



Dear Quality ITE Review Expert Panel,

DATTA Australia is the National Association representing Design and Technologies teachers across Australia, our committee is representing over 4,400 members across; NSW, VIC, SA, WA, ACT and QLD within this response. Our national perspective of Technologies education and ITE courses across the country is represented in this response.

We as a committee are especially invested in the Quality ITE review because of the current dire shortage of trained Technologies teachers across Australia,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond, we would invite further communications and involvement in the review.

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PART A - Attracting and selecting high-quality candidates into the teaching profession

1. How can we further encourage high-performing and highly motivated school leavers to enter ITE and choose teaching as a career?

See Q2.

2. What changes to admissions and degree requirements, including recognition of prior experience, would better attract and support suitable mid- and late-career professionals from other fields transition into the profession and become quality teachers?

Nationally pressing issues that require addressing in order to attract suitable mid-late career professionals to our teaching profession are:

- Improved portrayal of teaching profession in media and by politicians
- Greater financial incentive to study such as financial support/grants/subsidies and scholarships
- Improved working condition
- Reduced administration paperwork/non-essential paperwork
- Improve pathways into education - Recognition of years in the workforce as RPL

Following the cancellation of Trobe University's *Bachelor of Technology Education* last year, there has been no option in Victoria for people with a trade or industry qualification or experience but without an Undergraduate degree to retrain as a D&T teacher. *The NEXUS program that is mentioned in the report no longer trains in Design and Technologies.*

We are in support with the two-year minimum requirement of post-graduate ITE courses, however, is this extended period of full-time study suitable for mid-career professionals? We think that this coming from industry should receive shortened study plans in recognition of their industry work and previous study. *Within this recognition of previous study/experience, there should be no option to reduce or shorten placement and practicum time, only formal study.*

Across Australia we have world class Design and Engineering degrees, making teaching an attractive next step and an easy transition from one degree to another would further support an

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increase in enrolments. This has great potential to retrain designers and engineers as D&T teachers. However, for most industry professionals, it would be a significant move to step away from work to become a pre-service teacher unless there is financial subsidy and recognition of previous study that can reduce the period of ITE training.

Current funding options that are available across Australia are outlined in this document appendix in a state by state perspective, the funding directly targets some courses and some subjects and in most cases Design and Technologies is not included.

3. How can we increase ITE completion rates so that quality ITE students graduate and pursue careers as quality teachers?

Provide opportunities to witness quality teaching in the ITE course and during placement/practicum, it is through these experiences where love and passion for our profession ignite. COVID-19 has required a shift to teaching and learning at universities to be online, during this time more focus should be on improving and enhancing the teaching and learning experience of students to demonstrate quality teaching and engage students with teaching.

Also, for rural and remote students school options are limited, current ITE practicum requirements may stipulate that a students cannot attend the same location more than once or work there - these place limitations on placements and pressure on university placement offices to find a wide variety of settings. If a student is working at school while studying they should be encouraged to be placed there as it may become their future place of employment as a teacher. These requirements place additional hurdles and restrictions and may pressure some to quit work to study or they may quit study.

4. What more can be done to address issues with workforce supply in some subject areas (particularly maths) and schools?

Design and Technologies may be categorised as the T and the E of the STEM education acronym, the Australian Curriculum: Design and Digital Technologies, is complemented with local State and Territory practical subjects that develop both confidence and competence as students practise skills such as problem-solving, and critical and creative thinking. At state level, across Australia there is a critical shortage of Design and Technologies teachers, this should be directly recognised in the report and targeted in subsequent review.

Unfortunately, whilst this report will prove useful for staffing general Learning Areas such as Mathematics, it is the Learning Areas with a broad range of subjects and specialised domain knowledge within them such as Science, Humanities and Technologies that don't appear to be

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specifically itemised. For example, within Science which areas are short staffed in schools? Is it Chemistry or Physics? And likewise for Technologies, it is the Design and Technologies area that is requiring immediate attention. Each of our state Associations have reported slightly different immediate needs of staffing within the learning area, for example, in Victoria there is immediate need for Product Design and Systems Engineering, in QLD there is immediate need for senior specialists in Design and Industrial Technology subjects. A proposal for this panel to investigate specific subject needs rather than broad ones so that a more targeted approach can be employed.

The Victorian report on staffing levels in February 2020 is an example of where more clarity is needed. Whilst the Key Findings report that supply of teacher graduates is forecast to exceed demand, it indicates that only 2% of teachers graduate with a specialisation in Design and Technology. Principals would benefit from knowing how many graduates are forecasted to be qualified to teach subjects such as Food Studies, or Systems Engineering.

To meet current shortages and demand, untrained teachers are teaching courses that require specialist expertise and knowledge of WHS practices for the safety of students/teachers. Retraining programs and entry pathways should address this.

Principals need to place adequately trained teachers in front of classes, and with 'baby boomer' technology teachers entering retirement, teachers who may be qualified to teach in other disciplines are being called upon to teach 'out-of-field' to fill the void in High School workshops or kitchens. Out-of-field teaching is "when a teacher's qualifications and specialisations do not match their teaching allotment" (Hobbs & Törner, 2019). As stated in Sunday's article by Patty, (Jan. 17, 2021), staffing qualified teachers is difficult in rural and remote regions, and as such so is the occurrence of out-of-field teaching (Weldon, 2016). The data in our 2019 survey outlines "if significant action is not taken as outlined in this report, the Technologies learning area in Australia will be unsustainable by 2025." Currently, all of our state associations are reporting issues with staffing. How will this expert panel address immediate staffing concerns?

The *Victorian Teacher Supply and Demand Report* makes evident the critical lack of Design and Technologies teachers in Victoria, and makes evident the need for more supported opportunities to undertake initial teacher education. There are currently two Victorian-based Universities offering a Design and Technologies / Systems Engineering specialisation on their *Masters of Secondary Education* - Swinburne University and Victoria University. Neither of these programs are eligible for the *Pathways into Teaching* funding. DATTA Victoria has requested the Government to include them in this initiative. The Australian Catholic University's Master of Teaching (Secondary) is eligible for funding and it does have a Design and Technologies method, but this is currently only available to pre-service teachers at their Strathfield NSW campus, not VIC.

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5. How can we attract a more diverse cohort into ITE so that teachers better mirror the diversity in school students and society?

The aforementioned options for retaining and pathways from undergraduate courses into postgraduate teaching courses could encourage diversity of skills. Lantite testing standards propose a challenge for some workforce entry applicants, also, this can be an issue for migrants and potential candidates with identified language requirements and adjustments.

How can the ITE courses low SES, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and remote/rural participation if the Lantite standard is a hurdle for these communities of learners? What options for adjustment, modification and support is offered and how can this be extended to provide equity for our minority represented groups in education?

The Melbourne University TCAT testing mentioned in the review is not favoured by this committee, the elitist nature of Melbourne University should be recognised in the forum and not be acknowledged as a potential successful case study to be rolled out nationwide. We are opposed to further and additional testing hurdles for willing teachers and wish to see additional support mechanisms for studying teachers to build the required literacy, numeracy skills and cultural competence in their courses, not as additional tests.

Alternate pathways of entry should be encouraged from applicants within the education workforce, for example; learning support officers, wellbeing support staff, counsellors. They bring a wealth of knowledge about student diversity and would compliment our teaching workforce. Ways for them to study whilst keeping in school employment should be further explored, like the NSW scholarship program - teach.NSW - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teach-nsw/get-paid-to-study/teacher-education-scholarship> this should be used as a model for subsequent national funding and scholarship supports.

PART B – Preparing ITE students to be effective teachers

6. What more can we do to ensure that ITE curriculum is evidence-based and all future teachers are equipped to implement evidence-based teaching practices?



Our curriculum is being updated at a faster pace than our ITE courses, some university courses have old and outdated curriculum links within their specialisation subjects and cannot amend until their following accreditation period.

7. What more can ITE providers and employers do to ensure ITE students are getting the practical experience they need before they start their teaching careers?

Our committee is passionate about there being a minimum standard for placement days/practicum being a nationwide standard. Currently NSW and VIC are not aligned - for students in border-town studying online this poses problems with future registration at their state registration authority. Education courses at Southern Cross University, Charles Sturt University are being accessed by students in VIC, QLD and SA because of the flexibility of their online delivery of study programs.

8. How can Teaching Performance Assessment arrangements be strengthened to ensure graduate teachers are well-prepared for the classroom?

Utilise and improve existing mechanisms, GPTA, Lantite and after graduating teacher registration portfolio processes such as what NSWIT and VIT employ, these are already aligned to teaching standards and are currently in practice. This committee is opposed to additional assessments and reviews imposed on early career teachers.

9. How can leading teachers, principals and schools play a greater role in supporting the development of ITE students?

Leading teachers, HALT Accredited and Principals can be a part of the subsequent panel and forum for this project. We need to value the experience of on the ground specialists and give them a voice and space to contribute to this review. At present, these groups are excluded from direct participation on place of industry partners and research professionals. If leading teachers, principals and schools were a part of the review they would be engaged in the process and promoted as the experts. They already support the development of prospective ITE students by working in schools, acting as stewards and role models to our profession.

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We propose that members from our DATTA Committee also are representatives on this review so there can be a partnership and participation with a peak body national organisation representative of teachers that are affected by current teacher shortages.

10. Can ITE providers play a stronger role in ongoing professional development and support of teachers?

Yes, through offering professional learning and a place teaching within ITE courses.

