associate if a vacancy was available, which is a strong endorsement of the program.

The data collected through this evaluation is primarily qualitative and it has not been possible to investigate in any quantitative manner the extent to which measurable benefits for students have been achieved. This issue is further discussed in response to Key Question 6.

3. Forging new linkages between business, government and non-government education authorities, universities and schools.

The Pathway is in its early days and the area of forging new linkages is not a primary focus of the evaluation. That said, the Pathway was envisaged to be national and this outcome has not been realised, nor is it likely to be in the foreseeable future. As of 2012 (Cohort 3), three government education departments were involved as well as the Catholic sector in Victoria. From 2013 (Cohort 4), the Catholic and independent sectors in the NT will be involved, and a further state government has enacted legislation to allow the TFA Pathway and may be involved in the future. As such, the TFA organisation has direct partnerships with a number of education sectors and jurisdictions. A number of businesses and organisations have offered pro bono assistance to TFA and some have partnered in the recruitment area. The Clinical Specialist working in Canberra is affiliated with an ACT university. The TFA organisation has DGR status from 2013 and this may assist them in obtaining funding from business and philanthropic organisations.

The internship model of teacher education does require the school and university to work closely to support and monitor Associates and Clinical Specialists are visiting schools regularly. In addition, Mentor teachers undertake a mentoring course at the university and they have some responsibility for the evaluation of Associates as part of the post-graduate diploma.

4. Creating a community of future innovators and leaders for education and society with high regard for socially and educationally disadvantaged school communities.

The Alumni program is in its infancy, the first cohort of Associates having only completed the course at the end of 2011, so there is little available data on this community. The Alumni program is also not a direct focus of this evaluation.

What can be said at this stage is that Associates do appear to have formed a community of practice and have been a powerful source of support and learning for each other. This may in part be due to the shared vision of redressing disadvantage and the shared practice of being an Associate during the two year program. It is also due in part to the shared experience during the Initial Intensive and the facilitation provided by TFA and MGSE in this regard. The objective of creating on-going relationships among graduates appears to be embedded in the Pathway to a greater extent than other forms of teacher preparation.

Further research would be required to gauge the impact of this community of Alumni once they have completed the two year program, and any differences there may be between those who choose to remain in the classroom or in education generally, and those who choose an alternative career. If the TFA organisation is able to leverage this community post pathway, there does seem to be potential for the community to create an impact over and above that of individual members. This appears to be the case in the UK and particularly in the US, where Teach For America alumni have gone into political careers supporting the agenda of the current education reform movement.

5. Developing experienced teachers as teacher-mentors.

In-school Mentors have previously been identified as a strength of the program; however, this is highly dependent on the knowledge and skills of individual mentors and on the strength of professional community in schools. The careful selection of experienced, enthusiastic Mentors has proven very successful for the development of the Associates and their enjoyment of the school environment and their position as a teacher. Mentors were able to augment any induction with personal introductions to the school, other staff, school policies and so on. In the most successful cases, Mentors also spent time in the classroom observing Associates, and ensured that Associates had the opportunity to observe them and other staff in the classroom.

By contrast, the few Mentors who felt that the position was something of an impost, or where relations with Associates were strained, tended to exacerbate the high levels of stress under which Associates operated in the initial stages of the program.

In general, Mentors appreciated their role and many commented that it had reinvigorated their own teaching. In supportive schools, the mentor role was well respected. In some schools, the mentor role raised awareness of the need to provide greater support to beginning teachers. As such, the mentor role has the potential to increase the support structures of a school and the level of formality and respect given to the support role. Principals and other school personnel noted that, while time consuming, which could be difficult for smaller schools, the benefits were felt by mentors and other school staff as well as Associates.

3.1.2. Barriers to national implementation

Interviews with stakeholders identified a number of factors contributing to the success of the program in its current form. Any future national expansion of the program requires consideration of likely implementation barriers, and these were also canvassed with stakeholders.

The clinical, employment-based program model is a significant departure from the traditional teacher training model. State legislation controls who is allowed to teach in schools in all sectors (government and non-government schools). The nationally consistent approach to teacher registration endorsed by Ministers in 2011 included an element for alternative authorisation which has now been implemented in most states. Queensland currently requires all teachers to have completed a qualification. Tasmania and South Australia may grant permission for an unqualified person to teach, but only where a suitable, qualified and registered teacher cannot be found.

Another potential barrier to national implementation is the location of MGSE in Victoria. ACT- and NT-based Associates reported some concerns with the extent to which their need to understand their local context was met in the Initial Intensive and the ongoing course. It is likely that MGSE staff would be more knowledgeable about Victorian requirements, and meeting the needs of a cohort of Associates due to start teaching in multiple states and territories may stretch available resources.⁸⁴ There may also be state preferences for local universities to provide the teacher education component of the program.

As the MGSE course is accredited in Victoria, Associates are restricted in the learning areas they are able to enrol in the University of Melbourne by Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) guidelines that relate to the level of previous study completed. This may be an issue in some cases where teacher registration boards or Principals in other states recognise an Associate's capacity to teach a broader array of subject areas, as is currently the case in the NT. In such instances the Associate is allowed to teach the subject, but cannot include study of the subject methodology as part of their MGSE course.

The cost of providing the current level of support to Associates through Clinical Specialists (MGSE) and Training and Leadership Advisers (TFA) may also be problematic if the program grows nationally, and particularly if numbers of schools in more remote areas are to participate.

The separation of the Educational Adviser role from the beginning of the second year has perhaps allowed MGSE and TFA to guide the work of the separate roles (CS and TLA) according to the goals and requirements of each organisation. The Associates clearly benefit from both roles because of the additional support and individual relationships that develop as a result. However, it is not clear that the two external support roles are performing entirely separate functions and the cost seems to be significantly greater for little observable additional benefit to the Associates. The provision of CSs and TLAs nationally may also be problematic while the program remains on such a small scale. These roles are important but currently tend to be part-time, and in some cases short-term, particularly outside metropolitan areas, which has the potential of making it more difficult for the Victorian-based organisations to ensure quality and consistency of experience for Associates, or to maintain relationships across overlapping two-year periods.

⁸⁴ The introduction of a national curriculum and national teacher standards may ease the extent of these differences but is unlikely to remove them, at least in the medium term.

As noted by some Program Partners, teacher union resistance also remains significant in some states. Media commentary by unions and other critics of the program highlight several contentious issues, which can be summarised briefly:

- Associates are responsible for their students after just six weeks of training and may therefore be placing the learning of their students at risk;
- The TFA Pathway is ‘de-professionalising’ in that it allows ‘unqualified’ people to practise as teachers, thereby lowering the status of the profession as a profession;
- The TFA Pathway is based on a deficit model which makes negative assumptions about teachers and students in schools serving disadvantaged communities;
- Disadvantaged students need teachers who are expert and experienced, not novices, and;
- The TFA Pathway encourages a short-term commitment to teaching of two years followed by careers and leadership goals ‘beyond’ teaching. This potentially sends a negative message about teaching as a career and infers that the ‘best’ people do not remain in the classroom.

3.2 Pathway Impacts, Outcomes and Policy Considerations

The key critical questions, as presented in the original evaluation Work Order and in the Phase 1 and 2 reports, were as follows:

- 1) What are the key factors that influence success in terms of achieving initiative objectives (including identifying barriers to national implementation)?
- 2) Is the employment-based teacher training adopted by *Teach for Australia* a cost effective approach?
- 3) Does the employment-based teacher training program, *Teach for Australia*, deliver effective teachers?
- 4) Is the *Teach for Australia* initiative helping to raise the status of the teaching profession?
- 5) What features of the *Teach for Australia* approach have a positive impact on the quality of teaching?
- 6) What impact have *Teach for Australia* Associates had on student performance in targeted schools?

Key question 1 is concerned with the formative aspect of the evaluation and is considered above. The summative questions have been further considered following the Phase 2 report and it was agreed with DEEWR to present them in a slightly different order and to reword key question 5 (which below becomes key question 6) for the Phase 3 report. The key questions discussed below are now in order as follows:

- 2) Does the employment-based teacher training program, *Teach for Australia*, deliver effective teachers?
- 3) What impact have *Teach for Australia* Associates had on student performance in targeted schools?
- 4) Is the *Teach for Australia* initiative helping to raise the status of the teaching profession?
- 5) Is the employment-based teacher training adopted by *Teach for Australia* a cost effective approach?
- 6) What features of the *Teach for Australia* approach have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and what aspects of it can inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia?

It should be noted that there are limitations to the extent to which the key critical questions can be answered via any one evaluation. In particular, it has proven difficult to reliably answer the question of whether the TFA Pathway has had an effect on teacher status. The time span covered by the evaluation is relatively short and changes to major social attitudes take more than a couple of years to manifest. In addition, there are a number of Australian initiatives designed to attract talented people to teaching and to increase its status. As such, it would be very difficult reliably to attribute any increase in the status of teaching to any one program.

3.3 Key question 2

Does the employment-based teacher training program, *Teach for Australia*, deliver effective teachers?

Views tend to be polarised in regard to one specific facet of the TFA pathway: the length of training the Associates receive. On one hand, stakeholders who support the idea of the TFA Pathway argue that training is ongoing over a two-year period. On the other hand, groups who oppose the Pathway argue that TFA Associates are actually required to perform most of the duties of a qualified, provisionally registered teacher before they have completed a course of training usually required to obtain provisional registration status. In this sense, Associates are fully responsible for their classes of students immediately following an intense initial six weeks of training.

As such, it seems appropriate to consider the effectiveness of the Associates as teachers throughout the two year course, starting from the moment they begin teaching a 0.8FTE load in Term 1 of their first year.

3.3.1. Associates' effectiveness at the start of the school year

Some school personnel who have experienced the program have suggested that the TFA Pathway is a “sink or swim” model. Nearly all Associates and Mentors, principals and other school staff acknowledge implicitly or explicitly that the first few weeks, the first term, even the first two terms, are extremely difficult for Associates.

Nearly all Associates indicated a preference for more practical elements in the Initial Intensive, a tool kit of resources and behaviour management techniques to help them ‘survive’ the first few weeks. Many Mentors and school staff suggested, or strongly argued for, a structured opportunity for Associates to visit their school prior to the start of term, to meet students, observe classes, and get a better sense of the nature of teaching and the context of the students. Some Associates and Mentors argued for a greater awareness of the contexts of disadvantage that Associates would experience in their schools – greater preparation for the challenges likely to be presented by the students they would encounter, and which are often very different from the background and circumstances of the Associates themselves and the schools they attended as students.

Schools were able to support their Associates in a variety of ways during this time and the rigorous selection of Associates appeared to be a key factor in ensuring success in the early stages: Associates had to meet an academic requirement on a par with MGSE recruits, however they also had to demonstrate (for example) resilience and communicative ability, and these skills were highly praised by school personnel.

The Pathway in its current form puts high levels of pressure on Associates initially due to their inexperience in the field and the complexity of the teacher's role. The majority of Associates not only cope, but thrive in this kind of environment, and they are generally exceptionally well supported by the school, MGSE and TFA. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether this aspect of the Pathway is necessary, nor whether such high levels of stress, and the steep learning curves involved, are desirable, or necessary attractions for high achievers.

Suggested approaches to alleviate pressure on Associates at the beginning of their placement include allowing opportunities for team teaching and allocating Associates a number of classes at the same year level, to reduce preparation time and maximise experience in classroom delivery. At least one principal participating in the TFA Pathway has suggested reforms such as reducing the MGSE workload during Term 1 and requiring Associates to spend the 0.2FTE set aside for coursework in school observing classes and learning about school-specific requirements such as report writing, school policies and programs, and so on, which are not covered in their course.

While some misgivings about Associates' first few weeks as teachers have been expressed by stakeholders there was one notable caveat and this was a favourable comparison with recent graduates. Some School Personnel indicated that Associates started slightly behind other beginning teachers but caught up well within the first one to two terms. Others indicated that they were on a par or better than graduates of other teacher education programs with which they had experience even within the first weeks.

A 2012 survey of principals involved in the Pathway asked respondents to gauge how effective Associates were in comparison with other beginning teachers, as teachers and as involved members of staff. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 show that around 70-80 per cent of principals considered Associates to be comparable with or more effective than other beginning teachers within their first six months.

Table 3.2: Principal comparison of Associates and graduate teachers as teachers

Overall, how effective would you rate Associates as teachers compared to graduate teachers with the same amount of time in your school:	Much less/a little less effective %	About the same %	More/much more effective %
In the first 6 months	30	30	40
In the first 6-12 months	5	25	70
In the second year	0	24	76

Table 3.3: Principal comparison of Associates and graduate teachers as involved members of staff

Overall, how effective would you rate Associates as involved, participating members of staff compared to graduate teachers with the same amount of time in your school:	Much less/a little less effective %	About the same %	More/much more effective %
In the first 6 months	15	50	35
In the first 6-12 months	0	40	60
In the second year	0	18	82

One principal placed this comparison in context in the following way:

Associates are two to three times better than a normal graduate – because they’ve had experience, they’re doing a masters, they’re doing leadership. They have support – the CS visits regularly. A normal graduate goes through a cultural dip – they come into a school and get set adrift – they’re expected to get on with it with little support but they also have to learn the culture of the school.

The Associates come in with more confidence, they have strong subject knowledge, they’re dedicated, they’re serious – and they have great support including the in-school mentor. There’s more of a structure around them, there’s some scaffolding that graduates don’t really get. Associates also have ongoing outside training.

Many of the schools to which Associates were assigned have often struggled to recruit high quality graduates and a number were quite forthright in noting that the quality of applications they received was generally poor. Many school personnel commented that Associates’ intellect, enthusiasm and communicative ability consistently set them apart from other first year graduates. This was also the case in schools generally able to attract a higher quality of graduate.

School personnel also noted that university courses were not always particularly relevant to classroom practice,⁸⁵ echoing a common theme in many reports on teacher education in Australia over the last 25 years.⁸⁶ Further, in their view, the required practicum element of traditional teacher education courses could be a very ‘hit and miss’ affair. University staff often had little or no direct contact with the placement schools and supervising teachers could offer highly variable experiences.⁸⁷ Research has recognised that all newly qualified teachers have a fragile repertoire of practice that needs to be trialled, reflected upon, strengthened and challenged in a positive way with guidance from a supportive professional learning community.⁸⁸ The TFA Pathway addresses many of these issues by mandating extensive external and in-school support and the continuing development of professional knowledge through the employment-based, or clinical model over a two-year period.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Anecdotally, teachers often remark that they learned how to teach by teaching. An ASPA (2007) national survey of 1351 teachers with less than three years’ service found that 60% considered preparation to teach by schools was excellent/very good compared to 40% who considered their university course to be excellent/very good (p.16).

⁸⁶ ‘Areas consistently identified as lacking among preservice and graduating teachers included classroom management skills, development of classroom resources, student assessment and reporting strategies, [...] time management skills, organisational skills, acceptable professional conduct, developing professional relationships and understanding what school communities expect.’ Education and Training Committee, 2005, p. xxi. Dinham, 2006.

⁸⁷ The ALTC report (Ure, Gough & Newton 2009) on practicum partnerships in Victoria found that providers needed to evaluate more closely the extent to which the goals of their programs were being addressed by supervising teachers, that preservice teachers were more strongly influenced by the views of supervising teachers than by the goals of providers or VIT standards and that references to the standards varied considerably and learning on placements tended to support the standards only incidentally (p. 5). See also Education and Training Committee, 2005.

⁸⁸ Anthony & Kane, 2008, p. 68; Hobson, 2009.

⁸⁹ The TFA Pathway here departs considerably from the American model, which has served as the basis for many of the arguments against the ‘Teach for’ model.

In summary, it was clear from the comments of Associates and other school personnel that in the first one to two terms Associates were not perceived, by themselves or colleagues, to be highly effective teachers. They were novices, finding their feet and requiring a significant amount of support, similar to other beginning teachers. However, very early in their experience they were not considered to be a liability and, while they were not seen to be particularly effective, they were favourably compared to other beginning teachers. They were also enthusiastic and determined contributing members of staff, and they quickly earned the respect of students and staff.

3.3.2. Associates in Term 3 of their first year

Research from the 1980s on has suggested that ‘carefully constructed field experiences can enable new teachers to reinforce, apply and synthesise concepts they are learning in their coursework’ and, further, that ‘novices who have some experience with teaching when they encounter coursework are more prepared to make sense of the ideas, theories and concepts that are addressed in their academic work’.⁹⁰

In considering the design of teacher education programs, Darling-Hammond et al. noted:

Recent research on powerful teacher education programs not only suggests that new teachers may be able to move farther along in the journey of developing as a teacher more quickly than was previously thought, but also that it is possible for new teachers to learn much more about teaching and to attend to more aspects of the classroom than previously expected.⁹¹

By the end of Term 3, Associates have had considerable classroom experience. They have also been required to deliver complete units of work within their subject areas, to assess students and write reports. They have had time to get to know their students and the requirements, policies and practices of their school. They have also received considerable feedback from a minimum of three sources⁹² who have observed their classes, and many have in addition observed other teachers. As part of their coursework, they continue to read and complete assignments requiring them to reflect on their practice and on the wider teaching context. In this way, their experience is quite different to that of pre-service teachers in other courses, and here it becomes inappropriate to look for direct comparisons with courses that do not provide a clinical practice model of training. Associates are not pre-service teachers in the traditional sense of the term. They are not seen as ‘student teachers’ by their colleagues or their students, they do not leave the school after a few weeks and, in most cases, they are participating beyond the classroom, in numerous co-curricular activities, school PD and administration tasks. The clinical model does mean that they have yet to gain their teaching qualification; however, it also means that Associates have the opportunity to practise theory, to trial new methods learned in their course immediately within classrooms where they are already known and increasingly comfortable, and where they can obtain immediate feedback from their students.

⁹⁰ Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, et al., 2005, p. 401.

⁹¹ Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, et al., 2005, p. 398.

⁹² Clinical Specialists and Training and Leadership Advisers observe once a fortnight. Most Mentors observe more regularly in the first term. In addition, teachers in the same KLA may also observe, or team teach with Associates.

In addition, Associates are regularly observed and, in most cases, are able to use their CS, TLA, Mentor and/or other colleagues within their KLA to discuss issues as they arise. While this is not the traditional model of supervision, as Associates are not engaged in supervised *practice* (they are responsible for the students in their classes), it is clear that schools, MGSE and TFA are very quickly aware of any issues that arise and are able to provide the necessary support to enable the Associate to learn through the experience and acquire the requisite skills.

Only in one or two cases have Associates struggled and required additional assistance to manage their classrooms. In most cases, school personnel, based on their own observations, felt that Associates were at least as competent as any other beginning teacher and often much more so.

3.3.3. Associates in their second year

Evidence provided by school personnel suggests that in their second year the majority of Associates were considered to be the same as other teachers in the school: not the worst and while not as experienced as the best, certainly highly regarded. Associates themselves were considerably more confident than in their first year. None reported major issues with behaviour management and most were concentrating on the specifics of their curriculum areas and assessment. Their mentor relationships had become largely collegial sharing between peers and school personnel indicated that Associates had no professional development needs beyond those of other graduate teachers.

In the second year, the fact that Associates are still undertaking their qualification can be viewed as providing the potential to ensure their development as high quality practitioners. On entering their first school, graduate teachers must find their feet with new students, new classes and new colleagues. They have generally never taken an entire unit, never assessed several classes of students, may never have taught a given year level, and have never written reports. Their access to PD is often piecemeal and may not meet their needs and they may have little time to reflect on their practice or observe other teachers. Associates, on the other hand, are already well established in their school, they know their environment and the context of their students, and they know their colleagues. At the same time, they continue to have the support of MGSE lecturers and Clinical Specialists, as well as the TFA Training and Leadership Adviser and they are still regularly observed. They have the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of theories, of methods of assessment, of differentiating, of behaviour management techniques, and to put these into practice immediately, ask questions and obtain feedback from both experienced teachers, lecturers and their students.

This is demonstrated in part by the fact that Associates in Victoria who successfully graduate from their course are at the same time eligible to apply to VIT for full registration, while other graduates must generally teach for at least a year before they become eligible.

The scope of this evaluation did not extend to assessing Associates' effectiveness using purpose-designed performance assessments or other means such as direct classroom observation by trained observers.⁹³ Answers to the question: *Does the employment-based teacher training program, Teach for Australia, deliver effective teachers?* have therefore been inferred on the basis of the Associates' satisfying the requirements of the MGSE course, on their own perceptions of efficacy, on the perceptions of their Mentors, colleagues and principals, many of whom had spent time observing Associates in their classrooms over the two year period, and also on the perceptions of the CS and TLA, experienced teachers and teacher educators who had also observed Associates in the classroom over the two year period.

Given the highly positive nature of these perceptions, it can be said that Associates are generally considered to be effective teachers within their first year, and increasingly effective in their second year. Their effectiveness is also developed within highly supportive contexts, and this support is crucial to the success of the Pathway, particularly in the first one to two terms.

It appears likely that the effectiveness of TFA Associates in their second year would compare with that of Teach First teachers in the UK, whose classroom teaching was observed and analysed using the International Systematic Teacher Observation Framework (ISTOF) observation schedule, an instrument developed to measure observable classroom behaviours consistent with effective teaching. The results of this exercise showed that Teach First teachers in their second year compared favourably with an international sample of experienced as well as less experienced teachers. They rated highly on classroom management and instructional skills. Their lessons were well prepared and well paced, and pupils were engaged, with time on task levels of over 84 per cent in all cases. Overall, the standard of teaching by Teach First teachers observed was good to excellent as evidenced by the ISTOF rating means being above 3 or 4.⁹⁴

3.4 Key question 3

What impact have *Teach for Australia* Associates had on student performance in targeted schools?

This is a difficult question and has only been possible to address in partial, anecdotal ways. Generally, when student performance data is requested, the intent is to look at quantitative evidence that students have progressed within a given subject. Standardised testing such as NAPLAN is not available in all subjects and forms of assessment differ from school to school, particularly in the lower year levels.

Recent literature on student achievement attempts to control for teacher 'value add' as there is increasing recognition that student performance indicators alone are not valid indicators of the quality of an individual teacher. The general consensus in the research literature is that value-added methods of calculating the effects of *individual* teachers' work on student learning are not yet sufficiently robust to support high-stakes inferences to be made about *individual* teachers' impact on student achievement. In 2010 a group of ten distinguished American educators convened by the Economic Policy Institute pointed to

⁹³ See House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, p. 7, Ingvarson, Beavis et. al., 2005, and Ingvarson, Beavis, Danielson et al. 2005.

⁹⁴ Muijs et al. 2010, pp. 20-25.

the broad agreement among statisticians, psychometricians and economists that even when the most sophisticated statistical processes are employed, student test scores are not sufficiently reliable and valid indicators of individual teacher impact.⁹⁵ It has been documented in a longitudinal study that a teacher who gets top results one year may get much lower results the next year. Nor is it the case that teachers work in a vacuum: they share materials and knowledge about students; the morale and enthusiasm of one teacher may affect other teachers and students, as can the leadership of the principal and the culture and atmosphere of the school as a whole.

Recent studies that have sought to determine the impact of Teach For America teachers on student performance have produced mixed results. While some studies show that students of TFA teachers perform better on standardised tests,⁹⁶ others show less positive results.⁹⁷ It is clear, however, that, in common with most teachers, the effectiveness of Teach For America teachers improves if they stay in the classroom beyond their two-year requirement.⁹⁸

In conducting the TFA Pathway school case studies, quantitative evidence was sought about the impact of Associates, but schools were only able to provide partial and incomplete data. In every school visit school personnel shared success stories during interviews and many of the students who participated in focus groups also made comments that made it clear that the Associates had had a positive impact on them. Several principals noted that Associates were intelligent and gifted communicators and had changed the quality of staffroom discussion about teaching. Associates brought with them a depth of knowledge about their field, knowledge about ICT and methods (such as in assessment) from MGSE that Mentors and colleagues noted had challenged and changed aspects of their practice. Several principals noted that student scores in specific subject areas in which Associates were working had risen in comparison with previous years.

Schools also operate in highly different contexts. In some cases, a valid ‘impact’ on student performance is increasing attendance rates. Successful impacts on students often depend on the quality of interaction and relationships with the students. Again, in most cases, students and staff at schools reported that students liked and respected Associates.

Associates themselves reported that their view of what it meant to ‘make a difference’ changed with experience. They were often surprised by student culture and expectations, and lack of academic ambition. Some felt that their impact tended to be at a more personal level, a role model that could expand student horizons, and to which students could relate as the majority of Associates are quite young. Many Associates also recognised that they were part of a community and in this way, it is difficult to gauge the kind of impacts Associate activity outside the classroom may have had on students, as many Associates were involved in, started or lead clubs and activities, and many took on leadership roles within the school.

⁹⁵ Baker et al. 2010

⁹⁶ See e.g. Decker, Mayer & Glazerman, 2004; Xu & Hannaway, 2007

⁹⁷ See e.g. Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gaitlin & Heilig, 2005; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002

⁹⁸ Boyd et al, 2006; Kane et al. 2006; Decker, et al. 2004.; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005.

The difficulty in this question is the implied ‘in comparison to’. There is no doubt that Associates have had an impact on the students in their care, just as all teachers have an impact, and the evidence gathered from school personnel, students and the reflections of the Associates themselves is that those impacts were positive and covered the relational, aspirational and academic spectrum.

3.5 Key question 4

Is the *Teach for Australia* initiative helping to raise the status of the teaching profession?

This particular question was a part of the research brief although it should be noted that it is not one of the contractual outcomes of the Pathway. Consideration of this question involves a move away from the evaluation of the many elements of the TFA Pathway. It involves taking a step back, away from the administration of the program and from perceptions of the program itself, to a consideration of the perception of teaching as a profession and the perception of teaching by society.

As such, the first point to make is that the TFA initiative has not been long enough established, and is not a large enough provider, to have made any discernible impact on the status of the teaching profession in Australia overall. It may be some years before any change in status can be detected, and even then it may be difficult to ascertain the extent to which the TFA initiative may be said to have any responsibility for that change.

The existence of the TFA initiative itself potentially calls into question the status of the teaching profession. That is, if teaching was a high status profession, with attendant benefits, it is arguable that there would be no need for the TFA initiative. Teacher education courses would already attract high achievers and all schools would have teachers who were highly academically capable professionals, including schools serving disadvantaged communities. There would be no need for TFA’s mission, and it is likely that schools with disadvantaged students would instead be looking to attract the most experienced career teachers to assist with reducing that disadvantage rather than teachers at the beginning of their careers as is often the case at present.

It is understandable, therefore, that some teachers see an implied criticism in the TFA initiative – that the teachers currently in schools in disadvantaged areas are not good enough, do not have a mission, and lack the desire or the ability to effect change. From this perspective there is a sense that Associates are encouraged to see themselves as a clique of high achievers who will be able to turn around the fortunes of the students and the school community through their knowledge, experience, dedication and leadership, before moving on to more lucrative positions after their two years of service. There is potential for such views to alienate teachers in placement schools and some Associates, particularly those going into schools new to the program, were considerably concerned about the kind of reception they would receive at their schools.

Schools in this project, whatever their doubts, have tended not to take such views, but rather to see the Pathway as an alternative teacher education program and as an additional means of recruitment. Many principals indicated that they struggled to recruit suitable teachers and that the Associates complemented the dedicated staff already in the school. The majority of Associates have generally shown themselves to be team players and

excellent communicators. Although some teachers expressed scepticism based on their initial understanding of the Pathway, these doubts were quickly dispelled by the quality, dedication and enthusiasm of the individual Associates with whom they worked.

Seen another way, the TFA initiative depends upon the perception that there are not enough qualified, experienced teachers available and willing to work in schools serving disadvantaged communities. Teacher workforce data show that there are shortages in some areas (such as STEM fields). This may suggest that the status of teaching as a career is seen to be lower by graduates in these fields than by graduates in other areas, although it is also the case that there are fewer students pursuing degrees in these subjects than in other subject areas at university level. Shortages in other fields tend to be faced by schools in regional, rural and remote areas, and this is not necessarily an indication of the status of the teaching profession, but rather the perception of geographic location. This discrimination by geographic location is also demonstrated in the TFA Pathway, where, despite attempts to highlight the need and the program's specific mission to educationally disadvantaged communities, a number of successful candidates seem to be unwilling to relocate to a regional or rural area.

There is a further negative argument: that the TFA initiative calls into question the professional status of teaching, the need to be in possession of a complex body of professional knowledge and skills that take years of university study and supervised practice to acquire. This is based primarily on criticisms of the Teach for America model and the fact that Associates in the TFA Pathway become practising teachers after an initial six weeks of training. A reasonable counter-argument is that the Australian 'Teach for' model is primarily an employment-based pathway with rigorous requirements and support over two years, and the evidence suggests that as a training model it has been successful.

Participants have raised concerns about Associates' lack of opportunity to observe teachers and to experience supervised classroom practice prior to entering the classroom as the responsible teacher and this issue is considered in the discussion on Key Question 2. There are many positives as well. It is reasonable to point out here that elements of the TFA Pathway (particularly the levels of support the Associates receive, the rigorous selection process and the clinical model which seeks to integrate theory with practice) successfully address many concerns that have been noted in the literature on traditional teacher education programs such as the common lack of goals and standards in the traditional practicum,⁹⁹ the brevity of the practicum, the level and extent of knowledge imparted in some one year diplomas and the low academic entry standards for some programs.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ The ALTC report (Ure, Gough and Newton 2009) on practicum partnerships in Victoria found that providers needed to evaluate more closely the extent to which the goals of their programs were being addressed by supervising teachers, that preservice teachers were more strongly influenced by the views of supervising teachers than by the goals of providers or VIT standards and that references to the standards varied considerably and learning on placements tended to support the standards only incidentally (p. 5).

¹⁰⁰ VTAC 2011 and 2012 Round 1 ATAR clearly-in data: University of Ballarat, Mt Helens, Science/Education (52.20 in 2011, 47.2 in 2012); Victoria University, St Albans, Education P-12 (58.10 in 2011, 53.3 in 2012); Melbourne Institute of Technology, Education P-10 (51.05 in 2011).

A further consideration has to do with the decision of high achieving graduates to enter teaching. The TFA Pathway quite specifically targets top tier university graduates and comparable models in the US and the UK¹⁰¹ are among the top ten graduate employers in their respective countries.¹⁰² Is the TFA Pathway raising the status of teaching as a profession worthy of consideration by such graduates?

At this stage the evidence is not clear. About half of Associates in Cohorts 1 and 2 who responded to the online survey indicated that they had considered teaching at some stage in the future and that the TFA Pathway brought these plans forward. Over 40 per cent of respondents would have considered a traditional teacher education pathway had they not been successful and 20 per cent had already decided to enter teaching. About half of respondents considered participation in the program to be of value for a future career beyond teaching.

The majority of Associates indicated they were attracted to the program because they wanted to contribute to reducing educational disadvantage. This is a clear focus of the TFA Pathway. It can be argued that any other teacher education program offers the same opportunity as all of them enable a person to train as a teacher and look for work in a disadvantaged setting; however, anecdotally, high performing teacher graduates tend to be recruited by well-regarded schools serving more affluent areas, and disadvantaged schools are not able to offer incentives to encourage such graduates.

Over one-third of successful candidates were high achievers in STEM fields such as physics, engineering and mathematics. Table 3.4 shows that the attraction of the TFA Pathway was much the same as for those with degrees in other areas, suggesting that the level of interest from STEM graduates was a product of the specific focus on these discipline areas rather than any differences between high achieving graduates in different disciplines. However, it does seem likely that the marketing of the TFA program is encouraging graduates in areas of shortage to consider both teaching as a career and teaching in schools that (according to their principals) often do not have access to high quality graduates. As a comparison, MGSE report that 43 per cent (200 students) of enrolments in the Master of Teaching Secondary for 2013 have at least one STEM subject. As such, the TFA Pathway is not unique in its ability to attract high quality graduates in shortage areas.

Table 3.4: What did you find attractive about the Teach for Australia Pathway?

	Percentage agreeing			
	Cohort 1 2010 %	Cohort 2 2011 %	C 1 & 2 with STEM degree %	C 1 & 2 without STEM degree %
Contribute to reducing educational disadvantage	72	88	75	82
Opportunity to earn a salary while training	64	71	55	72

¹⁰¹ Teach for America and Teach First. They are not comparable models in terms of teacher education, however they are in terms of their rigorous graduate recruitment process and targeting of top university graduates.

¹⁰² The UK-based Times Top 100 Graduate Employers is an annual list now in its thirtieth year. It is based on face-to-face interviews with graduates who answer the open-ended question 'Which employer do you think offers the best opportunities for graduates?' The 2011-12 list was compiled from interviews with over 17,000 students who graduated in the summer of 2011. See <http://www.top100graduateemployers.com/>

Go straight into teaching without further fulltime study	61	68	60	66
TFA made me want to teach now	47	59	60	50
Participation of value for future career, beyond teaching	47	56	45	54
Consider traditional program?	42	49	50	43
Had decided to enter teaching	19	21	15	22

Labaree notes that ‘TFA[America] has managed to accomplish “the impossible”, which is to make teaching enormously attractive to a large number of people who have attractive career options.’ He suggests that:

*It is especially nice to have a high-powered program, with a lot of marketing muscle and with the ear of those in economic and political positions of power, which works aggressively and successfully to convince the public that teaching is an incredibly important profession and that we need our best people carrying it out.*¹⁰³

Labaree goes on to note that up to two-thirds of US alumni continue to hold a role in education after their two-year term, and half of those who choose to remain do so as classroom teachers. Those who move into other careers carry their experience of the classroom with them and may ‘become informed advocates for the educational enterprise’.¹⁰⁴

Arguably, the marketing of the TFA Pathway and its mission is the primary attraction for a number of Associates, rather than teaching per se. It is the challenge and exclusivity of the program and its altruistic mission to reduce educational disadvantage that initially appeals, and the associated program benefits provide a supporting argument (such as the high quality support and education, the immediacy of the ‘hands-on’ employment-based approach, and the guaranteed salary). Thus, it is the status and nature of the TFA Pathway rather than the status of teaching or of traditional teacher education programs that is the drawcard.

As such, the TFA Pathway does appear to make teaching more attractive to high achievers, and in this it succeeds at one of its aims. It seems unlikely that this attraction will make teaching more attractive outside the group at which it is aimed, nor does it seem likely on the whole that those who are unsuccessful in their application will turn to other pathways in order to explore a teaching career. That said, if the TFA Pathway is popular enough to raise the profile of teaching as a *potential* career path amongst high achievers, that higher profile may create interest where before there was none.

As Labaree implies above, the TFA Pathway may have some lessons, if not in raising the status of teaching overall, then certainly (for traditional pathways) in how to market the attractiveness of teaching as a potential career, particularly in the eyes of highly achieving young people with a wide array of options.

¹⁰³ Labaree, 2010, p. 51.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

3.6 Key question 5

Is the employment-based teacher training adopted by *Teach for Australia* a cost effective approach?

Cost-effectiveness analysis is difficult in a complex program like the TFA Pathway. The obvious comparison is with other pathways into teaching. The main intended outcome is the same: a qualified teacher in the classroom. If this outcome is the only benefit to be considered then clearly the TFA Pathway is considerably more expensive than its traditional counterparts. Such an analysis would be overly simplistic.

The cost of producing an effective, qualified teacher is obviously one outcome where comparisons can be made, yet even here, the qualitative nature of the outcome and the dearth of available data differentiating traditional programs in some aspects of that outcome make even this area difficult to analyse.

The analysis of teacher effectiveness is a controversial issue, as is analysing the links between different forms of preparation and teachers' impact in schools. Many factors other than the skill and knowledge of a teacher can impact on student outcomes, and these are not easily accounted for. In disadvantaged schools in particular, getting a student to attend school regularly and engage in a subject may be a considerable achievement and one that conventional measures of academic achievement do not necessarily account for.

A reasonable consideration of teacher retention would need to take into account the attrition rate of graduates from other programs on completion of their qualification and in their first five years of teaching, given that Associates have already been teaching (a 0.8 FTE load) for two years prior to graduation.

There is some limited data on graduate teacher retention in Australia; however, there is little disaggregation. A reasonable comparison would have to ask how the graduate retention and attrition rate differs across different teacher education courses, school levels (primary and secondary), school SES, metropolitan and regional areas, hard-to-staff schools and specialised subject areas with ongoing teacher shortages. These data are not available and without such comparisons any commentary on the potential of the TFA Pathway to produce career educators in comparison with other pathways is flawed. In addition, TFA has not been operating long enough for retention data post-course to be robust.

Due to the lack of comparative data on the outcomes of teacher education courses in terms of teacher effectiveness and teacher retention, it was not possible to conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of the Pathway. Rather, the approach taken was to detail its relative costs and provide stakeholders' views about outcomes.

The costs of the various components of the Teach for Australia Pathway were presented in some detail in the Phase 2 report alongside an attempt to identify comparable elements within traditional pathways.¹⁰⁵ The issue is that many of the elements are not easily comparable as they are optional and do not affect all pre-service teachers.

¹⁰⁵ See Weldon, et al. (2012), pp. 52-55 and particularly Table 3.1 and notes, p.54.

For example, the TFA Pathway specifically aims to achieve a quota of applicants and participants from specialist subject areas where there are shortages, such as mathematics and physics. The TFA Pathway also deliberately places Associates in schools serving educationally disadvantaged communities, including hard-to-staff schools and schools in regional, rural and remote areas.

University teacher education pathways are not required or funded to achieve either of these objectives and their students do not teach in a school except under supervision. The only feasible way to compare university programs in these areas is to consider optional, state-based incentives such as scholarships for graduates in shortage subjects, university partnerships with schools in rural and remote areas (which tend to attract limited funds for the university/schools or for interested teacher candidates), or graduate teachers choosing to teach in hard-to-staff or low SES schools. While they are not yet qualified, TFA Associates are also not ‘pre-service’ in the usual sense as they are paid a salary and take on most of the responsibilities of a qualified teacher. In this sense, it is very difficult to compare a university ‘pre-service’ teacher with an ‘in-service’ Associate undertaking an employment-based education pathway.

As such, this report presents the cost of a university teacher education pathway as an approximate cost of producing a qualified teacher, not so much as a point of comparison but rather as a base cost of current practice. The costs of each element of the TFA Pathway are then presented so that the extra costs relating to the additional provisions of the Pathway are clarified, followed by a discussion of stakeholder views of each element.

3.6.1. The cost of a traditional teacher education pathway

The traditional teacher education pathways most relevant for consideration here are those that may be undertaken by graduates (rather than four-year undergraduate programs), as the TFA Pathway draws from the same potential pool of candidates: those who have completed an undergraduate program of study. Table 3.5 shows a selection of courses available in Victoria. Costs are similar across Australia and the Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) funding for domestic students is the same for all education courses, at \$9,512 (in 2012 figures) per annum (or 1.0 Full Time Equivalent Student Load - EFTSL).

Table 3.5: Indicative cost of post-graduate teacher education programs

(2012 figures)	EFTSL	Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP)		Domestic full-fee Student pays
		Student pays ^a	Commonwealth pays ^b	
Deakin Graduate Diploma ^c	1.5	\$8,472	\$14,268	\$22,470
Deakin Master of Teaching	2.0	\$11,296	\$19,024	\$29,960
Monash Graduate Diploma ^d	1.25	\$7,060	\$11,890	\$20,725
MGSE Graduate Diploma ^e	1.5	\$8,472	\$14,268	\$29,376
MGSE Master of Teaching	2.0	\$11,296	\$19,024	\$39,168

Notes to Table 3.1:

^a CSP student contributions based on 2012 maximum annual contribution for a 1.0 EFTSL place in an Education course of \$5,648. Sourced 3 February 2012 from

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Resources/Documents/Rates2012.pdf>

^b Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding cluster amounts 2012, sourced 3 February from

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Resources/Documents/Rates2012.pdf> The figures in the table are based on a per annum rate for funding cluster 4. Education, at \$9,512 and are indicative only.

^c Deakin figures based on details sourced 3 February 2012 from <http://www.deakin.edu.au/future-students/courses/course.php?course=E760&stutype=local&continue=Continue#FEES-CHARGES> and on the basis of 8 credit points = 1.0 EFTSL, Grad Dip is 12 credit points or 1.5 EFTSL, Master of Teaching is 12 credit points or 2.0 EFTSL.

^d Monash figures based on details sourced 3 February 2012 from

<http://www.monash.edu/study/coursefinder/course/1737/> and on the basis of 48 credit points = 1.0 EFTSL and the Grad Dip is 60 credit points (1.25 EFTSL) completed in 1 year.

^e MGSE figures based on details sourced 3 February 2012 from

http://futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/admissions/fees/graduate-domestic-students/aust-fee-place-fees/australian_graduate_fees_table_2012 and on the basis of 100 credit points = 1.0 EFTSL and the Grad Dip is 150 credit points (1.5 EFTSL) completed in 1 year.

On the basis of the above table and taking as an average a 1.5 EFTSL course, the cost to government of training 50 teachers would be approximately \$713,400 and the cost to students would be a maximum of \$423,600. The total cost of training would be about \$1.14m.

This is the base cost of training. The base cost includes the university course. It does not include the additional costs to schools of the practicum component of the course, any school-based coordination and the role of the supervising teacher. It does not take into account student living costs and the cost to government of additional support provided to some students such as Youth Allowance and Rent Allowance, Fares Allowance, Low Income Health Care Card, Relocation Scholarships and others. It is also unable to take into account state-based incentives such as the Teaching Scholarship in Victoria, where graduates in subject shortage areas who secure a position in a priority school receive a scholarship of up to \$11,000.¹⁰⁶

In order to provide a reasonable comparison with the TFA Pathway, the costs and impacts of these additional areas would need to be considered as they (partially) relate to some of the additional costs incurred (and outcomes obtained) by the nature of the TFA Pathway.¹⁰⁷ There are other elements of the TFA Pathway which equally would need to be taken into account, but have no real counterpart in traditional pathways. Examples are the graduate recruitment program and the employment basis of the pathway, which means that successful applicants teach and earn a salary over the two year program, whereas successful applicants to other programs are not available in the same way to schools for one to two years, requiring another teacher to fill the vacancy an Associate can fill immediately. This is an important difference between the Pathway and other programs.

¹⁰⁶ Sourced January 2013 from

http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/hr/recruit/Teach/Scholarship_Categories_-_Teaching_Scholarship.pdf and

http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/hr/recruit/Teach/Selection_Process_and_Conditions-Teaching_Scholarships.pdf

¹⁰⁷ For example, a number of Associates would have been eligible to receive the Victorian Teaching Scholarship had they graduated through a traditional program and accepted employment in the same school in which they were placed.

3.6.2. The cost of the TFA Pathway

In terms of financing, the TFA Pathway can be split into two sections: funding provided by the federal government; and funding provided by the states.¹⁰⁸ The Pathway can be further split into three sections containing six distinct elements, as shown in Figure 3.1.

Source	Pre-Pathway (1 year)	Pathway (2 years)	Post-Pathway (ongoing)
Federal funding	(a) National Coordinating Role (TFA)		
	(b) Recruitment (TFA)	(d) Community and Leadership (TFA)	(f) Alumni (TFA)
		(c) Teacher education and Mentor training (MGSE)	
State funding		(e) Associate salary ¹⁰⁹ Mentor time release	

Figure 3.1: The funding of elements of the TFA Pathway

Briefly the funding situation is as follows (the letters refer to the elements of Figure 3.1):

- (a) the TFA organisation is responsible for the national coordination of the new Pathway into teaching.
- (b) TFA is also responsible for recruiting high achieving graduates to the program, which it does in the year prior to the Pathway commencing.
- (c) The Pathway itself commences with the Initial Intensive and continues for two full school years, ending with successful Associates obtaining a postgraduate diploma in teaching and full registration as a teacher.¹¹⁰ The VIT-registered teacher education course is provided by MGSE, based on their MTeach course. MGSE also provide a five-day training course for Mentors.
- (d) TFA supports Associates in a variety of ways, encourages the development of a community of practice and develops the leadership potential of Associates.
- (e) During their two years, Associates receive a salary and an in-school Mentor receives some time-release to provide support.
- (f) On completion of the Pathway, Associates then become alumni, an element managed by TFA.

The cost of each of these elements and how they fit into the whole experience is considered below, with the exception of (a), which is not part of this evaluation. It is appropriate firstly to consider the full funding provided to the TFA Pathway and some caveats around the scope of the analysis.

¹⁰⁸ Funding is provided by the states to government schools involved in the program. Non-government schools (currently Catholic schools in Victoria) provide funding for Associate and Mentor time release.

¹⁰⁹ In Victorian government schools, the school pays 0.8FTE of the Associates' salary out of their budget, while the 0.2FTE time release for ongoing study is paid by the central department. Mentor time release is also paid for centrally.

¹¹⁰ Associates in Victoria initially receive Permission to Teach (PTT) for two years. During their second year they are able to complete the requirements of full registration with the VIT. Other states may have different requirements and Associates in Victoria can choose to register provisionally or not at all if they do not intend to continue teaching.

The funding provided by the Australian Government is a matter of public record.¹¹¹ At the inception of the program, funding was allocated for two cohorts of up to 90 Associates each over two years, at (excl. GST):

Teach for Australia:	up to \$13,800,000
University of Melbourne:	up to \$8,199,913

These figures represent the total Australian Government funding for the period of this report, and includes fixed as well as variable costs. Contracts were varied in early 2011 to enable a third cohort to participate with no additional Commonwealth funding.¹¹²

A significant proportion of the funding provided to TFA includes start-up costs and administrative costs likely to be incurred by any program at its inception and fundamental to the successful fulfilment of contractual obligations. These include, for example:

- The national coordinating role, including school engagement conferences, the development of an engagement strategy, interstate travel, some marketing, media monitoring and brand development;
- Infrastructure: general office furniture, computer hardware and software;
- Initial set up of a website and online presence (e.g. Facebook, Youtube);
- The initial design of the national recruitment process;
- State-based roles consulting and in advocacy to develop and deliver services in states other than Victoria;
- Company administration (e.g. internal recruitment, insurance, book keeping, etc.).

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to consider the effectiveness of these elements in any but the most general terms.

Funding has also been provided by state governments for participating government schools in their jurisdictions, and by the Catholic sector for their participating schools. This funding is considered alongside the teacher education element of the Pathway.

Table 3.6 estimates the approximate current costs of the TFA Pathway based on the recruitment and course completion of 50 TFA Associates. The table is a tool to enable cost disaggregation and to present clearly the method by which the cost per-Associate has been estimated. The figures should be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes provided below the table. The cost and perceived effectiveness of each element are further discussed below, followed by an overview of the Pathway as a whole.

¹¹¹ See e.g. Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Questions on Notice, Supplementary Estimates 2009-10, DEEWR Question No. EW445_10, Available from http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/estimates/sup_0910/answers/EW445_10.pdf and DEEWR Question No. EW0931_10. Available from http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/estimates/add_0910/answers/EW0931_10.pdf

¹¹² Additional funding has been granted by the Australian government for the continuation of the program to (and including) Cohort 5. Consideration of this funding is beyond the scope of this report.

Table 3.6: Indicative cost of the TFA Pathway

Approximate cost of 50 Teach for Australia Associates over two years	\$
Recruitment @ \$15,000 per Associate ^a	750,000
Teacher Education over 2 years (including accommodation for residential intensives) ^b @ \$38,200	1,910,000
Assume 40 Mentors undertake Mentor Course ^c @ \$4,900	245,000
Mentor at 0.1FTE 1 st year, 0.05FTE 2 nd year ^e @ \$10,500	525,000
Clinical Specialist at approx 1:15 Associates ^f = 3.3 @ \$126,000	415,800
TFA Leadership program and Training and Leadership Adviser @ \$22,000	1,100,000
Total	4,945,800

Notes to Table 3.6:

a. Based on figures provided by TFA.

b. Cost of MGSE Dip Ed (TFA) is indicative and averaged based on disaggregated figures provided by MGSE.

c. Indicative figure. Currently the Mentor to Associate ratio is 1:1. As the program is repeated in schools over time, it can be assumed that some Mentors will already have been trained. The additional costs of CRTs, travel and accommodation for mentors attending the course are not included.

e. Mentor salary cost is based on a teacher earning \$70-\$80,000. Indicative cost only.

f. Clinical Specialist costs are based on 1.0 FTE salary equivalent and travel costs provided by MGSE.

3.6.3. Attraction and recruitment

Recruitment is the responsibility of the TFA organisation and incurs costs of approximately \$1m per cohort in 2011 figures. Included in a breakdown of costs, in order of expense, are:

- Salary and employment costs 60-70%,
- Marketing and advertising 7-20%,
- Department occupancy cost and office expenses 6-7%,
- Online recruitment platform and IT expenses 6-7%,
- Travel 5%, and
- Applicant, offeree and Associate travel 2-4%.

The cost-effectiveness of the recruitment process is a difficult area in which to provide meaningful comparisons. Deloitte make the point that for many organisations a substantial monetary investment is necessary to recruit high-quality applicants:

Attracting the best talent is difficult. Larger organisations spend substantial funds on the graduate recruitment process to attract the best applicants. This investment,

*together with their powerful international brands, means that many smaller organisations are resigned to accessing the next tier of graduates.*¹¹³

The Teacher Supply and Demand Report for DEECD in 2009 noted that the average ENTER score in undergraduate applications for teaching courses in Victoria in 2004 was 76.7.¹¹⁴ Since then, average scores have declined and in 2009 the average had dropped over 10 per cent to 68.8. However, this data does not disaggregate to individual university courses and does not include graduate courses, which tend to produce more secondary teachers. Data from MGSE clearly show that current, well regarded graduate university courses are capable of attracting high-quality graduates into teaching, on a par academically with those attracted through the TFA Pathway. In 2010, the median Grade Point Average (GPA) for 45 TFA Associates was 5.93. The median GPA for 720 MGSE Teacher Candidates was 5.45.

There are costs involved in recruitment at both university and school levels: universities must market their courses and their 'brand' and maintain information in websites and other sources. Employers at jurisdiction level may also maintain websites for vacancies and recruitment, and schools bear some of the costs of advertising and the time involved in the recruitment process for interviews and administration. It is likely that costs across schools and universities may differ considerably. There is no disaggregated publicly available data enabling the cost of teacher recruitment to be estimated, and outcomes are also likely to differ considerably among schools and institutions, and metropolitan and regional areas.

A general comparison of the cost of graduate recruitment programs (outside education) can be made using surveys of graduate employers in Australia. The 2011 Graduate Outlook Survey examined graduate recruitment practices and trends from the perspective of graduate employers in Australasia.¹¹⁵ The survey asked employers how much their organisation spent on graduate recruitment in 2011, including advertising, other promotional expenses and salaries for those involved in the graduate recruitment process. Larger employers (more than 500 employees) reported a median per capita cost of \$3,000 and a median total cost of \$75,000. However, the 2012 annual employer survey undertaken by the Australian Association of Graduate Employers (AAGE)¹¹⁶ surveyed 166 employers and provided a more nuanced consideration of costs. The AAGE survey noted:

- The median cost per joiner was \$7,100, for 8 per cent the cost was between \$20,001-\$30,000 and for a further 12 per cent the cost was more than \$30,000;
- The most expensive new joiners tend to be recruited into smaller organisations: the median cost per joiner for organisations with 500 or less staff was \$10,100;
- Employers have, on average, received 800 applications in 2011, 29 per cent received between 501-1,000 applications, 30 per cent received between 1,001-5000 applications and 8 per cent received more than 5,000 applications;

¹¹³ Sourced 6 January 2012 from

http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_AU/au/services/assurance/advisoryservices/Compliance/2e123bff6cde4210YgnVCM100000ba42f00aRCRD.htm

¹¹⁴ DEECD, 2010.

¹¹⁵ Graduate Careers Australia, 2012. Sourced 7 February from http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/GOS11_Report_FINAL.pdf

¹¹⁶ AAGE, 2012. (ACER gratefully acknowledges AAGE's provision of the AAGE 2012 Employer Graduate Survey. Further details are available from http://www.aage.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74&Itemid=64).

- The median number of staff working in graduate recruitment in 2011 was 1.5 FTE, and 11 per cent of respondents had six or more graduate recruitment team members;
- The median salary expenditure on recruitment teams was \$100,000, 30 per cent of respondents spent between \$100,000 and \$250,000 and a further 18 per cent spent more than \$250,000;
- Employers spent a median of \$28,500 on graduate recruitment marketing, 22 per cent spent between \$50,001 and \$100,000 and 12 per cent spent more than \$100,000;

Based on 2010 figures, the cost to TFA of recruitment per joiner (Applicant accepting an offered place) is about \$15,000 (this cost is included in Table 3.5). This cost is primarily due to the high number of staff working in recruitment at TFA, which averaged 8.5 FTE in 2010.

The recruitment process targets personal qualities such as resilience and leadership. There has been a very high retention rate (over 98 per cent) within the program to date, despite the acknowledged challenges,¹¹⁷ and over 60 per cent of Associates were in leadership roles by their second year.

Despite its success, this method of recruitment may be considered very costly given the very small numbers of Associates involved and the ability of high-quality university programs to attract applicants of a similar quality and ability. It is also unclear from the available literature that there would be significant savings in the area of recruitment should the program be scaled up.

3.6.4. Placement

The specific focus of the TFA Pathway, beyond getting top tier graduates into teaching, is placing them into schools serving disadvantaged communities. The process and timing of placement continues to be problematic as it differs significantly from the timing of recruitment. Successful applicants often have to wait several months before a placement is confirmed and final confirmation can come just prior to the Initial Intensive. There is steady attrition of successful applicants prior to placement as a result.

Late placement also places considerable strain on MGSE resourcing and this is compounded by the size of the program. In a larger program, one or two people more or less in a subject stream would make no difference. As it is, contracting a subject specialist to teach three or four Associates when they could teach 15 or 20 is clearly not cost-effective.

Interviews with stakeholders have made it clear that recruitment and placement are otherwise generally successful, in the sense that high quality graduates are being recruited and are being placed in schools serving student populations that are disadvantaged in

¹¹⁷ The recruitment process is not the only factor contributing to indicators such as retention (levels of support play an important role); however, the quality of the successful applicants is due in large part to the marketing and recruitment process.

various ways.¹¹⁸ The response from participant schools has been very positive. They have been impressed with the calibre of the Associates assigned to them and every participating school with a vacancy has requested another Associate: a strong endorsement of the recruitment process.

Many of the placement schools report that they struggle to attract applicants, particularly in shortage subjects, and principals have noted that in some cases applicants have been of such poor quality that the vacancy has remained unfilled. In addition, some principals, notably in rural and remote areas, have noted that they have difficulty retaining new staff and the two-year commitment of Associates, when followed through, in itself can have a significant impact on students otherwise unwilling to build relationships with teachers.

The needs of non-metropolitan schools and the difficulty of recruiting teachers to them is also visible within the TFA Pathway where, despite a marketing campaign targeted at ensuring Associates are willing to be placed anywhere, many continue to show a marked preference for metropolitan areas. In the 2011 intake for 2012, 20 Associates were unable to be placed even though a number of regional Victorian schools willing to participate in the program had vacancies. Nevertheless, it is clear that overall the TFA Pathway is helping to address staffing needs in non-metropolitan schools, albeit in small numbers to date.

The deliberate placement of Associates for two years in schools that struggle to attract high-quality applicants is perhaps the greatest strength of the TFA Pathway, given that successful applicants do not differ significantly from those of high-quality university courses. The ongoing low number of placements is, however, a cause for concern in terms of cost effectiveness.

School size and location in many parts of Australia are not conducive to program expansion given current constraints. For example, the program requires Associates to be placed in clusters and in low-SES schools. Low-SES schools in rural areas in many states are small and isolated (no other schools nearby), making it difficult to meet these criteria. These constraints and the timing of recruitment resulted in Western Australia withdrawing from participation in Cohort 4.

The TFA program is not unique in targeting low-SES schools. Many universities have developed relationships with rural and remote communities and send a small percentage of each year's pre-service teacher cohort to these locations for part of the practicum component of their course. Small as the annual numbers are, they match or exceed those of the TFA Pathway. The teacher candidates who go to these communities do so by choice. Minimum available funding may cover travel and accommodation costs.

University practicum placements may encourage some preservice teachers to consider jobs in regional and rural areas, however universities are not responsible for employment placements. In this sense the TFA Pathway can either be considered unique or a 'first' – Teach Next also places successful candidates in hard-to-staff schools as 0.8 FTE teachers for the two-year duration of their course.

¹¹⁸ Generally schools are selected from within the bottom 50 per cent of state or national measures of socioeconomic disadvantage. The measures may vary across jurisdictions but are applied consistently within a jurisdiction.

Teach Next differed somewhat in the process by which it placed applicants. Applicants were only interviewed if they matched the vacancies identified by employers – they were recruited and selected to a particular position rather than to a program in general. If a jurisdiction was only looking to place mathematics and science teachers, then only applicants with mathematics and science qualifications were interviewed for that jurisdiction. This reduced the number of interviews conducted. In contrast, the TFA program recruits a pool of applicants that the organisation deems to be suitable, who they then try to match to vacancies, which are often not known for some months after recruitment. The Teach Next program recruits to identified positions and the offer of placement in the program is based on the applicants' suitability to both an employment-based pathway into teaching and also to the school in which they will be placed.

More recent initiatives such as the National Partnership funding for School Centres for Teaching Excellence have also strengthened school-university partnerships in rural locations and low-SES metropolitan areas. Pre-service teachers are spending more time in schools and many are choosing to spend that time in low-SES schools they would not previously have considered.

One difficulty in gauging placement issues is the lack of data on the destination of new teacher graduates from different courses and their movements over an extended period (five years or more). That difficulty is compounded by other workforce issues such as short-term contracts and shortages in some subjects, and the availability and timing of vacancies in the secondary sector.

3.6.5. Teacher education

The TFA Pathway was funded by DEEWR in part as a pilot for employment-based teacher education in Australia. It is not the only program to feature a move towards a model that mandates greater time in schools as the University of Melbourne and other universities are, increasingly, following 'site-based' models of teacher education, placing pre-service teachers into schools for (for example) two days a week over an extended period of time, as opposed to the traditional block practicum placement. Neither is it the first program to offer employment as a teacher while concurrently studying for a qualification: the Victorian Career Change program has been in operation for some years.

The TFA Pathway teacher education program itself is based on the clinical model of the MGSE MTeach program. What is distinctive is the phasing of the theoretical and practical components, with Associates undertaking the practical component for the majority of their time (approximately 80 per cent of their working week), attending four blocks of intensive instruction throughout the two years, and studying by distance education for the rest of the time.

In terms of cost, MGSE note that their MTeach course is more expensive than other teacher education courses of similar length (see Table 3.3) due to the clinical model they use. The additional cost is primarily due to the salaries paid to Clinical Specialists and Teaching Fellows who are based in schools and who support PSTs and supervising teachers. The TFA Pathway model also uses Clinical Specialists who receive a (part-time) salary from MGSE and are each responsible for about 15 Associates. The cost of the teacher education component has been partially offset from 2013 by the \$5,000 Associate contribution.

Taking into account the more costly MGSE model, much of the rest of the funding provided to MGSE for the education course was based on the need to allow for the nature of the model: that it was national in scope and residential. That is, the funds provided to MGSE also covered Associate and Mentor local and interstate travel, accommodation and full catering for four intensives per cohort of Associates, as well as for the 2-day and 3-day residential Mentor training course. Such costs are typically not covered in the funding for other teacher preparation programs.

There are ongoing issues. Although processes have been introduced to reduce the incidence of late placements, this is an issue that requires close and ongoing cooperation among teacher employers, schools and the Pathway. University staff work through what is usually a holiday period and subject specialists work with very limited numbers of Associates. In addition, different requirements for some subject areas allow Associates outside Victoria to teach subjects for which MGSE are not able to provide subject specialist education because the Associates do not meet VIT requirements (necessary for course accreditation).

In many ways it is impractical to consider the outcomes and impacts of this education model in comparison to other pathways because while other pathways stand alone, the MGSE teacher education diploma is only one component of the TFA Pathway and not one that can readily be isolated. Academically, MGSE has indicated that Associates are on a par with MTeach candidates. Pathway outcomes are considered in 3.6.8 below.

3.6.6. Leadership

The TFA organisation promotes ‘teaching as leadership’¹¹⁹ and sees Associates as leaders in the classroom and beyond. It is this component that, aside from the employment-based model, is the most notable point of difference between the TFA Pathway and other pathways into teaching. A high percentage of Associates have moved into leadership positions in their schools, particularly in their second year. Associates have also been very willing to be involved in the life and community of the school. Many have been involved in co-curricular activities from early in their first year, some have started new groups, and others have initiated new external activities: trips, competitions, outings and so on.

It is not clear to what extent this emphasis on, and expectation of, leadership has an impact on the quality of Associate teaching or classroom management. It does appear to have an impact on Associate willingness to take on additional responsibility and in many cases Associates have reported that their involvement beyond the classroom has improved relations with students in class.

The emphasis on leadership (and the perceived quality of the recruitment process) is likely to have an impact on the expectations senior school personnel have of Associates, and thus Associates may have greater opportunities than many other early career teachers. Principals and some school personnel have reported that Associates are raising the quality of the conversation in staffrooms and some principals and Mentors have reported that Associate enthusiasm and drive is infectious and that other staff members have ‘raised their game.’

¹¹⁹ Based on material developed by Teach for America. See Farr, Teach for America, 2010.

It is difficult to put a monetary value on such activities, or to evaluate the extent of their effectiveness. DEECD has commented that if one Associate is able to improve the overall effectiveness of one KLA, the Associate is worth the cost. However, it is also difficult to gauge effectiveness in this area in comparison to other early career teachers and particularly other high quality early career teachers. (Here too, there is the consideration of placement. It may be that other high quality teachers would achieve similarly, however for a variety of reasons, such teachers often do not choose to apply for vacancies at these particular schools.¹²⁰)

3.6.7. Support

A significant proportion of program resources are spent on support. High levels of support, particularly in the initial stages of the Pathway, are necessary and are generally effective in helping Associates manage their new role, survive, and thrive in the classroom.

The time allowance granted Mentors appears to provide the mentoring role with a greater status and highlights its importance through the official provision of paid time in which to undertake mentoring. The majority of mentor teachers put great effort into their role and many felt that they had gained from it personally and professionally. In this way, the program has been effective in placing a positive emphasis on the Mentor role and the role itself has been effective both in the support it provides to the Associate and the opportunity it presents more experienced teachers.

The division of the Educational Adviser into two separate roles has increased the proportion of funds spent on support. The Clinical Specialist is employed by MGSE as part of the teacher education program and their role includes assisting the development of Associates' teaching and assessing their competence. The Training and Leadership Adviser is employed by TFA and also visits classrooms. Their role includes pastoral support and they also encourage Associates to apply leadership skills and attributes in the classroom using the leadership framework. These roles may potentially reflect differences in how the Associates are viewed by MGSE and TFA and emphases on goals and methods that may not be entirely compatible.

In pragmatic terms, there seems to be little justification for external support and in-class observation to be undertaken by two separate roles representing two groups in a partnership. It is not clear at present that the additional resources utilised in this area are warranted.

In terms of teacher quality, it is difficult to separate the level of support from that necessitated by the Pathway model. The high levels of support do enable Associates to 'find their feet' in the classroom more quickly than would otherwise be the case, but that level of support is necessary in the first semester due to the Pathway model and Associates' lack of experience. High levels of support are likely to have an impact on the Pathway's high retention rate.

¹²⁰ Schools perceived to be 'high quality' and schools in metropolitan areas tend to get more and higher quality applicants. This is not necessarily a comment on the quality of the staff already in a school. That said, there are teachers with an ATAR of 55 or below entering the profession and many of these are likely to be in regional areas. It is also the case that some schools find it difficult to hire and retain young teachers, and some teachers maintain a low expectation of their students.

Where Associates felt well supported, they tended to put themselves forward in terms of leadership roles and extra-curricular activities. There are clearly expectations placed upon them as part of the Pathway model so it is difficult to gauge how important formal support is beyond the first year.

3.6.8. Cost and effectiveness - summary

In terms of teacher education the TFA Pathway involves relatively high financial outlays by government. These relatively high costs are linked to the key elements of the Pathway, as well as the costs of establishing the Pathway and the relatively small number of Associates involved.

There is potential for the Pathway to obtain funding from other sources and to reduce costs. From Cohort 4 (2013), Associates pay \$5,000 towards the cost of the Postgraduate Diploma. TFA have DGR status from 2013, which has the potential to enable them to increase the level of funding they receive from business and philanthropic sources.

Scaling the program up is likely to reduce costs in areas such as recruitment and teacher education. Scaling up would also increase costs in some areas, such as in travel and accommodation for Associates, and for the CS and TLA roles, particularly if training remains based in Victoria. The current difficulties with the timing of vacancies and placements are also likely to increase rather than decrease with any program expansion.¹²¹ In addition, scaling up assumes the cooperation of other jurisdictions. Legislative barriers remain in Queensland and New South Wales is opposed to unqualified teachers in classrooms.

Any reduction in the quality of the teacher education program is likely to be detrimental to the Pathway, although there may be scope for a reduction in the levels of support provided to Associates. That is, while an in-school Mentor and some external support aimed at improving classroom practice remains an important component of the program, the current dual roles of Clinical Specialist and Training and Leadership Adviser do not appear to be clearly differentiated and it is difficult to find a justification for the cost of supporting both roles.

The question of effectiveness is difficult to answer with certainty. There are many ways an effective teacher can engage students and this impact may not be confined to classroom behaviour or academic achievement. Furthermore, effective, knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers can also have a positive impact on their colleagues. Schools are communities and the impact of one person in that wider context can be difficult to gauge. Principals, Mentors and other school personnel have indicated that some Associates have had a marked impact upon their colleagues as well as the students they teach.

¹²¹ In most jurisdictions, responsibility for teacher vacancies lies at the school rather than department level.

The effectiveness of Associates would best be judged by comparison with teachers from other programs; however, this kind of longitudinal data is not currently available. There is some data on the effectiveness of teacher education programs;¹²² however, it is not generally known how effective teachers from a given university program are, how many of them enter and remain in the teacher workforce or work in schools serving disadvantaged communities, how many take on positions of leadership, or the perception of students and colleagues about the quality of their teaching.

What can be said is that the perception schools have of Associates is very positive and, thus far, every school that has participated in the program would like to continue that association.

3.7 Key question 6

What features of the *Teach for Australia* approach have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and what aspects of it can inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia?

There are two questions here and they are each considered separately. The first is ‘What features of the TFA Pathway approach have a positive impact on the quality of teaching?’

3.7.1. Features of the TFA Pathway that have an impact on teacher quality

Elements of this question have already been discussed in previous key questions. The most notable features are:

1. The selection process and rigorous selection criteria;
2. The clinical model of practice integrated with theory over an extended period;
3. High levels of support – supportive schools, the in-school Mentor, CS and TLA.
4. The development of a community of Associates

While it does not follow that highly academically able people necessarily make good teachers, it does appear to be the case that high quality teachers are always, among other things, highly academically capable (or at least highly literate and numerate¹²³). They have a strong in-depth grasp of their own subject areas and an investment in their own lifelong learning. The TFA Pathway selection process recruits graduates with academic achievement substantially above that required by many secondary teacher education courses. In addition, the selection criteria include demonstrable ability to communicate confidently, to show resilience, tenacity and optimism, effective organisation, problem solving and openness to learning.

The need for a selection process that assesses a broad range of competencies required for teaching rather than relying solely on previous academic performance has been recognised by previous reports into teacher education.¹²⁴ Further, the TFA Pathway requires Associates to teach in potentially difficult classrooms with virtually no supervised experience. The first few weeks are extremely challenging and highly stressful. As such,

¹²² For example, Victorian beginning teacher views of the effectiveness of their training were canvassed in Ingvarson, Kleinhenz & Beavis, 2004.

¹²³ Louden, Rohl, Gore, Greaves, McIntosh, et al., 2005.

¹²⁴ Education and Training Committee, 2005.

the Pathway necessarily requires resilient, tenacious people. It is not for everyone who wants to teach.

The selection process on its own is not enough, however. Teaching is a profession requiring skills and knowledge that must be acquired to attain proficiency.¹²⁵ There are national standards¹²⁶ a teacher needs to meet that make explicit the elements of high quality, effective teaching and the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. The TFA Pathway is an employment-based pathway into teaching that requires Associates to complete a two-year course and there has been considerable effort to integrate theory and practice.

Alongside the two years of continuous study, Associates are supported directly and formally by the school, with a dedicated mentor (0.1 FTE in the first year, 0.05 in the second year). Within the school there is usually considerable additional support from other subject area teachers and senior staff. Associates are also supported by MGSE, both by lecturers and subject area specialists available by email and the Clinical Specialists who regularly visit, observe classes, provide advice and assist Associates to integrate their classroom practice with the theory they receive through the university course. In addition, they are supported by TFA Training and Leadership Advisers who also observe classes and provide feedback using a leadership framework. Associates also support each other and have grown a community of practice allowing them to share practical and personal advice.

3.7.2. Ways the TFA Pathway might inform teacher education in Australia

The second question in this section is 'what aspects of the TFA Pathway can inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia?' Viewed as a pilot program providing an alternative entry into teaching, there are a number of areas in which the Teach for Australia Pathway may provide food for thought for traditional pathways into teaching, and for the potential introduction of other alternate pathways. In highlighting these elements, it is worth first noting that they form parts of a cohesive program in the TFA Pathway. Consideration would need to be given to the extent to which any of these elements, in isolation, would have an impact.

Attracting high quality applicants to teaching: finance and social justice

There is no panacea or quick fix to attracting high quality applicants, and attraction needs to be considered in the light of retention.

Teaching has intrinsic rewards and satisfaction and many young people have strong principles; a desire to give something back or make a difference; a social conscience. Part of Teach for Australia's success appears to be marketing, or appealing to this conscience. Some high achievers, at least, are looking for something more than material satisfaction. Teach for Australia appeals to this group by presenting teaching as a means to make a difference specifically for groups who are educationally disadvantaged.

¹²⁵ Berliner, 2004

¹²⁶ See the AITSL website on national professional standards for teachers, sourced 24 January from <http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/>

The TFA Pathway's success in this area appears to be due to several interrelated strands: it is highly exclusive; it presents teaching as a challenge worthy of the high achiever and it appeals to both social conscience and the desire to make a difference. In addition, it offers rigorous training from a respected university as part of the package, as well as a reasonable salary. It also offers 'on-the-job' training.

The TFA Pathway's attraction in part is that it offers 'positives' and mitigates 'negatives': put another way it offers reasons for saying 'yes' and counters reasons for saying 'no'. On presenting positives it provides exclusivity, challenge and the opportunity to make a difference. On mitigating negatives it resolves issues for those who cannot afford another year or two years of supporting themselves while training. It also offers an alternative for those who prefer to 'learn by doing'.

There may be more scope for universities to market teaching courses in ways that appeal to social conscience, and to partnership with jurisdictions and schools serving disadvantaged communities in such an endeavour.

The TFA Pathway has shown that it is possible to attract high achievers in mathematics and science, as well as in other areas. Employment-based programs have the potential to attract career-changers who otherwise would not have the resources to make the change. The experience of the US and UK models suggest that this kind of pathway can be scaled up significantly.

Retaining new teachers: teaching load and support

There may be many reasons why newly graduated teachers choose to leave the profession such as the financial uncertainty of short term contracts. Anecdotally, a significant issue is the lack of support experienced by graduate teachers. In many cases, graduate teachers go from having had a few weeks teaching experience under supervision to a full load with responsibility for several classes at different levels, in units they may not have taught before and in a school whose policies and procedures are new to them. Schools generally do not have the funds to provide experienced teachers with the training and time needed for mentoring beginning teachers.

The TFA Pathway has shown that providing time for mentoring has the potential to pay dividends both in raising the status of mentoring, reinvigorating mid-career teachers and improving the confidence of new teachers. Such support may also improve retention in the early years.

Lightening the initial teaching load of a new teacher for the first semester or year would also recognise the need to allow them additional time to plan lessons and assess their students, to reflect on their practice and to observe fellow teachers. The experience of the TFA Pathway suggests that these practices enable new teachers to gain in confidence and expertise.

There is a cost implication to suggestions of time release for mentoring and a lighter initial teaching load. Costs may be partially offset by better retention of both beginning and mid-career teachers and there is also the potential to improve the collegial culture of a school through greater levels of internal support, observations and professional development amongst staff.

University support: ongoing professional and leadership development

Teaching is relational and experiential: theory and pedagogy are most relevant when they are applied in real circumstances. Teachers learn a great deal by doing teaching, and by reflecting on their practice in light of their theoretical knowledge.

Currently, once pre-service teachers graduate from their institution they are effectively ‘on their own’. They often have no further contact from their university as part of their teacher education course. Just as the TFA Pathway shows the importance of additional support within schools, it also indicates the value of additional, pro-active university support of graduates, potentially through an alumni network explicitly offering access to networks of other recent and older graduates willing to share resources and advice.

The TFA Pathway also explicitly considers leadership in the school context. There may be scope for teacher education courses to provide units in this area and encourage an earlier awareness and greater participation in responsibilities beyond the classroom.

Partnerships between universities and state departments of education

Currently, universities generally attempt to place pre-service teachers in schools in their local area by direct contact with those schools. In some cases more recently, universities have developed stronger partnerships with schools in their local area. These partnerships tend to depend on one or two local relationships and funding for specific programs can be limited and short-term.

The TFA Pathway has multiple stakeholders at the level of government departments and through this relationship the department is able to offer an alternative program to schools and to negotiate in areas of specific interest to the department, such as the targeting of hard-to-staff schools and in-demand subject areas.

There may be scope for the development and resourcing of partnerships between schools, a government department and a university that enables courses to be developed specifically to meet state needs in certain areas and to involve schools in wider partnerships.

The development of new alternative pathways into teaching

The experience of the TFA Pathway raises issues for the development of other alternative pathways. It is clearly aimed at a specific group: it is not for everyone. It relies to a large extent on its recruitment and it is acknowledged to be a challenging, highly stressful entrance into teaching. The transition into teaching is abrupt and Associates have very little opportunity to observe teachers and classes, to get a feel for how schools work, or to practice under supervision, prior to themselves being in front of a class. This is not ideal.

Within the TFA Pathway, some principals have attempted to mediate this transition by organising team teaching or allocating experienced teachers to spend time in the classroom with Associates. The program has been modified, introducing the Summer School and mandating that Associates should visit their placement school prior to the Initial Intensive. There have been suggestions to facilitate the initial months even more such as mandating that Associates in their first semester undertake very little university work but spend their study time in school observing teachers and reflecting on their practice.

Albeit not ideal in this respect, the TFA Pathway has been successful, with a high retention rate during the program, which suggests that the model works reasonably well for those who meet the recruitment criteria.

There may be scope for courses that take a broadly traditional path to build in more of an employment-based or ‘intern’ approach, for example with PSTs attending lectures, observing at schools and undertaking supervised practice, followed by two or three semesters at a school working in a paid position (0.6 to 0.8 FTE) while also continuing their study, with support from experienced teachers at the school and from the university.

As well as the TFA Pathway, other models of teacher education are increasingly recognising the role schools have in the preparation of beginning teachers. The MGSE model has ‘Teaching Fellows’ based in schools. The National Partnerships funded School Centres for Teaching Excellence (SCTE) program features closer partnerships between schools and universities and a reconsideration of the role of ‘supervisors’ of PSTs and various mentoring models are being explored. Any new employment-based model would greatly benefit from the strong support of principals, the involvement of experienced teachers and, as has been the case with the TFA Pathway, access to professional development for experienced teachers as an integral part of the program.

3.8 Conclusions

Stakeholders continue to regard the TFA Pathway as a promising initiative with the potential to attract talented graduates to teaching. With the program now well underway, some of the ‘teething problems’ associated with its initial development appear to be largely resolved, and adjustments are ongoing and generally appear to be effective. The Associates particularly, in all cohorts interviewed, commented on the extent to which both TFA and MGSE were willing to accept critical feedback and modify their approaches accordingly.

Strengths of the program from the perspectives of stakeholders include:

- The rigorous selection process for Associates;
- The provision of significant support to the Associates;
- The quality of the MGSE course; and
- The development of a community of Associates.

There is no doubt that the first one to two terms are extremely challenging for the new Associates. They face a very steep learning curve as they develop their teaching persona, their relationship with students, an understanding of school policies and procedures and of administrative tasks, such as report writing, that are part of the job and about which they have limited knowledge. Added to this, many Associates are also living in new communities, some in a different state, and they must build new, local support structures. They also have demanding study commitments. Associates, in their first two terms particularly, experience high levels of stress and emotional lows.

The selection process is designed to choose high quality Associates with the necessary ability and personal attributes to succeed in the pathway. To date, the selection process has been largely successful in recruiting Associates with the intelligence, communication and relational skills, confidence, enthusiasm and resilience to survive and indeed thrive in what is undoubtedly a very intense experience.

There is considerable interest in policy and teacher education circles in improving the selection processes used in teacher education. The TFA pathway places a strong emphasis on selecting people who are not only strong academically, but who also demonstrate a commitment to redressing educational disadvantage and who have the communication skills and resilience needed to succeed in challenging environments. The success of the pathway to date has been strongly influenced by the selection processes used. This experience is likely to hold important lessons for teacher education more broadly.

The most successful in-school support structures have the ability to mitigate the initial pressures to a considerable degree. Successful strategies have included team teaching (sharing classroom and student management responsibility), duplicating classes and minimising the number of subjects taught (minimising lesson planning and assessment requirements), and the assignment of appropriate year levels (minimising classroom management issues). A process that ensures that schools are better able to support Mentors in their role, both by considering timetabling issues and ensuring that allocated time is made available and used by the Mentor, would be highly desirable.

The formal provision of support through individuals selected to mentor Associates is a key structural requirement of the clinical model embodied in the TFA Pathway. At its strongest, the role of Mentor provides the Associate with personal and professional support. The Mentor facilitates the Associates' entry into the school community and their understanding of school policies and procedures. The Mentor also provides resources and practical advice about classroom issues, observes and provides constructive feedback, and models excellent practice. As noted in previous reports, a better understanding of what is required of Mentors, provided prior to their acceptance of the position, remains highly desirable.

Strengthening the support for teachers in their early career has been a common focus of reform efforts over a number of years. The ways in which this has been achieved in the TFA Pathway – including by structured Mentor training, time release for Mentors, and ongoing contact by university and other external advisors – could hold useful lessons for other reform efforts.

A large number of Associates and their Mentors, and other school personnel, noted that before Associates commenced their placement, more time in schools observing and practising teaching would have been very beneficial in helping to learn the art of classroom management. Once in schools, Associates tended to find, on reflection, that the Initial Intensive was more valuable than they had first thought. The Summer School was appreciated by Cohort 2 and 3 Associates; however, it has not fully alleviated the request for opportunities to observe and practise teaching. Team teaching may not be practicable as schools may not have staffing levels to cater for this option. The practice of some schools, lightening Associates' planning load and giving them 'easier' students, at least for the first two terms, alleviated some of the initial pressure placed upon them.

The Associates appear to be developing a 'Community of Practice'¹²⁷ which is providing them with considerable support at both personal and professional levels. A Community of Practice goes beyond friendship groups, cohorts and physical location, based as it is on a

¹²⁷ Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

practice – in this case, the practice of becoming a teacher through participation in the TFA Pathway. Thus, Associates are sharing resources and experiences, pooling the knowledge they gain through their local school context and so extending and enriching the learning they receive from MGSE and through their own practice. With their shared experiences, despite being in different schools, they are also able to provide emotional support, both by understanding the pressures other Associates are under, and by sharing teaching and other resources that may assist in alleviating some of the issues other Associates face. TFA already provides resources and assistance in this valuable area and the development of this community should be continued and further encouraged.

Time and space for reflection is required if exemplary teaching practices are to develop. The experience of beginning teaching is often very taxing and always challenging. If the challenge is too great there is the danger that its demands may overwhelm the beginning teacher's resources to the extent that survival trumps personal growth. From the perspective of the Associates and school personnel interviewed, there were a number of important factors that affected the chance of successfully making the transition to exemplary practitioner. These included:

- Appropriate Associates' attributes
- Good school climate and culture
- Good school-level support structures, with a thorough understanding by all stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities
- Careful selection of Mentors
- Appropriate year level of classes assigned to Associates
- Associates teaching in appropriate discipline areas.

Such factors are more evidently in place for Associates in their first year with each successive Cohort within a jurisdiction. Still, as acknowledged by all parties we spoke to, there remain grounds for improvement. If Associates are to gain the maximum benefit from their Placement School experience it would seem wise to ensure that their first year is more 'swim' than 'sink'. This would be most likely to occur where the Placement School environment is supportive and characterised by good staff-student and staff-staff relationships; Mentors are well chosen and supported by training and time release; the Associates are teaching in discipline areas in which they are well-versed and they have been assigned classes that are more easily managed.

Due to the lack of comparative data on the outcomes of teacher education courses in terms of teacher effectiveness and teacher retention, it was not possible to conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of the Pathway. Rather, the approach taken was to detail its relative costs and provide stakeholders' views about outcomes.

In terms of teacher education the TFA Pathway involves relatively high financial outlays by government. These relatively high costs are linked to the key elements of the Pathway, as well as the costs of establishing the Pathway and the relatively small number of Associates involved. Any reduction in the quality of the teacher education program is likely to be detrimental to the Pathway, although there may be scope for a reduction in the levels of support provided to Associates. The perception schools have of Associates is very positive and, thus far, every school that has participated in the program would like to continue that association.

Aspects of the evaluation of the TFA Pathway that may inform teaching approaches or teacher education in Australia include the following:

- Attraction of high quality applicants through appealing to social justice and through a quality, exclusive graduate recruitment process. Includes the attraction of applicants in shortage areas such as science and mathematics.
- Employment-based training, offering high quality training while working and a reasonable salary (which can also attract career changers and other applicants who would not be able to afford to take time out of the workforce to train).
- Partnerships with jurisdictions and schools serving disadvantaged communities to offer courses and incentives to attract quality candidates.
- High quality in-school mentoring, including time-release for mentors may assist in reinvigorating mid-career teachers and improving the confidence and retention rates of early-career teachers.
- An initial lighter teaching load for new graduates, time for planning and reflection, ongoing professional support both in-school and from the university or provider of the initial teacher education, may also assist in early career retention and development.
- The development of closer ties between university course participants and subject specialists, once they are alumni, may have potential benefits.
- The inclusion of units on school leadership may encourage greater awareness and participation for early career teachers in school.
- New employment-based pathways will need to consider the extent of training and supervised practice required prior to commencing an appointment at a school.

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Appendix 1: Cohort 1 Associates – Year 3 survey

1. Are you still teaching?

1. Yes, in an ongoing position
2. Yes, in a contract position
3. Emergency/CRT teaching
4. No

1a. How long is your contract for?

1. 6 months or less
2. 1 year
3. More than 1 year

2. Have you completed the MTeach? [yes, no]

2a. Do you intend to complete the MTeach? [yes, no]

3. Has your experience of the TFA pathway and teaching in a school changed your career plans? In what way? (text box)

(For those still in teaching)

4. How long do you think you will stay in teaching?

1. Just for this year (2012)
2. Just to the end of next year (2013)
3. I'll stay for a few years
4. I intend to make teaching my career
5. I'm unsure at present

5. Are you teaching in the same school (your TFA placement school)? [yes, no]

5a. Why did you move schools? [text box]

5b. Which sector are you teaching in: 1. Government 2. Catholic 3. Independent

5c. Are you currently teaching in a school that serves students with educational disadvantage? Yes/no (and text box for comment)

(from year 2 survey for those still in teaching)

6. Are you currently in a position of leadership in the school? [yes/no]

6a. If YES, what is the title of the position? [open response]

6b. If YES, does the position attract additional remuneration? [yes/no]

6c. If YES, does the position attract time allowance? [yes/no]

7. Do you expect to be filling a leadership position in 2013?

7a. If YES, what is the title of the position? [open response]

7b. If YES, does the position attract additional remuneration? [yes/no]

7c. If YES, does the position attract time allowance? [yes/no]

8. Thinking back to the following aspects of the TFA program, please indicate how effective each was overall in helping you to improve your capacity to work effectively in a disadvantaged school. [four point scale, very ineffective- very effective]

- Teaching in your Placement School
- Professional mentoring provided by the school
- MGSE Subject: *Individualising Learning and Teaching 2*
- MGSE Subject: *Social and Professional Contexts 2*
- MGSE Subject: *Learning Areas A2/B2*
- MGSE Subject: *Professional Practice and Portfolio 2*
- MGSE Subject: *Leadership for Learning*
- Leadership and practical sessions provided by TFA
- Information and support provided by Teach for Australia
- The TFA 'Leadership Development Framework'
- The training and support provided by my TLA
- The training and support provided by my CS

8a. Please tell us a little about those areas listed above you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching and your work in your school [open response]

8b. Please tell us a little about those areas listed above you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching and your work in your school [open response]

9. Looking back, please rate how important each of the following were overall in helping you do to develop as a teacher. [Four point scale not at all important - very important, N/A]

- Interactions with my Mentor
- Interactions with other staff at my Placement School
- Interactions with my Training and Leadership Adviser
- Interactions with my Clinical Specialist
- Interactions with my Learning Area Tutor
- Interactions with other University of Melbourne staff
- Ongoing formal training through MGSE
- Interactions with other *Teach For Australia* Associates
- Online communication/support from MGSE
- Online communication/support from TFA (including the Associate Virtual Platform)
- Informal online communication/support (other Associates)
- Professional learning provided by my school
- Professional learning provided by TFA
- Other professional learning (outside school)
- Interactions with TFA staff (other than Training and Leadership Adviser)
- Interactions with the leadership team of my Placement School
- Team teaching
- Interactions with my students

9a. Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

9b. Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

10. The following questions ask you to rate your capacity to perform a number of teaching tasks. We would like you to rate your current capacity. [Nine point scale: A great deal-Not at all]

- To what extent can you control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?
- To what extent can you motivate students who show low interest in school work?
- To what extent can you get students to believe they can do well in school work?
- To what extent can you help your students to value learning?
- To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
- To what extent can you get students to follow class rules?
- To what extent can you calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
- To what extent can you establish a classroom management system with each group/year level of students?
- To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
- To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
- To what extent can you assist families in helping their children do well at school?
- To what extent can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
- To what extent can you assess student learning and use it to plan future learning?
- To what extent can you develop the literacy skills of your students?

10a. Overall, how effective are you at assisting students to learn and improve?
[nine point scale not at all effective -highly effective]

10b. What do you think are your greatest strengths as a teacher?
[open response]

10c. What are your greatest professional development needs?
[open response]

11. Please indicate your participation this year (2012) in any of the following activities involving students from your school. [None/Participate/Lead/Started]

- Clubs, e.g. chess, science, public speaking
- Sports
- Music, performing arts, school productions
- Coaching/tutoring, including home work club
- Camps and excursions
- School wide committees
- Students' Representative Council or similar
- Other, please specify

11a. Do you have any further comments to make about your involvement in co-curricular activities? [open response]

12. How satisfied are you with teaching as a profession generally? [seven point scale – highly dissatisfied-highly satisfied]

13. How would you rate your ability to work effectively with the parents/carers of your students? [open response]

14. To what extent have you worked collaboratively with your colleagues? [open response]

15. To what extent have you taken a leadership role in professional interactions with your colleagues? [open response]

16. How responsive have you found your colleagues to accept your suggestions? [open response]

(For those not in teaching)

17. Do you plan to return to teaching at any point? [1 yes, 2 no, 3 unsure]

17a. If yes: Can you indicate when you intend to return to teaching?

1 within the next 2 years

2 within the next 5 years

3 between 5 and 10 years

4 more than 10 years from now

18. What are you currently doing? 1. Work, 2. Study 3. Travel 4. other (text box for comment/other)

19. Why have you chosen not to continue teaching? (tick all that apply)

1. The workload was too high

2. I found managing student behaviour too challenging

3. I was unable to find further employment as a teacher

4. Teaching was not what I expected it to be

5. I found the teachers at my school difficult to work with

6. I found teaching too stressful

7. I was not able to continue in my placement school

8. low salary

9. better opportunities elsewhere

10. full time study (in education)

11. full time study (not in education)

12. I want to gain further experience in my field

13. I wanted to take a break from teaching

14. I wanted to have an impact on educational disadvantage in other ways

15. Other (text box)

(For all C1 Associates)

20. What are the greatest strengths of the TFA initiative? (text box)

21. Are there any weaknesses in the TFA initiative, or any ways in which the program might be improved? (text box)

22. If there are any further comments you would like to make about the TFA initiative, or issues you would like to raise, please do so here. (text box)

Appendix 2: Cohort 2 Associates – Year 2 survey

1.0 Your Placement School

- 1.1 Please tell us what subjects you have taught to date? [open response]
- 1.2 What grades/year levels are you currently teaching? [pull down menu, multiple responses accepted]
- 2.1 Are you currently in a position of leadership in the school? [yes/no]
- 2.1a If YES, what is the title of the position? [open response]
- 2.1b If YES, what are the main responsibilities of the position? [open response]
- 2.1c If YES, does the position attract additional remuneration? [yes/no]
- 2.2 Have you applied for, or will you be filling a leadership position in 2013?
- 2.2a If YES, what is the title of the position? [open response]
- 2.2b If YES, what are the main responsibilities of the position? [open response]
- 2.2c If YES, does the position attract additional remuneration? [yes/no]

2.0 Learning to Teach

2.1 Thinking of the following aspects of the program, please indicate how effective each has been in improving your capacity to work effectively as a teacher and leader in a disadvantaged school. [four point scale, very ineffective- very effective]

1. Teaching in your Placement School
2. Professional Development provided by the school
3. MGSE Subject: *Individualising Learning and Teaching 2*
4. MGSE Subject: *Social and Professional Contexts 2*
5. MGSE Subject: *Learning Areas A2/B2*
6. MGSE Subject: *Professional Practice and Portfolio 2*
7. MGSE Subject: *Addressing Educational Disadvantage*
8. Leadership and practical sessions provided by TFA
9. Information and support provided by Teach for Australia
10. The TFA 'Leadership Development Framework'

2.1b Please tell us a little about those areas you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

2.2c Please tell us a little about those areas you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

3.0 Support for Professional Learning

3.1a Please rate how important each of the following have been in helping you do to develop as a teacher during your second year. [Four point scale not at all important - very important, N/A]

- Interactions with my Mentor
- Interactions with other staff at my Placement School
- Interactions with my Training and Leadership Adviser
- Interactions with my Clinical Specialist
- Interactions with other University of Melbourne staff

- Ongoing formal training, e.g. through MGSE
- Interactions with other *Teach For Australia* Associates
- Online communication/support from MGSE
- Online communication/support from TFA (including the Associate Virtual Platform)
- Informal online communication/support (other Associates)
- Professional learning provided by my school
- Other professional learning (outside school)
- Interactions with TFA staff (other than Training and Leadership Adviser)
- Mid-year intensive

3.1b Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

3.1c Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

3.2 How have you found balancing ongoing teaching, ongoing study and your personal life in the second year of the program? [four point scale Very difficult -Not at all difficult]

3.3 Is the 0.2 FTE release sufficient to allow you to complete all requirements of your study and employment? [four point scale, not at all sufficient – sufficient]

3.4 Is your school timetabling your 0.2 release in ways that assist you to use the time effectively to meet your study obligations? [yes/no] [additional text box open response]

3.5 How satisfied are you this year with the level of feedback you are receiving from: [seven point scale highly dissatisfied – highly satisfied]

- Mentors
- Clinical Specialists
- Training and Leadership Advisers
- Other school staff

3.5a If you would like, please comment about the feedback you are receiving [text box open response]

4.0 Personal Knowledge and Skills

4.1 The following questions ask you to rate your capacity to perform a number of teaching tasks. We would like you to rate your capacity to perform each teaching task AT THE END OF YOUR FIRST YEAR and NOW. [Nine point scale: A great deal-Not at all]

- To what extent can you control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?
- To what extent can you motivate students who show low interest in school work?
- To what extent can you get students to believe they can do well in school work?
- To what extent can you help your students to value learning?
- To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
- To what extent can you get students to follow class rules?
- To what extent can you calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
- To what extent can you establish a classroom management system with each group/year level of students?
- To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?

- To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
- To what extent can you assist families in helping their children do well at school?
- To what extent can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
- To what extent can you effectively plan backwards, from lessons to units?
- To what extent can you create ambitious goals for student growth?
- To what extent can you present content and ideas in a clear and engaging manner?
- To what extent can you facilitate and manage highly productive student work?
- To what extent can you build and facilitate effective teamwork within your classroom?

4.2 Overall, how effective are you at assisting students to learn and improve?
[nine point scale not at all effective -highly effective]

4.3 How effective are teachers generally at assisting students to learn and improve?
[nine point scale not at all effective-highly effective]

4.4 We would like you to rate your level of effective knowledge on the following skills. By effective knowledge we mean knowledge that you can apply in the classroom to assist student learning. Please rate yourself AT THE END OF YOUR FIRST YEAR and NOW
[Four point scale very ineffective-very effective]

How effective was/is your knowledge of

- How students learn
- How children develop
- Designing engaging learning tasks
- Using a variety of resources and technologies for teaching
- Designing assessment
- Giving students feedback
- The subjects you teach
- Strategies to teach content in your subject areas
- Monitoring student progress and making adjustment to your teaching
- Developing good relations with students
- Developing good relations with parents and the community
- Developing good relations with colleagues
- Treating students equitably
- Sources of student diversity
- The legal and ethical obligations of teaching
- Discovering students' prior learning in a topic area
- Classroom management principles

4.5 What do you think are your greatest strengths as a teacher?
[open response]

4.6 What are your greatest professional development needs?
[open response]

5.0 Current Teaching Context

5.1 Thinking of your placement school, how would you rate the: [four point scale Poor - Excellent]

- Level of collegiality and staff relations

- Staff relationships with students
- Level of support given to teachers
- Level of support you have received
- Level of support given to students
- Relationships with parents and the community
- Emphasis on teaching and learning
- Level of resources, such books, computer equipment, teaching resources.
- Facilities, grounds and buildings
- Communication, formal and informal
- Leadership in the school, thinking broadly, that is, not just the school executive
- Opportunities for staff to acquire new skills and knowledge
- Opportunities for staff to have a say in school decision-making or to exercise leadership

5.2 Have you been asked/required to teach outside of your two learning areas? [yes/no]

5.3 How satisfied are you with teaching as a profession generally? [seven point scale – highly dissatisfied-highly satisfied]

5.4 How has your satisfaction changed since this time last year? [seven point scale – now more highly dissatisfied-now more highly satisfied]

5.5 Have your expectations of teaching changed as a result of your experiences this year [yes/no]

5.6 If YES, in what ways? [open ended]

6.0 Co-Curricular Activities

6.1 Please indicate your participation in any of the following activities.
[None/Participate/Lead/Started]

- Clubs, e.g. chess, science, public speaking
- Sports
- Music, performing arts, school productions
- Coaching/tutoring, including home work club
- Camps and excursions
- School wide committees
- Students' Representative Council or similar
- Other, please specify

6.2 How satisfied are you with your involvement in co-curricular activities?
[seven point scale – highly dissatisfied-highly satisfied]

6.3 Do you have any further comments to make about your involvement in co-curricular activities? [open response]

7.0 Teach for Australia Program

7.1 How satisfied are you with the quality of interaction with your Leadership Coach?
[seven point scale highly dissatisfied – highly satisfied]

7.1a If you would like to comment on any aspects of the provision of a Leadership Coach, please do so here [open response]

7.2 Would you recommend *Teach for Australia* to others:

1. who are considering teaching?
 2. who are not considering teaching?
 3. with similar interests and competencies to your own?
- [yes/no/unsure]

7.3 What are the best aspect(s) of the *Teach for Australia* program? [open response]

7.4 What aspect(s) could be improved? [open response]

7.5 Overall, how satisfied are you with the Teach for Australia program? [7 point scale highly dissatisfied- highly satisfied]

8.0 The Future

8.1 Do you intend to continue to teach at your current school (in 2013)? [No/Yes, I have an ongoing position/Yes, I have a contract position/Yes, but I'm not sure if a position is available/I would have like to but no position is available//unsure/Other, open response]

8.2a Have you applied or do you intend to apply for a position at another school? [Yes/No/unsure]

8.2b If YES, Can you tell us why you have chosen to apply to another school?

8.2c If YES, Did you have any criteria for the schools you have applied to? [open response]

8.2d (If answered no/unsure to 9.2a) How likely are you to continue teaching beyond the two years? [four point scale – very unlikely-to very likely]

8.3 Do you plan to do further study in the area of [school/teacher] education following your two year course? [Yes/no/unsure]

8.3a5 If YES, what do you plan to study? [Open response]

8.4 If you do not plan to continue teaching beyond the program, how likely are you to continue working to address educational disadvantage through a different career path? [four point scale – very unlikely-to very likely]

8.5 If you do not plan to continue teaching, what are you intending to do? [open response]

8.6 Will you participate in the Teach for Australia Alumni program? [Yes/no/unsure]

8.6a If NO, why not? [Open response]

8.6b If YES, in what way do you think you may be involved? [Open response]

8.6c If UNSURE, can you indicate why you are unsure at this time? [Open response]

8.7 How has participating in the Teach for Australia initiative contributed to your personal development generally? [open response]

Appendix 3: Cohort 3 Associates – Year 1 survey

1.0 Your details

- 1.1 What is your age?
- 1.2 What is your home state?
- 1.3 What was your bachelor's degree? [open response]
- 1.4 What was your degree major? [open response]
- 1.5 If applicable, what was your second major/minor? [open response]
- 1.6 Do you have a higher degree? yes/no
- 1.6a If YES, what is the degree [open response]
- 1.7 Have you had experience working with children/students before, in a paid or voluntary capacity (for example, tutoring, coaching sport) [yes/no]

2.0 Your Placement School

- 2.1 Was your placement school one of your preferred locations? Yes/no
- 2.2 Please tell us what subjects you have taught to date [open response]
- 2.2a Please tell us what learning areas you are studying with MGSE [open response]
- 2.3 What grades/year levels are you currently teaching? [multiple responses accepted]
- 2.4 Did you receive a formal induction to your placement school? [yes/no]
- 2.5a (If yes) Was this induction modified for you as a TFA Associate? [yes/no]
- 2.5b (If yes) How helpful was your induction? [four point scale very unhelpful- very helpful]
- 2.5 How much assistance/support did you receive during the teacher preparation days prior to the commencement of Term One? [four point scale no support- plenty of support]
- 2.6 How helpful/useful was this support? [four point scale not at all helpful- very helpful]
- 2.7 Are there any ways in which your experience in the first 1-2 terms could be improved?

3.0 Teach for Australia Program

3.1 Please indicate how you first heard about the *Teach for Australia* program

- 1. University careers fair
- 2. University careers email
- 3. TFA Website
- 4. Media
- 5. Friend
- 6. On-campus presentation by TFA
- 7. Other, please specify

3.2 What did you find attractive about the *Teach for Australia* program? Please indicate which of the following are true of you (choose as many as apply)

I was attracted to the *Teach for Australia* program because

- 1. I had decided to enter teaching
- 2. I had thought of teaching later but TFA made me want to teach now
- 3. I wished to contribute to reducing educational disadvantage
- 4. I was attracted by the opportunity to earn a salary while training
- 5. I could go straight into teaching without further fulltime study
- 6. Participation would be of value for my future career, beyond teaching
- 7. I was attracted by the emphasis on leadership development
- 8. I was attracted by the opportunity to be part of a movement seeking to redress educational disadvantage
- 9. Other, please specify

3.3a If you had considered teaching as a career would you have considered a traditional teaching program if you had not been accepted by TFA?
[yes/no/unsure]

3.3b Had you had any teaching experience prior to joining TFA? [yes/no]

3.3c If YES, can you briefly describe your prior teaching experience? [open response]

3.4a How well do you feel you understood the *Teach for Australia* program before you commenced it?
[four point scale not at all- very well]

3.4b If you answered 'not at all' which aspect(s) did you not understand? [open response]

3.5 Would you recommend *Teach for Australia* to others
a. who are considering teaching?
b. who are not considering teaching?
c. with similar interests and competencies to your own?
[yes/no/unsure]

3.7 What are the best aspect(s) of the *Teach for Australia* program? [open response]

3.8 What aspect(s) could be improved? [open response]

3.9 Overall, how satisfied are you with the TFA program? [7 point scale highly dissatisfied- highly satisfied]

4.0 Preparation to Teach

4.1 Thinking of the following aspects of the program during the Initial Intensive, please indicate how effective each was in helping you to acquire teaching skills and knowledge and preparing you for your placement.
[four point scale, very ineffective- very effective]

- 1 Information and support provided by Teach for Australia (tools, resources and frameworks)
- 4 Placement school visit
- 5 Leadership and practical sessions provided by TFA
- 6 *Linking Curriculum and Pedagogy (including the Summer School)*
- 7 *Individualising Learning and Teaching I*
- 8 *Language and Teaching*
- 9 *Professional Practice and Portfolio 1*
- 10 *Learning Areas A1/B1*
- 11 *Social and Professional Contexts I*
- 12 *Non-subject specific sessions*

4.2a Looking back, to what extent did you feel prepared by MGSE to commence work in your school?
[Four point scale – very unprepared -Very well prepared]

4.2b Please tell us a little about those areas you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

4.2c Please tell us a little about those areas you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

5.0 Support for Professional Learning

5.1a Please rate how important each of the following have been in helping you to develop as a teacher.

[Four point scale not at all important - very important, N/A]

- 1 Interactions with my Clinical Specialist
- 2 Interactions with my Mentor teacher
- 3 Interactions with University of Melbourne staff (other than Clinical Specialist)
- 4 Interactions with other staff at my Placement School
- 5 Interactions with other *Teach for Australia* Associates
- 6 Ongoing formal training, e.g. through MGSE
- 7 Online communication/support from MGSE
- 8 Professional learning provided in school
- 9 Other professional learning (outside school)
- 10 Interactions with TFA staff (other than Training and Leadership Adviser)
- 11 Interactions with my Training and Leadership Adviser
- 12 Online communication/support from TFA
- 13 Mid-year Intensive

5.1b Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the most impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

5.1c Please tell us a little about those interactions/supports you feel have had the least impact upon the quality of your teaching [open response]

5.2 How have you found balancing ongoing teaching, ongoing study and your personal life?

[four point scale Very difficult -Not at all difficult]

5.2a Could you briefly indicate the nature of the difficulties you are experiencing? [open response]

5.3 Is the 0.2 FTE release sufficient to allow you to complete all requirements of your study and employment? [four point scale, not at all sufficient – sufficient]

5.4 Is your school timetabling your 0.2 release in ways that assist you to use the time effectively to meet your study obligations? [yes/no]

5.5 How satisfied are you with the level of feedback you are receiving from
[seven point scale highly dissatisfied – highly satisfied]

- Mentors
- Clinical Specialists
- Training and Leadership Advisers
- Other school staff

5.5a If you would like, please comment about the feedback you are receiving.

6.0 Personal Knowledge and Skills

6.1 The following questions ask you to rate your capacity to perform a number of teaching tasks. We would like you to rate your capacity to perform each teaching task AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF YOUR TEACHING ASSIGNMENT and NOW.

[Nine point scale: A great deal-Not at all]

- To what extent can you control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?
- To what extent can you motivate students who show low interest in school work?
- To what extent can you get students to believe they can do well in school work?
- To what extent can you help your students to value learning?
- To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
- To what extent can you get students to follow class rules?
- To what extent can you calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
- To what extent can you establish a classroom management system with each group/year level of students?
- To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
- To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
- To what extent can you assist families in helping their children do well at school?
- To what extent can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?
- To what extent can you effectively plan backwards, from lessons to units?
- To what extent can you create ambitious goals for student growth?
- To what extent can you present content and ideas in a clear and engaging manner?
- To what extent can you facilitate and manage highly productive student work?
- To what extent can you build and facilitate effective teamwork within your classroom?

6.2 Please also rate the following:

1. Overall, how effective are you at assisting students to learn and improve?
 2. How effective are teachers generally at assisting students to learn and improve?
- [nine point scale not at all effective -highly effective]

6.4 We would like you to rate your level of effective knowledge on the following skills. By effective knowledge we mean knowledge that you can apply in the classroom to assist student learning.

Please rate yourself AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF YOUR TEACHING ASSIGNMENT and NOW

[Four point scale very ineffective-very effective]

How effective was/is your knowledge of

- How students learn
- How children develop
- Designing engaging learning tasks
- Using a variety of resources and technologies for teaching
- Designing assessment
- Giving students feedback
- The subjects you teach
- Strategies to teach content in your subject areas
- Monitoring student progress and making adjustment to your teaching

- Developing good relations with students
- Developing good relations with parents and the community
- Developing good relations with colleagues
- Treating students equitably
- Sources of student diversity
- The legal and ethical obligations of teaching
- Discovering students' prior learning in a topic area
- Classroom management principles

6.5 What do you think are your greatest strengths as a teacher?
[open response]

6.6 What are your greatest professional development needs?
[open response]

7.0 Current Teaching Context

7.1 Thinking of your placement school, how would you rate the:
[four point scale Poor -Excellent]

- Level of collegiality and staff relations
- Staff relationships with students
- Level of support given to teachers
- Level of support you have received
- Level of support given to students
- Relationships with parents and the community
- Emphasis on teaching and learning
- Level of resources, such books, computer equipment, teaching resources.
- Facilities, grounds and buildings
- Communication, formal and informal
- Leadership in the school, thinking broadly, that is, not just the school executive
- Opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge
- Opportunities to have a say in school decision-making or to exercise leadership

7.2 Have you been asked/required to teach outside of your two learning areas? [yes/no]

7.2a Are you involved in team teaching with other members of staff? [Never, sometimes, often, always]

7.2b What is your experience of team teaching [four point scale, very negative - very positive]

7.3 How satisfied are you with teaching as a profession generally?
[seven point scale – highly dissatisfied-highly satisfied]

7.4 How has your satisfaction changed since you commenced teaching?
[seven point scale – now more highly dissatisfied-now more highly satisfied]

7.5 Have your views of teaching changed as a result of your experiences to date [yes/no]
If YES, in what ways? [open ended]

8.0 Co-Curricular Activities

8.1 Please indicate your participation in any of the following activities.
[None/Participate/Lead/Started]

- Clubs, e.g. chess, science, public speaking
- Sports
- Music, performing arts, school productions
- Coaching/tutoring, including homework club
- Camps and excursions
- School wide committees
- Students' Representative Council or similar
- Other, please specify

8.2 How satisfied are you with your involvement in co-curricular activities?
[seven point scale – highly dissatisfied-highly satisfied]

8.3 Do you have any further comments to make about your involvement in co-curricular activities? [open response]

9.0 The Future

9.1 How likely are you to complete the two year program? [four point scale – very unlikely-very likely]

9.2 How likely are you to continue teaching beyond the two years?
[four point scale – very unlikely-to very likely]

9.3 If you plan to continue teaching beyond your program, would you like to continue to teach at your current school? [Yes/no/unsure]

9.4 Do you plan to do further study in the area of [school/teacher] education following your two year course? [Yes/no/unsure]

9.5 If YES, what do you plan to study? [Open response]

9.6 If you plan to stay in teaching beyond the two years, do you plan to seek promotion in teaching? [yes/no/unsure]

9.7 If you do not plan to continue teaching beyond the program, how likely are you to continue working to address educational disadvantage through a different career path?
[four point scale – very unlikely-to very likely]

9.8 How has participating in the TFA initiative contributed to your personal development generally? [open response]

Appendix 4: Phase 3 Principal Survey

1. Are you: Principal, Campus Principal, Assistant/Deputy Principal
2. Please indicate how many Associates from each Cohort started teaching at the school, and whether you were involved in the decision to employ them:
 1. Cohort 1 (started in 2010) ---- Involved in decision to employ (yes, no)
 2. Cohort 2 (started in 2011)---- Involved in decision to employ (yes, no)
 3. Cohort 3 (started in 2012) ---- Involved in decision to employ (yes, no)
3. How many Cohort 4 Associates (starting in 2013) are you intending to employ?
 1. None, the school has no vacancies
 2. None, no Associates available in the subject areas the school needs
 3. None (for reasons see text box)
 4. 1
 5. 2
 6. 3
 7. 4 or more

(where applicable based on 3 and 4 above)
4. Having had Associates in your school, if you did not have any in a following year, why not?
 1. No vacancy
 2. No Associates available in the subject areas the school needed
 3. Other (provide text box and ask for the reasons)
5. Please indicate the importance of each of the following factors in your school's decision to employ Associates for the *first* time.
(if you were not aware of any of the following factors when you first participated in the initiative, please indicate 'not aware' rather than 'not at all important')
[1 Not at all important, 2 a little important, 3 somewhat important, 4 quite important, 5 very important 6 Not aware]
 1. Associate subject expertise
 2. An alternative method of recruitment for a hard-to-staff school
 3. Endorsement of the program by other principals
 4. The anticipated academic quality of the Associates
 5. The anticipated leadership potential of the Associates
 6. Confidence in the TFA selection process
 7. The training provided to Associates by University of Melbourne
 8. Opportunity for the school to contribute to teacher training
 9. Associate experience in a previous career/industry
 10. The level of external support given to Associates
 11. The Mentor training by the University of Melbourne
 12. The Associates' stated desire to make a difference
 13. The Associates' 2-year commitment to the school
 14. The level of funding support provided by the Department
 15. Opportunity to reinvigorate existing staff

6. If you have employed, or intend to employ, a second group of Associates after the first group please indicate the importance of each of the following factors in your school's decision to employ the subsequent group.
[1 Not at all important, 2 a little important, 3 somewhat important, 4 quite important, 5 very important]
 1. The quality of previous Associates
 2. Associate subject expertise
 3. An alternative method of recruitment for a hard-to-staff school
 4. The anticipated academic quality of the Associates
 5. The anticipated leadership potential of the Associates
 6. The TFA selection process
 7. The training provided to Associates by University of Melbourne
 8. Opportunity for the school to contribute to teacher training
 9. The level of external support given to Associates
 10. The Mentor training by MGSE
 11. The Associates' stated desire to make a difference
 12. The Associates' 2-year commitment to the school
 13. The level of funding support provided by the Department
 14. Opportunity to reinvigorate existing staff
 15. Associate experience in a previous career/industry
7. How many Cohort 1 Associates (who completed the program at the end of 2011) have stayed teaching at the school?
8. How many Cohort 1 Associates left after completing their two years?
9. Please indicate your understanding of the reasons Cohort 1 Associates left the school (tick all that apply)
 1. No vacancy at the school
 2. To move to another school
 3. To continue study
 4. Not continuing in teaching
 5. To move into other (non-teaching) employment
 6. Other (text box)
10. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements rating your experience of the TFA program overall:
1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neither agree or disagree 4 agree 5 strongly agree
 1. The TFA program is well organised
 2. The school has benefited from involvement in the TFA program
 3. TFA Associates have positively impacted on student achievement
 4. TFA Associates have positively impacted on student engagement
 5. Associates have had a positive impact on other teachers
 6. Subject to vacancies, our school would like ongoing involvement in the TFA program
 7. We would reconsider involvement in the TFA program if all the Associates left the school after 2 years
 8. We would reconsider involvement in the TFA program if all the Associates left teaching after 2 years
 9. The MGSE Mentor training has had a positive impact on participating teachers
 10. Associates are well supported by the TFA Training and Leadership Adviser
 11. Associates are well supported by the MGSE Clinical Specialist
 12. The TFA focus on leadership has been beneficial to the school

13. The level of external support provided to Associates is appropriate
 14. Associates have integrated well into the school
 15. Associates demonstrate leadership skills
 16. Associates are effective teachers within their first 6 months
 17. Associates are effective teachers within their first 6-12 months
 18. Associates are effective teachers in their second year
 19. I would recommend the TFA program to other principals
 20. The TFA program is cost-effective at the school level
 21. Schools are provided with sufficient information to make an appropriate decision on whether to participate in the program.
 22. Schools are provided with an appropriate level of support if an issue arises with one of the Associates
 23. The employment-based nature of the TFA program is an effective way to train teachers
11. Overall, how effective would you rate Associates *as teachers* compared to graduate teachers with the same amount of time in your school:
 1. in the first 6 months
 2. in the first 6-12 months
 3. in the second year

[1 Much less effective, 2 A little less effective, 3 About the same 4 more effective, 5 much more effective]
 12. Overall, how effective would you rate Associates *as involved, participating members of staff* compared to graduate teachers with the same amount of time in your school:
 1. in the first 6 months
 2. in the first 6-12 months
 3. in the second year

[1 Much less effective, 2 A little less effective, 3 About the same 4 more effective, 5 much more effective]
 13. Did you find the Associate(s) needed any extra support in the first 6 months? [yes, no]
If yes, how did you provide that support? (text box)
 14. What are the greatest strengths of the TFA initiative? (text box)
Are there any weaknesses in the TFA initiative, or any ways in which the program might be improved? (text box)
 15. Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they? (text box)
 16. How could the TFA pathway be effectively marketed to schools? (text box)
 17. Did you use the Principals' Portal to find out more information about the Associates before they started in your school? (Yes/No) If yes, how useful did you find the portal, and in what ways was it most useful? (text box)
 19. If there are any further comments you would like to make about the TFA initiative, issues you would like to raise, or suggestions, please do so here. (text box)

Appendix 5: Phase 3 Interview guides

Phase 3 Interview guide – DEEWR Staff

1.0 TFA

- 1.1 TFA marketing and recruitment is considered by stakeholders to be highly successful. What are your views on how this may affect - the status of teaching? – the retention of Associates in teaching?
- 1.2 Other than marketing and recruitment, what elements of TFA's (the organisation) role are key factors in the development of high-quality teachers? What evidence do you have for this?

2.0 Business partnerships, finance & the future

- 2.1 How do you see business involved in TFA in terms of financial sustainability (note TFA's unsuccessful application for DGR tax status)?
- 2.2 How do you see business involved in the TFA program in terms of developing and retaining high quality teachers?
- 2.3 How could the TFA Pathway be made more cost-effective?
- 2.4 What are the potential/ongoing barriers to national implementation? How can these be overcome and in what time-line?

3.0 Teaching and employment-based education

- 3.1 The evaluation has identified that Associates' first weeks teaching are highly stressful and that they lack the opportunity to observe and practise teaching. What is your response to this issue?
- 3.2 What aspects of TFA's model contribute to the development of effective teachers? What aspects of the university preparation program contribute to developing teacher effectiveness? What are the challenges? How do you see this working if implementation is managed across more states in the future?
- 3.3 What are your views on the extent to which the TFA Pathway can contribute to raising the quality of teaching?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What do you see are the benefits of the MGSE mentor training program? What are the challenges?
- 4.2 What can other teacher education providers learn from the TFA Pathway model?
- 4.3 How might learning from the TFA Pathway shape future government policy in teacher education?
- 4.4 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 4.5 Do you have anything further that you would like to add?

Phase 3 Interview guide – DEECD staff

5.0 Victoria, school support and national implementation

- 5.1 Has the TFA initiative changed much over the last year? At this point how successful do you feel it has been in Victoria?
- 5.2 What elements of the TFA initiative are attractive to employers of teachers (such as DEECD?) Why has it gained the degree of support it now has? Do you see this as being likely to continue?
- 5.3 Has the TFA program helped to address the problems of disadvantage in Victorian schools? If yes, how has it achieved this and to what extent?
- 5.4 What advantages does the TFA program have over traditional teacher education pathways? What are the disadvantages?
- 5.5 What do you consider to be the key factors for success in Victoria and how have these areas developed to date? What were the main impeding factors and how were they overcome?
- 5.6 Associates' first weeks teaching are sometimes difficult. Is that your experience of the situation? If YES, do you see any workable solution? If NO, what has been your experience?
- 5.7 What is your perception of the 'schools roadshow' where TFA, MGSE and DEECD jointly present to schools? About how many schools attended the roadshow in the past 12 months/ Are more schools taking up the option of the TFA Pathway?
- 5.8 Have you received any feedback from the regions/schools about the TFA Pathway? Is the program sustainable? If not, why? What would need to change to make it sustainable?
- 5.9 Are schools receiving appropriate support? Do schools remain willing to accept Associates? What factors attract schools to take TFA associates? What are the disincentives?
- 5.10 Do you have any opinion about why the initiative has not been more widely adopted in other sectors and states? Could these be overcome and in what time-line?

6.0 Finance & business partnership

- 6.1 From your perspective, is the TFA Pathway cost effective? What would improve its cost effectiveness?
- 6.2 How extensive is business involvement in TFA? How has business been involved to date? From DEECD's perspective how important is business involvement in the program?

7.0 Teaching

- 7.1 What are your current views of the TFA model and the development of effective teachers? How does it compare with more traditional teacher education pathways? Have your views changed as a result of your involvement so far? In what ways?
- 7.2 What are your views of the TFA model as training for the development of future leaders in education and other areas?
- 7.3 What evidence do you have that TFA Associates are having an impact on student achievement in the schools in which they teach?
- 7.4 What has been the impact of the initiative in the schools where it has been adopted?
- 7.5 Has the initiative had any impact beyond the participating schools, for example on other schools or on the status of teaching?

7.6 What is your view of the MGSE teacher Mentor training? Have you had any feedback from schools?

8.0 General

8.1 What is your current overall perception of the TFA initiative?

8.2 How could the program be improved?

8.3 Is DET likely to continue its involvement beyond Cohort 3? What are the reasons for that decision?

8.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?

8.5 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – ACT ETD, NT DET staff

ACT ETD

1.0 The ACT, school support and national implementation

- 1.1 Has the TFA initiative changed much over the last year? At this point how successful do you feel it has been in the ACT?
- 1.2 What features of the TFA initiative do you find most attractive? Are there any features you have doubts about?
- 1.3 How successful has the TFA initiative been in addressing disadvantage among students?
- 1.4 What do you consider to be the key factors for success in the ACT and how have these areas developed to date?
- 1.5 Associates' first weeks teaching are sometimes difficult. Is that your experience of the situation? If YES, do you see any workable solution? If NO, what has been your experience?
- 1.6 What feedback have you received from the schools? Is the program sustainable in schools? If not, why? What would need to change to make it sustainable? Are schools receiving appropriate support?
- 1.7 What are the potential barriers to national implementation? How can these be overcome and in what time-line?

2.0 Finance & business partnership

- 2.1 From your perspective, is the TFA Pathway cost effective? What would improve its cost effectiveness?
- 2.2 How extensive is business involvement in TFA (in terms of financial sustainability and Associate development/engagement)? How has business been involved to date? From your department's perspective how important is business involvement in the program?

3.0 Teaching

- 3.1 What are your current views of the TFA model and the development of effective teachers? How does it compare with more traditional pathways? What are the key similarities? differences? Have your views changed as a result of your involvement so far? In what ways?
- 3.2 What are your views about the program's aim to attract and develop future leaders in education and other fields?
- 3.3 What evidence do you have that TFA Associates are having an impact on student achievement in the schools in which they teach?
- 3.4 What has been the impact of the initiative in the schools where it has been adopted?
- 3.5 Has the initiative had any impact beyond the participating schools, for example on other schools or the status of teaching?
- 3.6 Do you think the program has the capacity to improve the status of the teaching profession? How and why?
- 3.7 What is your view of the MGSE teacher Mentor training? Have you had any feedback from schools?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 4.2 How could the program be improved?

- 4.3 Is ETD likely to continue its involvement beyond Cohort 3? What are the reasons for that decision?
- 4.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.5 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

NT DET

1.0 Background

- 1.1 What were the reasons behind the decision to create a new pathway into teaching in the Northern Territory, and why was the TFA model chosen?
- 1.2 To what extent is the pathway helping to overcome disadvantage among students in the schools involved?

2.0 The NT, school support and national implementation

- 2.1 What do you consider to be the key factors for success in the NT and how have these areas developed to date?
- 2.2 What feedback have you received from the schools involved? What is your perception of the program at this point? Is the program sustainable in the NT? If not, why? What would need to change to make it sustainable? Are schools receiving appropriate support?
- 2.3 What are the potential barriers to national implementation? How can these be overcome and in what time-line?
- 2.4 What are the potential barriers to further implementation in the NT? How can these be overcome and in what timeline?

3.0 Finance & business partnership

- 3.1 What does cost effectiveness mean in the context of teacher preparation? What aspects of TFA make it cost effective or otherwise? What could improve its cost effectiveness?
- 3.2 Has NT incurred expenses specifically related to TFA? How do these compare to costs in relation to other teacher education pathways? Are they 'start up' costs, or are they likely to continue?
- 3.3 How extensive is business involvement in TFA? How has business been involved to date? From your department's perspective how important is business involvement in the program?

4.0 Teaching

- 4.1 What are your views of the TFA model and the development of effective teachers?
- 4.2 What are the key differences between this model and other teacher-education pathways?
- 4.3 Associates' first weeks teaching are sometimes difficult. Is that your experience of the situation? If YES, do you see any workable solution? If NO, what has been your experience?
- 4.4 What are your views of the TFA model in terms of the development of future leaders in education and other fields?
- 4.5 Are associates receiving appropriate support?
- 4.6 What is your view of the MGSE teacher Mentor training? Have you had any feedback from schools?
- 4.7 Is the TFA model likely to improve the status of teaching as a profession? Why? In what ways?

5.0 General

- 5.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 5.2 In what ways could the program be improved?

- 5.3 Is ETD likely to continue its involvement beyond Cohort 3? What are the reasons for that decision?
- 5.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 5.5 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – VIT staff

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Has the VIT position on the TFA initiative changed over time? In what ways?
- 1.2 Does VIT/do you see the TFA as being a viable alternative path to teaching in the future?
- 1.3 What are its advantages/disadvantages compared with more traditional pathways?
- 1.4 What do you see as the reasons for the introduction of TFA? What issues was it trying to resolve? Has it succeeded?

2.0 Permission to teach and registration

- 2.1 Have there been any ongoing issues with PTT or provisional/full registration, that you are aware of? If so, what are they and have they been resolved?
- 2.2 Have arrangements made with MGSE to ensure the TFA course is in alignment with VIT requirements been successful? In what way?
- 2.3 How have recent changes connected to AITSL's new national course accreditation functions affected the TFA teacher education program?

3.0 Schools and Associates

- 3.1 Have you received any feedback about the Associates and their performance as teachers?
- 3.2 What is your view of the MGSE teacher Mentor training? Have you had any feedback about this aspect of the Pathway? How does it link to the VIT mentor training?
- 3.3 In your view, is the TFA Pathway having an influence on perceptions of teaching?
- 3.4 Do you have any evidence of this?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of TFA (the organisation) and TfA (the program)? Is the program sustainable?
- 4.2 Has VIT had consultations with registration authorities in other states about the program? Has there been consultation with AITSL? Is a "national position" about the pathway developing among the teacher registration authorities?
- 4.3 Are there barriers to it going nationwide? What are these?
- 4.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.5 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – MGSE Staff

1.0 Course

- 1.1 What major or significant adjustments has MGSE made as a result of feedback (from Associates, departments, the evaluation) on the course: to the intensive, to subject content, to assessment – content and timing, to communication processes?
- 1.2 Are you aware of Associates in C2 or C3 who have had any difficulties with the course or at school? What were these? To what do you attribute these difficulties?
- 1.3 What MGSE procedures are in place for helping Associates who experience difficulties? Are the roles of various stakeholders clearly defined in such cases?
- 1.4 How are the roles of the Mentors, CSs and TLAs evolving? Are communication processes working?
- 1.5 Have you made any changes to the Mentor course, and if so, what/why? What feedback have you received from mentors/schools about the mentor course?
- 1.6 Does the amount of teaching undertaken by Associates impact upon their engagement with coursework? In what ways? How do they compare with MTeach students?
- 1.7 By their second year, Associates have had a lot of teaching experience. Are you able to (have you) tailor the course and assessment to incorporate that experience? In what ways?
- 1.8 What are the advantages/disadvantages of this model in comparison to the 1.9 MTeach/other models of teacher preparation?
- 1.9 In your opinion, how is the balance between teaching and teacher education working in the TFA Pathway? Would you change anything? If so, what/why?

2.0 Associates

- 2.1 Have you noticed any differences between the current cohort of TFA Associates and the first and second cohorts? If so, to what do you attribute these differences?
- 2.2 Have you noticed any differences between cohorts of TFA Associates and cohorts of PSTs in other pre service education courses you have been involved with? (a) at the start of the course? (b) as they progress through the course?
- 2.3 To what extent do you think the recruitment program has an impact on the ability of Associates to be good teachers (eg, not recruited solely on academic ability)?
- 2.4 How is the second cohort of Associates progressing in their second year? What are their particular strengths? Developmental needs?
- 2.5 How is the third cohort progressing?
- 2.6 Associates' first weeks teaching are sometimes difficult as there is little opportunity to observe and practise teaching prior to entering schools. Is that your experience of the situation? If YES, do you see any workable solution? If NO, what has been your experience?
- 2.7 What evidence do you have that TFA Associates are having an impact on student achievement in the schools in which they teach?
- 2.8 Do you have any evidence that they having an effect on the wider school community?

3.0 Finance, Sustainability

- 3.1 What are likely to be barriers to national implementation and how may these be overcome?
- 3.2 How do you see national implementation affecting your program?
- 3.3 How have you catered for ACT and NT requirements?

- 3.4 The Initial Intensive takes place during what would usually be a holiday or research period for staff. How does this affect staff availability and the sustainability of the program?
- 3.5 What does cost effectiveness mean in the context of teacher preparation? What aspects of the TFA program make it cost effective or otherwise? How could this be improved?

4.0 Alumni and General

- 4.1 What role do you see the Cohort One Alumni playing, now that they have finished the program?
- 4.2 How are relations among the stakeholders evolving?
- 4.3 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 4.4 Is it having an effect on how teaching is perceived?
- 4.5 In what ways could the pathway be improved?
- 4.6 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.7 Do you think the Pathway will continue and if so, do you think MGSE will continue to be involved?
- 4.8 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview Guide – Clinical Specialists

1.0 Your role

- 1.1 What is your involvement with the *TFA* initiative? What is your role?
- 1.2 How/why did you become involved in the role?
- 1.3 How many Associates do you support (first years/second years)? How often do you visit them? What other forms of communication do you have? What support do you provide to Associates?
- 1.4 You also assess Associates. What does that involve? Are there differences between the first and second year assessments?
- 1.5 How well do the Associates perform in the classroom? What are the major factors involved in their performance?
- 1.6 Do you collect data on their students' performance? If so, what kind of data? For what purpose? How is it used?
- 1.7 How would you say the Associates compare to other trainee teachers? At the beginning of the program? In their second year? (and what is your experience of other teacher training methods and other trainee teachers?)
- 1.8 Can you tell me a little about how you work with other members of the support team, for example Mentors, Training and Leadership Advisors. How do your roles complement each other? Are there any uncertainties about roles and responsibilities? Any tensions?
- 1.9 What support do you receive to perform your role? Do you need more support? If so, what do you need?

2.0 The TFA Pathway

- 2.1 What is your general perception of the *TFA* initiative?
- 2.2 What are the program's strongest points? What aspects of the program are critical to its success?
- 2.3 What do you see as the major outcomes from the program?
- 2.4 Does it have any weaknesses? What are these?
- 2.5 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 2.6 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 2.7 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience of the program?

Phase 3 Interview guide – TFA Staff

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 What have been the major learnings in 2011 leading into 2012 and what if any changes have been introduced in response to those learnings?
- 1.2 Have there been any other developments for the third year of the operation of the TFA initiative?
- 1.3 What have been the major barriers to extending the program to other states and systems? What would help to overcome these?
- 1.4 What advantages/disadvantages does the TFA program have over more traditional pathways? How is it different?

2.0 Finance & business partnership

- 2.1 What role are businesses playing in the initiative? What progress has been made in developing partnerships with business?
- 2.2 What are the key points for successful and sustainable business participation?
- 2.3 Is the current model for financing sustainable? If not, why not?

3.0 Associate recruitment

- 3.1 How successful has Associate recruitment been? What are the key factors for successful recruitment? Have any changes been made for this year's cohort?
- 3.2 To what do you attribute the apparent success of the TFA recruitment processes so far?
- 3.3 Is the model of recruitment sustainable in the long-term? Does anything need to change (e.g. school vacancy system, number of applicants)?

4.0 School recruitment

- 4.1 What are the key factors for school recruitment success?
- 4.2 Just how successful has school recruitment been, and is the model sustainable long-term?
- 4.3 How well have schools been prepared for their role supporting associates? What changes, if any, have been made based on experience to date?

5.0 MGSE training

- 5.1 What are your views on the MGSE Postgraduate diploma (TFA)?
- 5.2 Is the current TFA teacher education model sustainable? What changes, if any, would you suggest?
- 5.3 What do you see as the main differences between the TFA model of teacher training and other, comparable programs? What are the disadvantages/advantages of TFA v. other models?
- 5.4 What are your views on the MGSE Mentor training program?

6.0 Associate support/mentoring

- 6.1 How has TFA been involved in the support and mentoring of Associates? (e.g., during intensive, while in-school, what channels – phone, email, internet etc.)
- 6.2 What is the role of the TLA and how has it developed over the year? Have any changes been made for Cohort 3?
- 6.3 How is TFA involved in supporting Associates during the 2 years (other than at intensives and the TLA)?
- 6.4 In what ways does TFA evaluate Associates' experience of the program?

- 6.5 Associates' first weeks teaching are sometimes difficult as there is little opportunity to observe and practise teaching prior to entering schools. Is that your experience of the situation? If YES, do you see any workable solution? If NO, what has been your experience?
- 6.6 How has business been involved in Associate support/mentoring/leadership development?
- 6.7 What is in place to support an associate in difficulties? (what possible areas of difficulty have been recognised?) Have these support mechanisms been utilised successfully? Have they changed as a result of experiences in the first two years?

7.0 Alumni and General

- 7.1 What role do you see the Cohort One Alumni playing now that they have finished the program?
- 7.2 What evidence do you have that TFA associates are having an impact on student achievement in the schools in which they teach?
- 7.3 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 7.4 How are relations among the stakeholders evolving?
- 7.5 What is your perception of the reaction of the media? The general public?
- 7.6 In what ways might the TFA pathway be raising the status of teaching, in your view?
- 7.7 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 7.8 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Training and Leadership Advisers

1.0 Your role

- 1.1 What is your involvement with the *TFA* initiative? What is your role?
- 1.2 How/why did you become involved in the role?
- 1.3 Were you previously involved in the *TFA* initiative? If yes, has it changed since last year and if so, how? The TLA role was new last year. How has it changed/developed since then?
- 1.4 How many Associates do you support? How often do you visit them? What other forms of communication do you have? What support do you provide to Associates?
- 1.5 How well do the Associates perform in the classroom? Do you collect data on their students' performance? If so, what kind of data? For what purpose? How is it used?
- 1.6 How would you say the Associates compare to other trainee teachers? (and what is your experience of other teacher training methods and other trainee teachers?)
- 1.7 Can you tell me a little about how you work with other members of the support team, for example Mentors, Clinical Specialists. How do your roles complement each other? Are there any uncertainties about roles and responsibilities? Any tensions?
- 1.8 What support do you receive to perform your role? Do you need more support? If so, what do you need?

2.0 General

- 2.1 What is your general perception of the *TFA* initiative?
- 2.2 How is it different to other programs of teacher preparation?
- 2.3 What are the program's strongest points? What aspects of the program are critical to its success?
- 2.4 What do you see as the major outcomes from the program?
- 2.5 Does it have any weaknesses? What are these?
- 2.6 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 2.7 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Cohort 1 Associates, Post TFA

1.0 Teaching

- 1.1 You've completed the TFA Pathway. What are you doing now? What position are you in? Have you completed a Master of Teaching or in the process of/intending to complete it?
- 1.2 From your present standpoint, what do you see as the major incentives/disincentives of a career in teaching?

For those still teaching

- 1.3 Why did you choose to stay at this school/move to another school?
- 1.4 How long are you currently planning to stay in teaching? In this school?
- 1.5 Would you like to stay mainly in a classroom position? Take on a formal leadership role? Other?

For those not teaching

- 1.6 Do you see your current role as contributing addressing educational disadvantage? If so, how?
- 1.7 Do you plan to return to teaching at any point? Why/not? If so, when?
- 1.8 If you are not in education, do you plan to return to the field of education more broadly? Why/not? If so when? What area?
- 1.9 Did(will) your TFA experience and/or the TFA organisation/brand help you to get this(a) job?
- 1.10 Were there any aspects of your experience as a TFA Associate which helped you in your current position? What were they?

2.0 Looking back on the experience

- 2.1 What are your views now about the TFA organisation? Have your views changed?
- 2.2 What are your views now about MGSE and your teaching course? Have your views changed?
- 2.3 What are your views now about your placement school? Have your views changed?
- 2.4 What are your views now about teaching as a career? Have your views changed?
- 2.5 Of your total experience, what were the highlights? The 'lowlights'?
- 2.6 What would you keep the same, what really worked for you?
- 2.7 What would you change, and why?
- 2.8 How successful do you think the TFA program has been so far in meeting its objective of redressing educational disadvantage?

3.0 Leadership

- 3.1 The TFA program places emphasis on leadership. In what ways did it develop your leadership skills? Do you see yourself as a leader? Do you agree that classroom teaching is/requires leadership?
- 3.2 Do you see yourself in a leadership position in the future (say, 5 years)? Will your classroom experience help in future leadership roles? What kind of position would do you see yourself in?
- 3.3 Did you undertake a leadership role in your school? How were you chosen? What did you learn from the experience?

4.0 Alumni

- 4.1 Will you participate in the TFA Alumni program? If yes, what do you see as the benefits of being in the alumni program? If no, why not?
- 4.2 If yes, in what ways do you expect (or would you like) to be involved (in what ways have you been involved)?

5.0 General

- 5.1 In your opinion, did you have a positive impact on your students' achievement during the two year program and/or after? If so, in what way(s)? Do you have any evidence of this?
- 5.2 Do you think, overall, the TFA Pathway produces high quality teachers? What makes the program successful, or not, in your view? What are the key elements? What advantages, if any, does it have over more traditional pathways? Any disadvantages?
- 5.3 Are there any lessons from the TFA Pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 5.4 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 5.5 Many Associates found the first few weeks in school very difficult. What is your view now? What changes would you make to those first weeks, if you could?
- 5.6 Do you think the program is cost effective for government and schools? Why/not?
- 5.7 Is there any way that it could be made more cost effective?
- 5.8 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experiences in the program?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Cohort 2 Associates, Year 2

1.0 Ongoing training and support

- 1.1 What are your views on the distance learning aspect of the MGSE course? The MGSE component of the end of year intensive? (and the 2nd midyear intensive if completed)? Would you change anything?
- 1.2 You're in your second year. Is the MGSE course helping you to improve as a teacher? In what ways (or why not)?
- 1.3 Have the MGSE course / assessment and your experiences at the school been explicitly linked? Can you give examples?
- 1.4 What is the role of the Clinical Specialist in your case? How is your teaching supported by them? Assessed by them? Can you give me an example? Would you change anything about the CS role?
- 1.5 How have you found the training provided by TFA at the end of year/midyear intensives? How has it helped your teaching? Has it met your needs?
- 1.6 What is the role of the Training and Leadership Adviser in your case? How is your teaching supported by them? Assessed by them? What other contributions have they made to your experience? Can you give me an example? Would you change anything about the role?
- 1.7 How well do you think your leadership skills have been developed thus far? What has helped/not helped in this process? Have you had the opportunity to develop/demonstrate them?

2.0 Placement school

- 2.1 What are your views on your placement school? Have these developed or changed since last year?
- 2.2 Could you say a little about the experience of teaching in this school? What are the particular challenges and rewards of teaching here?
- 2.3 Have perceptions of the TFA pathway at the school changed? If so, how have they changed and what would be your perceptions of why they have changed?
- 2.4 Is the TFA program becoming known in the wider school and local community?
- 2.5 Are you aware of any changes in the school that could be attributed to you and other TFA Associates?
- 2.6 How effective has your mentoring relationship been? How has it changed over the time that you have been at the school? Examples?
- 2.7 What aspects of the mentoring relationship have helped you to develop as an effective teacher? What aspects, if any, have restricted your development as an effective teacher?
- 2.8 What kind/s of support are you receiving from other personnel within the school?
- 2.9 Which kind/s of support has been the most help? What additional support would you like, if any?

3.0 Teaching and involvement

- 3.1 Has your teaching changed since the first year? What are you doing differently? 3.2 What do you think that you are doing better? What are your current professional development needs? How do you plan to address these?
- 3.2 How effective is your teaching? How do you know that students are learning?
- 3.3 What other influence do you have on your students?
- 3.4 To what extent do you think you have been able to contribute to redressing disadvantage in the school?

- 3.5 Are you involved in other aspects of school life, outside classroom teaching? If so, what is this involvement? How are you finding this involvement? How important do you believe it is?
- 3.6 To what extent have you become involved in the broader community beyond the school? How has this impacted on your role and relationships within the school?

4.0 General

- 4.1 Have you been supported by other Associates? Associates from your year (cohort)?
- 4.2 Your school or elsewhere? Your subject area? In what ways have you been (examples)? How effective do you think that support has been?
- 4.3 Have you been involved in providing support for other Associates? In what ways?
- 4.4 I understand you have the option of a 'leadership coach' (business coach/mentor) in your 2nd year. Can you tell me a little about that relationship? How does it relate to your teaching?
- 4.5 What is your overall perception of the TFA program?
- 4.6 In what ways could it be improved?
- 4.7 Do you think that your opinions are typical of Associates generally? How/Why?
- 4.8 Do you intend to stay in teaching after the 2 years? Why/not? Will you complete the MTeach? Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- 4.9 Do you see yourself as having a role as a Teach For Australia alumni?
- 4.10 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Cohort 1 Associates, Year 3

1.0 Recruitment

- 1.1 How did you hear about TFA and why did you apply?
- 1.2 Would you have considered teaching were it not for the TFA program? If yes, would you have applied to another teacher education program?
- 1.3 What aspects of the TFA program/marketing were you attracted to? What aspects of the marketing did you feel less attracted to, if any?
- 1.4 What aspects of the recruitment process did you find challenging? Highlighted your skills? Do you think anything needs to be changed in order to select the best possible candidates?

2.0 Initial intensive/ongoing training

- 2.1 How did you find the Initial Intensive? Did the experience of the intensive match your expectations? How well did the course provide you with preparation for teaching generally? /for the specific subjects you teach? Looking back, what, if anything, would you change?
- 2.2 For which aspects of teaching do you feel the course best prepared you? For which aspects were you least prepared?
- 2.3 How are you finding the ongoing, distance learning so far? (if completed, how was the midyear intensive?) Do the course and related assessments have explicit links to your work as a teacher at the school?
- 2.4 What do you understand the TFA Leadership Framework to be? Is it relevant to your teaching practice? If so, how?
- 2.5 How relevant do you think the TFA Leadership Development Program is to a) your teaching? b) your future plans? Can you explain?

3.0 Placement school and support

- 3.1 When and how were you introduced to your placement school? How do you feel about the school community (students/staff)? How have they responded to you (and your TFA peers)? What 'induction' did you receive to the school and your role?
- 3.2 What did you expect your early experiences in the classroom to be like? How did the reality match your expectations?
- 3.3 How did you find the first few days and weeks in school? What made the experience of beginning teaching easier/more difficult?
- 3.4 How effective is your mentoring relationship in supporting you to develop your teaching? in allowing you to integrate into the life of the school? What factors aid or impede its effectiveness?
- 3.5 What are the roles of the Clinical Specialist and Training and Leadership Adviser in your case? How do they support you personally/professionally?
- 3.6 What other support have you received (e.g. from other school staff/Associates)? 3.7 What support have you found most helpful? Why? Would you like any additional support or can you suggest any changes to the current support model?

4.0 Teaching and involvement

- 4.1 What have been the challenges / rewards for you in this first experience of teaching? What has your teaching experience been like so far? What is it like to be in class?
- 4.2 Have you been involved in any professional learning at or through the school? If so, has it been useful?

- 4.3 Are you involved in other aspects of school life, outside teaching? How are you finding this involvement?
- 4.4 To what extent do you believe you have been able to contribute to redressing disadvantage among students in the school?

5.0 General

- 5.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA program? Has it changed from your initial perceptions when you were originally attracted to the program?
- 5.2 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 5.3 Do you think you will complete the 2 year program? Do you intend to stay in teaching after the 2 years? Why/not? Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- 5.4 Would you recommend the Teach For Australia program to other suitable applicants? Why / why not?

Phase 3 Interview guide – New Teacher Mentors

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Why did you get involved as a Mentor? What did you see yourself gaining from involvement?
- 1.2 What was your initial reaction to the TFA concept (not the associates personally)?

2.0 Associate placement and support

- 2.1 How well prepared did you think the school (or your campus) was to support the Associates?
- 2.2 Were the expectations of your school made clear to you/staff?
- 2.3 What has been the reaction of staff to the associates as individuals? As teachers?
- 2.4 How supportive is the school of your role as mentor? How have they demonstrated this?

2.0 Associate teaching and involvement

- 2.1 How have students responded to your Associate so far? How has the Associate responded to the students? To being in the classroom?
- 2.2 Does the Associate demonstrate the skills and knowledge that you would expect of a recent graduate from a teacher education course? Now? At the very start of his/her teaching assignment?
- 2.3 From what you have seen so far, do you think the TFA 'employment-based teacher training' model will produce quality teachers at the end of the 2 years? (in comparison to other pathways?) Why/why not?
- 2.4 To what extent have Associates involved themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities? (compared to other beginning teachers/other staff in the school)

3.0 The Mentor role

- 3.1 Have you mentored a beginning teacher before? How were you selected for this role?
- 3.2 Have you undertaken the MGSE mentor training? If yes, did you undertake the assessed/non-assessed version of the course? Why? How useful was the training? In what way did the training change your perceptions of mentoring/of teaching? Have you had any other mentor training?
- 3.3 Has mentoring assisted in your own professional growth and if so, how?
- 3.4 How have you mentored the Associate? What sort of assistance have you provided?
- 3.5 Can you tell me about some specific examples of assistance you provided?
- 3.6 Do you observe the Associate teaching? How often? Has the Associate observed you/others? Has this been useful?
- 3.7 How do you provide feedback to the Associate? What sorts of issues do you cover?
- 3.8 How do you interact with Training and Leadership Advisers and Clinical Specialists?
- 3.9 Are there structural-type factors that make your mentoring role harder or easier, e.g. teaching in the same subject area or being in the same staffroom?
- 3.10 Is any of your mentoring done as part of a team-teaching approach?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 4.2 What do you see as the key differences between this teacher education program and the traditional Dip Ed mode?
- 4.3 In what ways could the TFA teacher education program be improved?
- 4.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.5 Would you recommend involvement in TFA to other suitable mentors? Why/why not?
- 4.6 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Mentors, Year 2

1.0 The Program

- 1.1 How does the implementation of the program compare to last year? Have there been improvements/changes in the management of the program?
- 1.2 (if more than one cohort at the school) Are there any significant changes between the cohorts? If so, to what do you attribute the changes?
- 1.3 Have school staff perceptions/understanding of the program changed from this time last year? Why have they changed?

2.0 The Mentoring Role

- 2.1 How were you selected for the role?
- 2.2 How has your mentoring relationship with your Associate developed since last year?
- 2.3 How satisfied are you with the mentoring role? What aspects are you most/least satisfied with?
- 2.4 Has mentoring assisted your own professional growth and if so, how?
- 2.5 What support do you get to perform the role? Is this adequate? If no, what else would help?
- 2.6 Do you discuss the work of mentoring with others? Who? What sorts of things do you discuss?
- 2.7 How do you interact with Training and Leadership Advisers and Clinical Specialists?
- 2.8 How do you mentor your Associate? Has this changed? How? Do you have an assessment as well as a guiding role? How is this working?
- 2.9 What sort of assistance have you provided? Can you tell me about some specific examples of assistance you have provided?
- 2.10 Do you observe the Associate teaching? How often? How do you structure your observations?
- 2.11 How do you provide feedback to the Associate? What sorts of issues do you cover?
- 2.12 How much time, approximately, do you spend in mentoring your Associate each week?
- 2.13 What are the areas in which your Associate seems to be in most need of your mentoring and advice?

3.0 The Associate

- 3.1 How is the Associate developing as a teacher? How has his/her teaching changed and developed? Can you give an example of something s/he did particularly well? Something that indicates that s/he has some professional development need(s)?
- 3.2 To what extent are Associates involving themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities? (compared to last year/other beginning teachers/other staff in the school)
- 3.3. What is your perception of how the Associates are regarded by other members of the school Students/staff)?
- 3.4 What evidence do you have of the Associate's impact on the students s/he teaches?
- 3.5 What effects are the Associates having on the school as a whole? What changes have you seen?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your current opinion of the TFA initiative? Will it produce quality teachers?
- 4.2 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 4.3 If you were presented with the opportunity to be a mentor for a TFA Associate in the future, would you accept? Why/why not?
- 4.4 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.5 Would you recommend involvement with TFA to other suitable mentors? Why/why not?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Principals, Year 1

1.0 School involvement and Associate placement

- 1.1 Why did you choose to involve your school? What attracted you to the program?
- 1.2 Was employing a TFA Associate the only way in which the vacancy could be filled? What would have happened if no TFA Associate was available?
- 1.3 What was the initial reaction of you/your staff to the TFA concept (not the Associates personally)?
- 1.4 How many Associates do you have? What was the process for choosing specific Associates for your school?
- 1.5 Were the expectations of your school made clear to you? By the Department? By TFA? By MGSE? How well prepared did you think the school was to support the Associates?
- 1.6 What has been/is the reaction of your staff to the Associates?

2.0 Associate Support

- 2.1 What kinds of support does your school provide to Associates?
- 2.2 Do the Associates participate in an induction program? What does this involve?
- 2.3 How are the Associates supported? How well does this work?
- 2.4 What is your view of the MGSE Mentor training program? Has it had a broader impact on your school other than the direct Mentor-Associate relationship?
- 2.5 Have you or your teachers participated in any other mentor training?

3.0 Associate teaching and involvement

- 3.1 How have students responded to the Associates so far?
- 3.2 At this point, how do Associates rate against other beginning teachers (both those on practicum and those in first year out?) How did they rate in the early days and weeks?
- 3.3 From what you have seen so far, do you think the TFA ‘employment-based teacher training’ model will produce quality teachers at the end of the 2 years? (in comparison to other pathways?) Why/not?
- 3.4 Have Associates experienced any difficulties? If so how have you dealt with the issue(s)?
- 3.5 In what ways (if any) are Associates different from other beginning teachers?
- 3.6 To what extent have Associates involved themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities? Is the school collecting evidence of Associates’ impact on student learning? If so, in what ways? If not, why not? In any case, how would you assess their impact so far?
- 3.7 What impact have the Associates had on the school as a whole? What, if anything, has changed as a consequence of having them in the school?
- 3.8 What feedback have you received from the wider school community about TFA? (parents, local community)

4.0 Finance

- 4.1 What direct/indirect costs to the school result from the presence of Associates? Are there any unintended/unanticipated costs?
- 4.2 From your perspective, and compared to other teacher training models you’ve experienced, is the TFA model cost effective? Are there opportunities to make the program more cost-effective?

5.0 General

- 5.1 How successful are the Associates in helping to redress disadvantage among the students? Are they more/less/ successful than a first year graduate of a traditional teacher education program (e.g. Dip.Ed)?
- 5.2 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative? How is it different from other teacher-training programs?
- 5.3 What is your understanding of the TFA 'leadership framework'? How is the school involved and how well are the associates supported to develop leadership skills?
- 5.4 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 5.5 From what you have experienced so far, do you intend to continue a relationship with the TFA program?
- 5.6 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 5.7 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Principals, Ongoing

1.0 School involvement

- 1.1 *(for Principals not interviewed last year only)* Why did you choose to involve your school? What attracted you to the program? What did you see your school gaining from involvement?
- 1.2 How is the TFA initiative progressing at your school?
- 1.3 Have you noticed any improvements in implementation over time?
- 1.4 Have there been any issues or difficulties with communication, or processes and
- 1.5 Have you made any changes to processes, for example, induction, Mentor selection? If so, how and why?
- 1.6 Have staff perceptions of the program changed over time? If so, how have they changed?

2.0 Associates: placement, teaching and support

- 2.1 Did your school take on Cohort 3 Associates this year? Why/Why not?
- 2.2 Had you not chosen to take Associate(s) how would the vacancies have been filled?

Cohort 2 Associates in their 2nd year

- 2.3 How are the Associates developing as teachers?
- 2.4 What are their greatest strengths? Their greatest professional development needs?
- 2.5 What evidence do you have of the Associate's impact on the students s/he teaches?
- 2.6 How are students responding to the Associates in their second year?
- 2.7 How do the 2nd Year Associates rate against other beginning teachers (both those on practicum and recent graduates?) Are they different in any way?
- 2.8 To what extent are 2nd year Associates now involving themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities?
- 2.9 Would you say the Associates are demonstrating leadership skills (generally and in comparison to other beginning teachers)?
- 2.10 Have any 2nd year Associates taken on leadership positions? If so which positions, and why were the Associates chosen? Were they selected over other applicants? Does this attract additional pay?

Cohort 3 Associates in their 1st year

- 2.11 How many Cohort 3 Associates do you have?
- 2.12 What has been the reaction of your staff and students to the new Associates?
- 2.13 How do this year's Associates rate against other beginning teachers (those in first year out?)

All Associates

- 2.14 What impact have the Associates had on the school as a whole? What, if anything, has changed as a consequence of having them in the school?
- 2.15 What kinds of support does your school provide to Associates?
- 2.16 How well do you think the Associates are supported?
- 2.17 What is your understanding of the TFA 'leadership framework'? How is the school involved and how well are the associates supported to develop leadership skills?

If the school had C1 Associates

- 2.18 How many C1 Associates stayed/left? Why? (supernumerary? Other?)
- 2.19 Have you employed any former TFA Associates? If so, why?

- 2.20 (If you employed any former TFA Associates), were they Associates who had worked in your own school or a different school? How many other applicants were there for the position(s)?
- 2.21 What were the deciding factors that encouraged you to employ this person (people)?
- 2.22 Would you be inclined to employ a former TFA Associate, whom you did not know, on the basis of that person being a TFA trained teacher?
- 2.23 Do you believe that TFA Associates are focussed on careers in teaching, or have you formed an impression that they are looking to other careers and opportunities?

3.0 Finance

- 3.1 What direct/indirect costs to the school result from the presence of Associates? Are there any unintended/unanticipated costs, financial or otherwise?
- 3.2 From your perspective, and compared to other teacher training models you've experienced, is the TFA model cost effective? Are there opportunities to make the program more cost-effective?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 4.2 Is the TFA 'employment-based teacher training' model producing quality teachers at the end of the 2 years? (in comparison to other pathways?) Why/not?
- 4.3 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 4.4 Will you continue to be involved in the initiative in future? Why/Why not?
- 4.5 What feedback have you received from the wider school community about TFA? (parents, local community)
- 4.6 Are you aware of interest from other schools in your area?
- 4.7 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.8 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – New Placement school staff

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Why did your school get involved? What do you see the school gaining from involvement?
- 1.2 What was your, and your colleagues' initial reaction to the TFA concept (not the associates personally)? How has this changed?

2.0 Associate placement

- 2.1 How well prepared did you think the school was to support the Associates? By the Department? By TFA? By MGSE? Were the expectations of your school made clear to you/staff?

3.0 Associate teaching and involvement

- 3.1 How have students responded to the Associates so far? How have associates responded to students?
- 3.2 From what you have seen so far, how long do you think it takes for Associates to 'settle down' in the classroom compared to other first year graduate teachers?
- 3.3 From what you have seen so far, do you think the TFA 'employment-based teacher training' model will produce quality teachers at the end of the 2 years? (in comparison to other pathways?) Why/not?
- 3.4 To what extent have Associates involved themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities?

4.0 Associate Support

- 4.1 What kinds of support does your school provide to Associates?
- 4.2 How well do you think the Associates are supported?

5.0 General

- 5.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 5.2 In what ways could it be improved?
- 5.3 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 5.4 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Ongoing Placement school staff

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Why did your school get involved? What do you see the school gaining from involvement?
- 1.2 What was your, and your colleagues' initial reaction to the TFA concept (not the Associates personally)? How has this changed?
- 1.3 Were the expectations of your school made clear to you/staff? By the Principal? By others?

2.0 Associate placement and support

- 2.1 How well prepared did you think the school was to support the TFA Associates initially? And now? Did the school make any changes for the next group of Associates and if so, what were they?
- 2.2 What kinds of support does your school provide to Associates? Do they receive extra support – i.e more than (or different from) other first year graduate teachers?
- 2.3 How well do you think the Associates are supported?

3.0 Associate teaching and involvement

- 3.1 How have students responded to the Associates? How have Associates responded to students?
- 3.2 From what you have seen so far, how long do you think it takes the Associates to 'settle down' in the classroom, compared with other first year graduate teachers?
- 3.3 From what you have seen so far, do you think the TFA 'employment-based teacher training' model will produce quality teachers at the end of the 2 years? (in comparison to other pathways?) Why/not?
- 3.4 To what extent have Associates involved themselves in the life of the school – extra-curricular activities? How did the school encourage this in the first cohort, and what is planned for the second cohort as a result?

4.0 General

- 4.1 What is your overall perception (so far) of the TFA initiative?
- 4.2 In what ways could the program be improved?
- 4.3 Are there any lessons from the TFA pathway for teacher education in Australia more broadly? If so, what are they?
- 4.4 Is there anything else you can tell me about your experience to date?

Phase 3 Interview guide – Students

1.0 In class

- 1.1 How do you feel about [subject/s]?
- 1.2 How do you feel about the teaching of [subject]? What sort of things do you do?
- 1.3 What is it like being in the class?
- 1.4 How does the teaching of [subject] compare to: other subjects you study? The teaching of [subject] last year/in previous years?
- 1.5 Compared to this subject in previous years, do you feel you are more (or less) interested in the subject? Can you say why that might be?
- 1.6 Are you enjoying this class more (or less) than other classes this year?
- 1.7 How about your results so far compared to last year? Better? Worse? About the same?