



Australian Government

Quality Teacher Programme

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE
AND TRAINING**

**Research on career change pathways into
teaching**

Final report

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PhillipsKPA

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Executive summary

With a view to informing Australian Government policy on teacher education, the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) commissioned PhillipsKPA to research the nature of career change initiatives which are evident across Australia. The project has a particular focus on the New South Wales Accelerated Teacher Training Program (ATTP) and the Victorian Career Change Program. The research has centred on:

- Determining the extent and effectiveness of initiatives that encourage and support career change entrants to teaching; and
- Documenting and assessing the perceived benefits by relevant stakeholders (such as universities, education authorities, schools, teachers and students) of career change initiatives, and the extent to which they do or would support such initiatives.

The project methodology has involved desktop analysis of career change programs and a scan of relevant research literature, consultations with education authorities, teacher registration/accreditation bodies, principals, teachers and students, as well as site visits to six schools across three States: New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

Using a continuum which begins with recruitment and selection, and moves through participation in pre-service training, to appointment, induction and ongoing roles in schools, the research reveals that career change programs are generally effective in delivering on their stated objectives to appoint teachers to difficult to staff locations and address shortages in specialisations across the curriculum.

Critical success factors include:

- The initial motivations which trigger interest in a career change to teaching;
- The quality of selection processes; and
- The important role played by practicum experiences and, post appointment, the induction and mentoring programs offered by individual schools and school systems.

Where quality inputs and processes are evident in these areas, stakeholders report a propensity for career change initiatives to deliver benefits to:

- Schools and school systems in relation to addressing staffing shortfalls and gaps in curriculum specialisations, particularly in rural and remote schools;
- Individual classrooms in terms of the knowledge and authentic life experiences career change teachers bring to their teaching; and
- The individual teachers in terms of the revitalisation they experience and the value attributed to their previous career.

With the expectation that the career change initiatives are likely to continue into the future, program planners and those with responsibility for assuring the quality of such programs need to ensure that the attributes career change teachers bring to the profession are balanced with the pedagogical skills developed through pre service training and appropriate interpersonal skills of the individual teacher. At the same time, there may be opportunities in the future to take advantage of shifts in the Australian economy to tap into a wider sphere of potential career change recruits.

1 Introduction

The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) engaged PhillipsKPA to undertake a research project to inform DEST's policy development related to teacher education. The project specifically focused on current career change initiatives of which two were identified: the Accelerated Teacher Training Program in New South Wales and the Victorian Career Change Program.

The project was established with the key objectives:

- To document and analyse the extent and effectiveness of initiatives that encourage and support career change entrants to teaching; and
- To document and assess the benefits perceived by stakeholders (such as universities, education authorities, schools, teachers and students) of career change initiatives and the extent to which they do or would support such initiatives.

As such, it may be noted that the purpose of this report does not require an assessment of the relative merits of career change initiatives which may be established in one jurisdiction in comparison to those which may be apparent in another. To this end, where distinctions are made between one program and another, they relate to the issues and themes evident in the discussion rather than an assessment of comparative effectiveness.

Furthermore, while the issues and themes discussed in relation to career change teachers may also apply to beginning teachers in general, this does not diminish the validity of the themes and issues in terms of responding to the project brief. Indeed, while many issues are undoubtedly evident in other pathways into teaching, they are brought into sharper relief as a result of program participants' prior experience in other fields, combined with their maturity and the willingness of some participants to identify and express their views about the career change initiatives. Furthermore, as a result of being a targeted initiative, stakeholders interacting with the initiative (program participants, academic, teachers and principals) appear to be more predisposed to comment on strengths and issues related to the initiative than they are in relation to teacher education more generally.

1.1 *Methodology*

The project methodology has involved:

- Desktop research of career change programs and initiatives and a scan of relevant research literature related to career change into teaching;
- Desktop analysis of participation data for students undertaking teacher training;

- Consultations with:
 - the Deans (or representatives) of the Faculties of Education in Australia's Universities;
 - State and Territory education authorities;
 - teacher registration/accreditation bodies in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria;
- Focus groups with principals and current or recent career change teachers in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia; and
- Site visits which involved meetings with principals, career change teachers, other teachers and students in two schools in each of the following States: Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

The project was completed during the period June–October 2006 by Justin Brown, Lenore Cooper, Sue Johnston and Geoff Noblett from PhillipsKPA and Ray Land from Education Priorities.

1.2 *Acknowledgment*

The project team acknowledges the assistance received from teachers, principals and students who readily gave up their time to contribute to the research, as well as university representatives and representatives of education authorities throughout Australia who equally contributed to the project. In particular, the project team is indebted to the valuable assistance provided by the following people in the organisation of site visits and focus groups: Deb Kember in Queensland, Joe Jimenez, Margaret Adebisi and Annie Hollander in New South Wales, Mark Newton and Jim Tangas in Victoria and Mark Dennison in Western Australia.

The project team also acknowledges the valuable assistance and insights provided by the project Reference Group. The membership of the Reference Group and the organisations represented are listed as follows:

Organisation	Representative(s)
Australian Council of Deans of Education	Professor Sue Willis
The Australian Teacher Educators Association	Dr Simone White
Teaching Australia	Dr Graeme Hall and Ms Lynne Reeder
Independent Schools Council of Australia	Mr Malcolm Lamb
Department of Education Science and Training	Ms Brooke Rogers and Ms Nicole Panting
Department of Education and Training – Victoria	Mr Mark Newton and Dr Jim Tangas (Observers)
Department of Education and Training – New South Wales	Mr Joe Jimenez and Ms Margaret Adebisi (Observers)

1.3 *Terminology*

To ensure consistency in understanding of the themes and issues discussed in the report, the key terms used in the report include:

- Practicum experience – This broad term covers a continuum which has *observation* of practicing teachers at one extreme to *full classroom control* by pre service teachers (including those working in an internship) at the other. For the purpose of this report, the term practicum experience is located in the middle of this continuum and understood to mean the process by which a pre service teacher is involved in delivering classroom programs with the support, guidance and oversight by a supervising teacher unless a distinction is otherwise made; and
- Registration and accreditation processes – While all States and Territories are establishing or have established legislation to give qualified teachers permission to teach, the processes through which this is achieved vary from one jurisdiction to another, as does the associated terminology. As a consequence, whilst teachers in one State need to meet certain qualifications, requirements and standards in teaching practice in order to become ‘registered’, in other States, they need to fulfil similar requirements in order to receive ‘accreditation’. It is for this reason that, where issues and themes are discussed at a general level, the term ‘registration/accreditation’ is used.

1.4 *Report structure*

The remainder of the report is structured to include:

- Analysis of teacher education data sourced from DEST;
- An overview of current career change programs which are evident in Australia, with a particular emphasis on:
 - the Accelerated Teacher Training Program in New South Wales;
 - the Career Change Program in Victoria; and
- Insights derived from the consultations and site visits; and
- A set of concluding remarks and discussion of options for the future in relation to career change initiatives.

Appendices to the report include:

- An overview of the Mathematics and Science Scholarships which were offered in Queensland in 2004/05;
- Perspectives on career change sourced through recent research;
- References; and
- A list of stakeholder organisations which gave representation to the consultations.

2 Data analysis and definition

Consultations with universities and other higher education providers emphasise that commencing teacher education cohorts typically include a significant percentage of students with prior work experience who are consciously choosing to make a career change. Some institutions report that younger students entering courses direct from secondary school or undergraduate degrees are consistently in the minority within their courses.

Most institutions do not collect statistics in relation to career change entrants to teacher education courses. While the DEST Higher Education Student Statistical Collection also does not include data that enables a specific analysis of career change into teaching trends, it does include some data that provides relevant insights into the characteristics of students being attracted into teacher education programs.

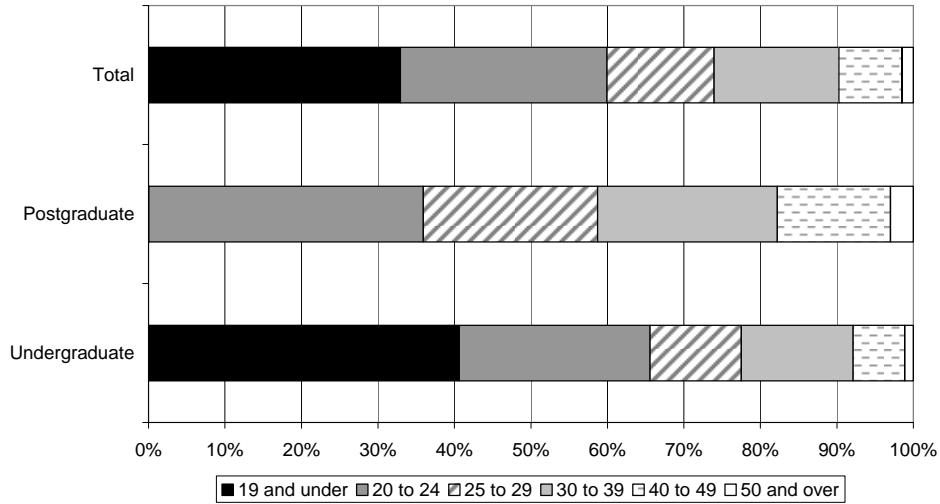
2.1 *Analysis by age*

According to statistical data provided by DEST for this study, in 2004 21,823 domestic students commenced courses providing initial teacher training.¹ The majority of these students (81 per cent) commenced undergraduate courses, principally Bachelor degrees. The remaining 19 per cent commenced postgraduate courses, principally Graduate Diplomas.

Figure 1 presents the percentage of students commencing initial teacher education courses in 2004 by age group and course type.

¹ The DEST Statistical Collection data element number 312 enables the identification of courses providing initial (pre-service) teacher education (versus courses targeting practising teachers). The data analysis presented in this section is based only on students enrolled in courses classified as initial teacher education courses.

Figure 1: Percentage of students commencing initial teacher education courses by age group and course type, 2004



Of the total students commencing initial teacher education courses, 33 per cent were aged 19 years and under and a further 27 per cent were aged 20-24 years. These age groups represent the 'traditional' entrants to teacher education courses (ie school leavers and recent graduates who undertook degrees on the completion of secondary schooling and then enrolled in teacher education courses). There was a substantial percentage (40 per cent) of course entrants, however, who were aged 25 years and older, with 26 per cent aged 30 years and older.

While the age profiles of students commencing undergraduate and postgraduate courses differ, both categories of courses attract a significant percentage of students aged 25 years or older, many of whom it could be assumed would have had some work experience. Of those students commencing undergraduate courses, 34 per cent are aged 25 years and older, with 23 per cent aged 30 years and older. These percentages increase significantly for students commencing Graduate Diplomas and other postgraduate courses, with 64 per cent aged 25 years and older, and 41 per cent aged 30 years and older.

2.2 *Basis for admission*

Figure 2 provides the 2004 percentage distribution of commencing enrolments in both undergraduate and post graduate initial teacher education courses by basis for admission.

Figure 2: Students commencing initial teacher training courses by basis for admission, 2004

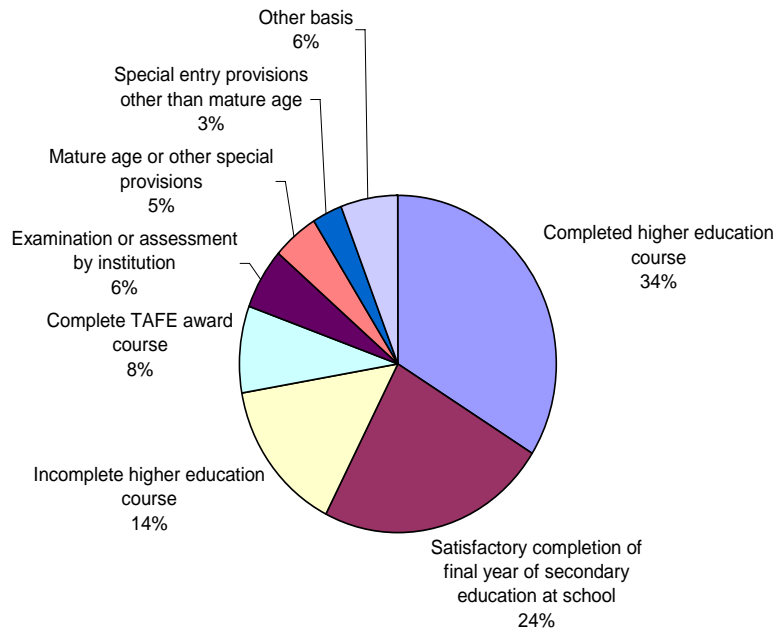


Figure 2 shows that 24 per cent of entrants were admitted on the basis of satisfactory completion of secondary education at school and a further 34 per cent on the basis of a completed higher education course. The remaining 42 per cent were admitted on a variety of bases, including TAFE qualifications (especially entrants to early childhood teacher education courses) and mature age and other special entry provisions.

For students entering undergraduate courses, the percentage admitted on the basis of satisfactory completion of secondary education at school increased to 29 per cent, with a further 31 per cent admitted on the basis of a completed higher education or TAFE course.

For students entering postgraduate courses, over 90 per cent were admitted on the basis of a completed higher education course. This percentage was consistent for both the younger student cohort (under 25 years of age) and the older student cohort (25 years and older). While institutions may take factors such as work experience into account when assessing applications from career change entrants, in most instances, the possession of a degree or equivalent qualification is the primary entrance requirement for postgraduate courses.

2.2.1 Jurisdictional variations

The data indicates that the percentage of entrants to initial teacher education courses admitted on the basis of the completion of secondary schooling varies across States and Territories. In 2004, for example, the percentage of entrants in this category ranged from 9 per cent in the Northern Territory to 21 per cent in New South Wales

to 30 per cent in South Australia. The percentage also varied substantially across institutions, and this variability may be due in some part to institutional course profiles (eg four-year undergraduate courses, graduate diplomas).

2.3 *Defining a career change teacher*

For the purpose of achieving a working definition of career change teachers, the analysis of the DEST data would suggest that they are located within the 34 per cent of undergraduate students and 64 per cent of postgraduate students aged 25 years or older, as people of this age may be reasonably expected to have worked in other fields for a period of time, particularly those aged 30 and over. However, not all older course entrants will have worked and others will have worked in a number of fields without necessarily establishing a career in any one field or more. Equally, as the data indicates that the basis for admission may vary according to the type of course and jurisdiction in which the enrolment occurs, it is difficult to classify career change and non career change teachers according to this criterion.

As a result, our definition of a career change teacher assumes a generalised perspective reflecting a combination of:

- Age - career change teachers are aged 25 years or older;
- Qualifications - career change teachers have recognised academic or trade based qualifications, although it is more likely that a higher education qualification is used as the basis for admission to a postgraduate teacher education course; and
- Work experience - career change teachers have developed skills and established careers in fields which reflect their qualifications.

As a consequence, it may be noted that our definition of a career change teacher does not feature mature age entry based on satisfactory completion of secondary education, on its own, as the basis of inclusion. Similarly, the definition does not include qualified teachers who undertake additional education to teach in another field, such as primary teachers who retrain as secondary teachers or secondary trained teachers of humanities subjects retraining to teach maths and science.²

Furthermore, while noting that career change teachers are evident across the full spectrum of school education in Australia, the targeted initiatives and the description of the messages and themes arising from the consultations generally centre on career change pathways into secondary schools. While the definition of career change generally covers mature aged entrants to undergraduate and graduate programs who have established careers in another field, it should be noted that the majority of the report focuses on the themes and issues sourced through stakeholder consultations related to the current career change programs in New

² However, we do make some comparative observations about retraining schemes. Please see Section 4.2.3 for details.

South Wales and Victoria as well as the recent Maths and Science Scholarships initiative in Queensland.

3 Career change programs

Three career change programs have been examined as key elements of the research. The programs are the Accelerated Teacher Training Program (ATTP) in New South Wales, the Career Change Program in Victoria and the Maths Science Scholarships in Queensland. Given that the focus of the project is on 'current initiatives', the details of purpose and features of the programs in operation in the New South Wales and the Victoria are featured in the text which follows. Details of other Australian and international initiatives conclude the discussion, and details of the former Maths and Science Scholarships in Queensland may be found at Appendix one.

3.1 *Accelerated Teacher Training Program - New South Wales*

3.1.1 Purpose

The ATTP has been developed to attract people with current industry knowledge and expertise for teaching positions in specific subject areas.

The origins of the ATTP can be traced back to the 'NewStart' program which was founded in 1998, as a joint partnership between the University of Newcastle, BHP steel industry and the then New South Wales Department of Education. Initiated in response to significant downsizing in the Newcastle and Hunter regions, the program offered industry workers from these regions retraining opportunities in teaching. The Bachelor of Education: Design & Technology (Industrial Technology) was the first degree offered in this accelerated program that allows adult learners to complete their teaching qualifications in two years.

The program was nominated for the Australian Awards for University Teaching Program *Institutional Award* for 1999, for innovative and practical approaches to the provision of educational services to the local and/or regional community.

The ATTP was subsequently developed to meet the under-supply of secondary teachers in some subject areas within hard-to-staff government schools districts in New South Wales. The program aims to offer a second career pathway into the teaching profession that addresses teacher shortages at the secondary level.

The ATTP commenced in 2001 with four participating universities: Charles Sturt University, Newcastle University, University of Western Sydney and University of Technology, Sydney. The program is described as "... one of the most significant changes to occur within the Australian teaching profession, while being both market driven and strategically designed" (Green, Randall & Francis, 2002). Praised as 'innovative in its delivery and responsive to the need for rapid enculturation' (Grushka, 2002), this program has been the model for subsequent retraining technology in teacher education programs.

Green, Randall & Francis (2002) indicate the key elements of the program to be the rigorous process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) resulting in an accelerated program of study, an amalgamation of pedagogical course work with site based practical education and work with mentor teachers in schools.

3.1.2 Features

Delivery is structured to accommodate a fast-tracking mode which sees the students completing their teaching qualifications in 18 months. Rather than requiring participants to complete a full undergraduate teaching degree, the program uses the principle of RPL to give applicants advanced standing.

As an incentive to prospective applicants and to provide ongoing support to pre service student teachers, the New South Wales Department of Education and Training:

- Meets the cost of tuition and course administration fees (approximately \$18,000);
- Provides a one-off training allowance of \$1,500 (incidentals and textbooks);
- Guarantees employment as a teacher in New South Wales government schools in a geographic area of need (as agreed to in the Deed of Agreement) upon successful completion of the program and departmental recruitment procedures; and
- Offers an annual starting salary, from 2008, of \$50,522 upon completion of four years' training. Some applicants may be eligible for a higher starting salary due to prior 'teaching experience' (for example in TAFE), industry experience or child rearing.

Successful applicants are required to serve as a full-time teacher (which initially may be as a mobile teacher) for a minimum of three continuous years in secondary or central schools³.

3.1.3 Marketing and promotion

The New South Wales Department of Education and Training has established a detailed strategy paper, *Program Promotion* which outlines its approach to disseminating information and recruiting participants to the program. Key features of this strategy include:

- A range of brochures which provide summary information about the program and relevant contact details;
- Detailed information posted on the Department's website;⁴

³ Schools located in country areas which cater for both primary and secondary students.

⁴ Please see https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/teachnsw/acc_ttp.htm

- Hard copy materials which mirror the information on the website; and
- Additional information which accompanies the application forms.

Further marketing of the program is achieved through regular feature articles in the media, particularly newspapers and internal promotion through Departmental publications.

3.1.4 Target groups

The criteria for entry and attributes considered at interview include: applicants having recent and substantial industry experience, relevant qualifications; demonstrated experience in specific content areas and evidence of a commitment to continuous lifelong learning. Participation in this program requires skills in computer use, internet searching and use of email. Prospective students are required to have access to their own computer facilities.

Applicants with a strong industry background are targeted to assure the quality of their practical skills relative to the secondary key learning areas in which they will be expected to teach. Target participants include those individuals with prior training and industry experience in engineering, accounting, technology industries and trade areas such as agriculture, hospitality, food technology/preparation and information technology.

Participation data

<i>Year</i>	<i>Course participants</i>
2001/02	129
2002/03	137
2003/04	113
2004/05	77
2005/06	42

The recent decline in the rate of participation is attributed to a combination of factors, including:

- The artificially high participation rates in the initial establishment of the program, “ as it provided a new opportunity for career changers”;
- The subsequent success of the program in meeting shortfall areas, which has led to variations in the subject areas in which places are offered. For example, industrial arts ceased to be offered in 2005/06;
- A reduction in the number of providers from three in 2003/04 to two in 2004/05 and one in 2005/06; and

- Selection processes have become more refined to ensure a high success rate among applicants accepted into the program.⁵

Retention rates

While variations are apparent from one year to the next, program evaluation data suggests that the attrition rate of 6–7 per cent is much lower than that which is normally experienced with undergraduate students which is reportedly at a rate of 30–35 per cent.⁶

3.1.5 Course structure

The ATTP is based on providing skilled workers the equivalent of two years' advanced standing into what is normally a four-year Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent.

The course was designed to 'telescope' two years into 18 months of accelerated study without sacrificing quality or scope. This is largely achieved through strategies which combine curriculum methodology subjects with work-based problem solving during practicum experiences and covers aspects of teacher education through the residential programs.

While some level of part-time employment may be maintained, the professional experience component in the latter stages of the program requires participants to undertake full-time, in-school experience.

The structure of the training program involves the following:

- Full-time study by distance learning, combined with problem solving methodology and online support;
- School-based teaching practice and school visits, including an internship placement for an entire school term (Term 4);
- Attendance at three compulsory residential sessions;
- The award of an undergraduate degree to successful participants; and
- Following appointment to a school, graduates of the program are provided with mentor support.

3.1.6 University engagement

In 2002/2003, three universities (Newcastle, UTS and CSU) in New South Wales were selected by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training to conduct the programs, predominantly in the key learning areas of Mathematics and Technological and Applied Studies (TAS). Relative course features included:

⁵ As advised by New South Wales Department of Education and Training.

⁶ As noted in the 2003 ATTP evaluation report

- University of Newcastle (Maths and TAS);
- University of Technology, Sydney (Science and Physics); and
- Charles Sturt University (Maths and TAS).

University of Newcastle was a provider up to and including the 2003/2004 cohort. From 2004/2005, CSU and UTS were the only providers, although numbers at UTS (Science – physics) were very small. UTS did not tender in 2005.

3.2 *Career Change Programs – Victoria*

3.2.1 Purpose

According to a report released by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (2004), *Teacher Supply and Demand for Government Schools*, there is a significant proportion of teacher graduates in government schools over 30 years of age. It is assumed that many of these graduates would have chosen teaching as a second career. In order to attract and recruit more of these qualified professionals into teaching, the Victorian Government implemented the Career Change Program to actively encourage suitably qualified people with relevant industry experience to undertake teaching as a career.

‘Action 1: Opportunities will be provided for non-teaching professionals to undertake teacher education courses while being employed as a trainee teacher under the supervision of an experienced teacher. For instance, an information technology professional may be likely to have undertaken sufficient tertiary education in mathematics to meet the qualification requirements, other than teacher training, to be a mathematics teacher.’⁷

The initial two-year Career Change program began in 2005, offering around 30 places per year at a cost of \$1.3 million to attract and provide on-the-job training for career change professionals to become teachers in ‘hard to staff’ Victorian government schools. Twenty-nine participants commenced in the program in 2005, and a further 32 participants were accepted into the second intake of the program in 2006.

3.2.2 Features

Features of the Career Change program include:

- A starting salary of \$41,005 (subdivision 3 of the secondary school instructor salary range) which is paid each semester (pro rata) on the successful completion of study;
- A travel allowance of \$500 to \$1,600;

⁷ Victorian Department of Education and Training (2004)

- Lump sum on completion of between \$7,000 and \$11,000 (study costs, removal expenses);
- On completion of the education program, a retention benefit of \$4,000 after two years work in the school of initial appointment;
- One day per week paid study leave; and
- Induction programs at the school level.

3.2.3 Marketing and promotion

In addition to a highly publicised launch of the program by the Minister for Education, the Victorian Career Change Program has adopted a multi layered approach to marketing and promotion. This has included detailed information on the Department's website,⁸ brochures and information packages. The program is advertised through statewide newspapers, regional newspapers and radio, and many of these publications have written feature articles highlighting the motivations and experience of participants in the program.

The Victorian Department of Education and Training also promotes the Career Change Program through its internal publication, *Education Times*. Feature articles are used to celebrate the success of the program and give principals and teachers insights into its structure and benefits. Through this process, schools are informed of a mechanism which may assist in alleviating staffing difficulties, and teachers often convey information about the program to friends or associates who may be potential recruits.

3.2.4 Target groups

The program targets people with current industry knowledge, expertise and suitable qualifications in their own area of specialisation. Typically, this includes tradespeople, engineers, scientists, mathematicians and information technology staff. The program also aims to attract professionals with advanced skills in Languages Other Than English.

In terms of target schools, teachers from the Career Change Program can only be appointed at a particular school where that school can demonstrate that previous recruitment action to attract a suitably qualified teacher has been unsuccessful.⁹

⁸ Please see <http://www.teaching.vic.gov.au/news/careerchg/default.htm>

⁹ It may be noted that, in Victoria, government schools are solely responsible for the employment of teachers. Central and regional Department of Education and Training offices provide policy guidelines and centralised payroll services but do not have a major role in teacher deployment (other than assisting with the relocation of teachers in excess of requirement). To this end, schools in Victoria must demonstrate that they have exhausted normal recruitment mechanisms, as well as redeployment options, prior to being eligible to recruit a career change teacher.

Participation data

The Victorian Department of Education and Training currently supports 57 career change teachers. Data related to the program is listed as follows:

<i>Completion date</i>	<i>Course length</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
2005	24 months	2
2006	12 months	10
	24 months	16
2007	12 months	10
	24 months	19

Of these students, 86 per cent are enrolled at Victoria University, with the remainder enrolled at Deakin University, La Trobe University or the University of Ballarat. Fifty six per cent are enrolled in a Bachelor of Education course (24 months) and the remaining 44 per cent are enrolled in Graduate Diploma courses (12 month course completed over a two year period).¹⁰

Retention rates

Four resignations were experienced within the first 6 months of implementation in intake one, with most of the resigning participants citing that teaching was not the career for them. However, one participant resigned to return to their previous industry on a higher level of remuneration.

As an outcome of an evaluation of the initial program, Victoria's career change initiative has been restructured to incorporate an orientation into the school and a broken summer school. These improvements have lowered the attrition rate for the second intake which has experienced one resignation due to ill health and only two withdrawals as a result participants making decisions about the suitability of teaching as a career for them.¹¹

3.2.5 Course structure

The Career Change program involves a training period that covers one or two years internship at a designated school and combines teacher education, study and classroom experience. Program participants are employed as a teacher-in-training for four days per week and receive paid study leave to undertake training one day per week. Where practicable, students commence the training period in their designated school in late November/early December.

The course combines on-line and direct delivery modes, building on the program's internship model which links course theory and workplace practice. The course also allows for the flexibility to work in partnership with participating schools while

¹⁰ Variations in course length also arises as a result of some students receiving advanced standing based on pre-existing qualifications.

¹¹ As advised by the Department of Education and Training, Victoria

accommodating their operational needs and offers the key learning areas targeted by the program.

The program provides participants with funding to support travel and accommodation costs during periods of face to face 'block contact.' Apart from the direct training which occurs at these times, the block contact is seen to be an important ingredient to the overall success of the program as it enables the career change teachers to establish and maintain collegiate support networks.

If the two year training period is successfully completed, program participants are offered an ongoing teaching position in the school where they have been interned, subject to a probationary period.

3.2.6 University engagement

The Department has engaged Victoria University to provide the Career Change students with a place in their Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) teacher education program, and offer appropriately structured teacher education. Depending on the academic background of the student, the qualification will meet the University requirements for the award of Bachelor of Education in Vocational Education Training or a Graduate Diploma of Education.

A preparatory summer school at Victoria University's Footscray campus is a requirement for students prior to commencing classroom duties. This full-time intensive 'introduction to teaching' course (run in two segments in December and January) provides students with essential knowledge and skills in teaching techniques and classroom management.

3.2.7 Other Victorian programs

In addition to the designated course delivered by Victoria University, Deakin University, La Trobe University and the University of Ballarat have also established specific courses which focus on career change. In each instance, the courses have been developed to address gaps in the teaching population in Victorian schools (both government and non government), particularly in the areas of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and the Technology Key Learning Area (KLA).

Deakin University

The Graduate Diploma (Applied Learning) was specifically developed in response to the identified need for teachers with the required skills and knowledge to deliver the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) whilst still enabling people who complete the course to be qualified to teach in secondary schools and the VET and ACE sectors throughout Australia.

Core focus areas of the course centre on the preparation of teachers to teach the Technology KLA and VET in Schools. The course openly targets career change

professionals seeking to become qualified teachers in secondary schools, TAFE institutes or Adult Community Education (ACE) providers.

Key features of the course include:

- A three year Bachelor Degree or an equivalent Advanced Diploma as the minimum entry requirements;¹²
- Eight units of study usually completed over one year full time or two years part time;
- Forty-five days of supervised professional experience accumulated through a combination of secondary school, TAFE or ACE work placements. A minimum of 23 days must be in a secondary school;
- Delivery through a mix of on campus/off campus course components with significant emphasis on utilisation of Deakin Studies Online (DSO);¹³
- The development of general pedagogical skills in applied and vocational learning, as well as focusing specifically on pedagogy as it relates to each participant's areas of teaching specialisation; and
- Furthering understandings of young people's further education and career pathways and the value of work based learning experiences.

The demand for course graduates may be measured by the growth in enrolments in the VCAL as an alternative to the Victoria Certificate of Education (VCE). From a small enrolment of 546 students in the 2002 pilot program, enrolments in VCAL have increased to exceed 12,000 in 2006.¹⁴ With an annual intake of 30 students, the Graduate Diploma (Applied Learning) course operates with approximately 60 students who complete their studies over two years.

La Trobe University

The Faculty of Education at La Trobe University offers a Graduate Diploma in Technology Education through its Melbourne and regional campuses. The course is designed specifically to educate teachers for secondary schools in the specialist areas of Technology and VET.

The course targets mature age/career change applicants in that the entry requirements note that one or more of the following are required for eligibility to enrol:

¹² Where prospective students do not have the requisite qualifications, Deakin provides advice regarding alternative pathways into the course via an Advanced Diploma qualification. In turn, demonstrated workplace proficiencies are often used as the basis for RPL in completing this prerequisite qualification.

¹³ DSO delivers web-based course material and assessment tasks and facilitates communication and collaboration between staff and students.

¹⁴ VQA (2005) *VCAL Participation Project* and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)

- Recognised trade papers, such as a Certificate of Proficiency issued by the former Victorian Industrial Training Commission, and substantial relevant work experience totalling not less than eight years;
- A Certificate of Technology or other approved two year, full time post Year 11 TAFE Certificate or equivalent plus at least six years of relevant work experience;
- A Diploma or other approved full time post Year 12 Award; or
- Other vocational qualifications and occupational experience as may be deemed by the University and the Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT) to be at least equivalent to one of the above.

Applicants are also required to complete a selection process which includes the furnishing of documentary evidence of qualifications and work experience, as well as completing a literacy and numeracy evaluation in the case of applicants who have not completed Year 12 or equivalent. Commonwealth Support Places are awarded based on the merit of written applications and a selection interview.

The course has two streams of study and training: units delivered by La Trobe University and units delivered through TAFE. The La Trobe University units are delivered on weekends or through vacation periods and include:

- Teaching Methods in VET and Technology studies;
- Curriculum development and design;
- Issues in Education;
- Studies in Technology: Materials and Systems; and
- Studies in Information Technology.

TAFE units include 'Safe practices in the VET Classroom' and 'An introduction to Australia's VET System' which incorporates completion of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

The course has an annual intake of 100-120 students, and involves a teaching practicum totalling 82 days of which 60 days must be undertaken in a secondary school.

University of Ballarat

The Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Technology offered at the University of Ballarat places great emphasis on industry experience and innovative teaching practices and has a strong focus on integrating the traditional disciplines of mathematics, science, materials and systems technology and vocational education and training. The course prepares teachers for roles in schools in the areas of secondary school technology (materials, systems and design), science and mathematics.

From a career change perspective, the relevance of this course centres on the condition that people with a trade background have at least eight years of relevant work, industry or enterprise experience and are able to complete an advanced version of the course in two-and-a-half years.

3.3 *Other programs that might appeal to career change entrants*

While not necessarily targeted at career change, a range of other programs and initiatives have been identified through the consultations as being highly attractive to people considering a career change.

3.3.1 The University of Newcastle – Bachelor of Education (Design and Technology)

Although the University of Newcastle is no longer involved in the ATTP, the University continues to offer a Bachelor of Education (Design and Technology). The program currently operates with an annual intake of 110 students across the University's three campuses. Most of the intake comes from trades or from people with TAFE qualifications such as diplomas or advanced diplomas. The program takes in students from a range of backgrounds, including para-medical, surveying, IT, chefs, technicians and trades, but few with higher education qualifications.

The university endeavours to build in flexibility in the program through RPL which means each student has an individual program provided on the basis of previous education, work and life experience. Each student has assessment undertaken by DET to indicate what they need in order to be employed as teachers in New South Wales, and then Newcastle designs a program accordingly. The program is therefore designed to provide a mix of education input and discipline upgrading if needed. The program also has literacy and study skills support built in which is considered important in terms of ensuring the participants are adequately prepared for their role as teachers. Based on Newcastle's experience, few people with trade or para-science backgrounds have enough maths background to become maths teachers.

This course has a high proportion of school-based activity because early and extensive experience in schools is considered very important to assist with the enculturation. The university also suggests that career change teachers need to get used to the equipment available in schools which is at a much lower level than most workplaces.

With RPL, students can complete the Bachelor of Education in 18 months to two years, depending on prior experience.

3.3.2 Masters of Teaching

While not necessarily targeting career change, both the Masters of Teaching offered by the University of Sydney and Masters of Teaching offered previously by QUT have a tendency to attract career change students. At present, the average age of students in the University of Sydney course is 28 years.

3.3.3 Initiatives in Western Australia

Whilst not necessarily targeting career change, two initiatives which have been operating in Western Australia have had a propensity to attract people from other professional backgrounds into teaching.

Science HECS Reimbursement Scheme

The Science HECS Reimbursement Scheme has enabled beginning teachers to receive up to \$18,000 over three years towards repaying HECS debt if they are qualified to teach physical sciences and have taken up a position in a West Australian school.

Although the reimbursement scheme attracts Fringe Benefits Tax, this is covered by the Department of Education and Training.

Final Year Teaching Scholarships

Students in their final year of a Bachelor of Education, and more importantly (in terms of career change) people planning to complete a Graduate Diploma of Education, are eligible to apply for a Final Year Teaching Scholarship. Eligibility is subject to recipients being willing to teach in a rural/remote location for two years and qualifications in required areas of specialisation.¹⁵

On receipt of an award, scholarship holders receive regular, fortnightly payments of \$1,500 in the second semester of their studies (final year), \$1,000 to assist with a teaching practicum, \$1,000 to support professional learning on commencement, a \$3,000 settling in bonus at the beginning of the first year of teaching and an additional \$2,500 bonus at the beginning of the second year.¹⁶

The scholarship is additional to other allowances (up to \$11,000 depending on location) which teachers are entitled to receive on appointment to a difficult to staff location. On completion of the two year contract, recipients are eligible to receive double the standard points which related to Western Australia's transfer system for the teaching service.

¹⁵ Currently, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Design and Technology, Home Economics, Agriculture, English and LOTE areas: Indonesian, Japanese or Italian.

¹⁶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible for an additional \$5,000 payment if they meet the criteria for the final year scholarship.

Technology and Enterprise Program

In 2001, the Western Australian Department of Education developed a proposal to address teaching shortages in the field of technology, especially in country areas. The tender was won by Edith Cowan University which developed a one-year course to educate graduates from a range of disciplines.

In return for scholarships worth approximately \$18,000 (a training wage plus course fees), successful applicants undertook to teach in country schools for a minimum of two years on completion of the course.

During the training year, students spent one day a week in schools.

The University of Notre Dame - Bachelor of Education (VET)

Since 2004, the University of Notre Dame has been offering a Bachelor of Education (VET) which is targeted at people with trade skills to the level of AQF Certificate IV or above and to offer TAFE teachers a qualification to enable them to teach in secondary schools.

The course has had limited success which is mainly attributed to the booming economy in Western Australia which offers significantly higher remuneration for people with trade qualifications than that which may be achieved through a career in teaching. As a result, the University of Notre Dame is planning to phase out the course.

3.3.4 Queensland - Remote Area Teacher Education Program

The Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP) program delivers teacher education courses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (based primarily in remote communities). The program bases education facilities in remote communities using a diverse range of computer technology and online components to deliver culturally appropriate content with the assistance of on site teachers who provide academic and administrative support for students.

The statement of purpose of the program is to increase the pool of registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers available to teach in Department of Education, Training and the Arts. According to the program website, it is intended that graduates of the program will bring with them to the schools an in-depth knowledge of the cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds of the children they and their colleagues will be teaching.

In terms of university engagement, RATEP involves James Cook University of North Queensland (JCU).

Since the commencement of RATEP in 1990, there have been 89 graduates with teachers placed throughout the Torres Strait, Northern and Southern Queensland.

3.3.5 Central Queensland University – Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM)

Although not strictly a career change program, the University of Central Queensland offers a Bachelor of Learning Management. The over-arching purpose of this qualification is to graduate “learning managers” who have a significantly different perspective and skill/knowledge base than in the past. Students work in schools from the first week, gradually increasing contact, until finally undertaking a 10-week internship in the final term.

The Bachelor of Learning Management is a four-year, initial teaching (professional learning) degree approved by the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration (now the Queensland College of Teachers). The stated aim of the course is to prepare ‘workplace ready’ and ‘futures-oriented’ graduates who have a strong sense of social and educational vision, responsibility, and change.

The course aims to better prepare teachers for the needs of contemporary schools and to address the challenges of learning in a knowledge-based economy at a time of rapid and substantial social change.

3.3.6 Graduate Diploma programs

The desktop research and consultations reveal a consistent pattern of involvement in Graduate Diploma of Education/Teaching courses in Australian Universities where significant numbers of students concurrently work in other occupations during their study. Applicants for courses have included qualified and practising solicitors, veterinarians, medical doctors, petroleum engineers, and designers.

3.3.7 Other jurisdictions

While no specific programs exist to provide career change pathways into teaching in other jurisdictions, there are nevertheless a number of broader teacher recruitment strategies in place which potentially impact on career change.¹⁷

Australian Capital Territory

Through the Teaching Staff Certified Agreement, recognition of previous ‘paid employment relevant to teaching’ is available for teachers with previous work

¹⁷ It may be noted that some of the initiatives described in this section of the report, as well others listed in Section 3.4, are also evident in States which have implemented targeted career change programs. For example, in Victoria, a Student Teacher Practicum Scheme has been introduced to provide financial incentives for student teachers to undertake practicum placements in government rural and outer metropolitan schools. The Department of Education and Training in Victoria has also established a Teaching Scholarship Scheme and a Graduate Recruitment program to support the employment of graduates in government schools. Similarly, retraining programs are also evident in New South Wales and Victoria. As a generalisation, these programs offer opportunities for primary trained teachers or teachers with specialisations which are in low demand or over supply to retrain in subject areas in which schools are experiencing difficulties in attracting qualified staff.

experience to enter the incremental salary scale at a higher point than that of a beginning teacher. Through the provision of documentary evidence, teachers with recognised prior work experience are able to advance one 'step' on the incremental salary scale for every three years of full time equivalent work in areas relevant to teaching (to a maximum of six steps). For career change teachers with experience in teaching and training in other sectors, such as TAFE, the recognition is based on one step for every two years of service (up to a maximum of eight steps).

Tasmania

To assist schools which experience difficulties in staffing in particular subject areas, the Department of Education and the Teacher Registration Board (Tasmania) have the legislated authority to provide a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) for individuals who meet all requirements for the position other than a recognised teaching qualification. Recipients of a LAT are required to be enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (In-Service) with the University of Tasmania.

The Department of Education does not sponsor or actively promote this pathway into teaching. Indeed, to be eligible to appoint a person in a LAT position, a school must demonstrate that it has exhausted all other means of locating a suitably qualified and currently registered teacher to fill the vacancy.

However, in response to perceived demand for career change opportunities, the University of Tasmania is considering the introduction of a 14 month, intensive program (using summer and winter schools) to ensure coverage in the time leading to Master of Teaching that would cater for career change students.

Northern Territory

Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) funds 20 Student Teacher Bursaries each year. The awards are open to school leavers and mature age persons (either through a Bachelor Degree in Education or a Graduate Diploma), and DEET give priority to applicants who are willing to teach in remote, Northern Territory schools or who undergo teacher education in identified skills shortage areas.

By encouraging people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to apply for Student Teacher Bursaries, as well as through a system of DEET funded fellowships and the Australian Government funded National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP), DEET is fulfilling one of its priority actions to increase the proportion of Indigenous teachers working in Territory schools.¹⁸ Although these support mechanisms do not specifically target career change, in practice, most of the Bachelor Institute's teacher education students are mature aged at least, and also often career change, and hence they indirectly support the career change process.

¹⁸ DEET (2006) *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2006-2009*

South Australia

Two recruitment strategies currently operate in South Australia:

- The Country Teacher Scholarship Program which provide scholarships up to a maximum of \$10,000 (\$2,500 annually over four years) are also available for students who are undertaking Teacher Education courses at a Tertiary Institution in South Australia and who are willing to teach in areas of identified (currently mathematics, physics, chemistry, English and home economics) need in country locations in South Australia; and
- The Graduate Recruitment Program, which enables early offers of permanent employment in country locations to be made to teacher training graduates. All teachers recruited through this program are expected to teach in country locations.

Currently, the South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services is developing a budget bid to establish a career change program on the basis of clear need to recruit qualified teachers for specialised areas of secondary education in South Australian schools.

3.3.8 International perspectives

United States - Passport to Teaching

Endorsed by the US Department of Education, *Passport to Teaching* targets knowledgeable and motivated professionals who want to change careers and become teachers or current teachers who need to earn certification.

The American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence offers the *Passport to Teaching* certification, which is designed to recruit professionals looking to career-change into the teaching profession through an interactive, online training tool. This resource has a modular structure that focuses on developing and strengthening professional teaching knowledge.

All candidates for *Passport to Teaching* certification must hold a bachelor's degree and demonstrate mastery on rigorous examinations of subject area and professional teaching knowledge. Prior to earning certification, candidates must also pass a federal background check. *Passport to Teaching* is a five-step process that offers individualised preparation.

Once an individual is certified and employed as a teacher, he or she will be able to participate in the American Board's mentoring program, which connects experienced educators with new teachers in an interactive and online environment.

United Kingdom - Ways into Teaching

Regardless of prior experience or qualifications, in order to become a fully qualified teacher in state-maintained schools in England and Wales, prospective teachers

must gain Qualified Teacher Status. This will usually require the prospective teacher to complete a program of initial teacher education.

One avenue for gaining this status is to undertake School-Centred Initial Teacher Training courses. These are postgraduate, initial teacher training programs designed and delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges. These qualifications allow graduates to complete almost all of their training in a school environment.

Taught by experienced, practising teachers, and often tailored towards local teaching needs, all School-Centred Initial Teacher Training courses lead to qualified teacher status. Many, though not all, will also award graduates the Postgraduate Certificate in Education validated by a higher education institution.

School-Centred Initial Teacher Training is considered to be a good option for individuals who would prefer to spend more of their learning time in the classroom, putting theory into practice and developing confidence through more contact with pupils and other members of staff.

Courses generally last for one year full-time. The academic year runs from September to June.

In addition to achieving set standards on English language and mathematics, applicants must have a UK undergraduate degree or a recognised equivalent qualification. The applicant's degree must relate to the subject they want to teach (if primary, that means the core subjects of the national curriculum) - if it does not, they may need to complete a pre-training course to demonstrate knowledge at predetermined level.

4 Insights arising from the consultations

The stakeholder consultations have revealed a range of insights across the full spectrum of activity related to career change pathways into teaching. As a consequence, the continuum through which all aspirant teachers' progress has been used as an organising framework for the discussion arising from the consultations.

4.1 *Recruitment*

4.1.1 Motivations

Consistent with contemporary research findings,¹⁹ current and recent participants in career change courses highlight a range of motivating factors which have led them on the path to teaching. For many, the targeted initiatives and the offer of financial support have triggered a long held ambition to become a teacher. These teachers reflect that their interest in teaching stems from the admiration they retain for the professional practices of a teacher or teachers who they held in high regard during their own time at school.

"They have a history of interest in teaching and now is a good time in their lives to make the transition; they didn't have the opportunity to take up teaching before and are now returning to their true vocation."

Other career change teachers highlight a 'seminal moment' or a series of rewarding experiences as being a key motivator for becoming a teacher. Finding themselves in a teaching or training situation as part of their work or interactions with young people (such as apprentices) through work, recreational pursuits (such as coaching a team sport) or tutoring roles, these teachers have discovered a sense of personal fulfilment in helping others to develop and learn. For these teachers, motivation to teach is based largely around altruism and the desire to 'make a difference' in the lives of young people. For some, the desire for having a positive impact on young people is also linked to a passion for their area of specialisation and the desire to give 'something back' to the industry from which they derived a career by passing their interest and knowledge on to the next generation.

By contrast, other career change teachers have a more pragmatic motivation for becoming a teacher. These teachers identify a distinct contrast in work environments and working conditions between their previous occupation and teaching. For example, chefs and other workers in the hospitality industry talk of split shifts and night work, laboratory workers and some engineers highlight the low levels of interaction with other people and trades people note the physical toll of manual work on aging bodies. In contrast, the same career change teachers are

¹⁹ See Appendix two for details

attracted to the profession because of the defined hours, the flexibility provided by regular term breaks and the high level of interaction with other people.

While not necessarily being a motivating factor on its own, some career change teachers also point to the importance of the support of a family member or close friend who has a background in teaching as being a critical factor in making a decision to change careers. In acknowledging that a close relationship with a current or former teacher provides career changers with 'inside knowledge' about the profession, other stakeholders have mixed views about the overall benefits of such relationships. That is, although these career change teachers have less 'romantic' views about the profession, they are also more likely to have a more narrow view of what the role entails based on the experience of their contact. For some career change teachers, this narrow view can prejudice relationships with other staff or school leaders as well as negatively influence views on teaching in some settings.

Although the motivations for becoming a career change teacher are largely consistent with those expressed by school leavers who directly enter the profession,²⁰ the critical difference between school leavers and career change teachers centres on a significant level of personal and financial risk associated with giving up one career in order to study for another with no guarantees of success. For many students, the study period presents significant financial hardship, especially during a practicum where they are unable to undertake part time work. For example, students enrolled in the ATTP strongly reinforced their concerns in regard to the difficulties experienced during the Term 4 practicum – *“Effectively I will be unemployed for a whole Term but I will still have bills to pay and day to day living expenses.”*

Whilst being sympathetic to student concerns, academics point to the challenges faced by students as being a critical element of the success for the ATTP in that the challenges foreshadow the need for strong commitment in order to complete the course.

“They cannot be half hearted. Because of the risks they have taken and because of the investment of time and money required, the students are really driven to being successful”

Similarly, university representatives note that career change teachers are less likely to 'drop out' of their course as they have made such a conscious decision to make the change – *“... career changers do not drift into teaching.”*

²⁰ For example, as identified in Australian Secondary Principals' Association (2006) *Teacher Supply Survey*

4.1.2 Selection processes

Various selection processes have been adopted as a critical component of career change initiatives. For example, stakeholders interacting with the ATTP in New South Wales point to the importance of the short listing process and associated selection criteria to reduce fields of up to 600 applicants down to the annual intake of 70 students. As noted in Section 3.1.3, the criteria include:

- Specifying areas of need – currently Mathematics, Science, Agriculture, Food Technology and Technical and Applied Studies (TAS);
- Seeking evidence of lifelong learning – such as further studies or participation in professional development or training courses; and
- Seeking evidence of interaction with young people through coaching roles, voluntary assistance in schools or working with apprentices.

Apart from the practicalities of short listing, stakeholders note the effectiveness of the process in selecting new recruits with attributes that are suitable to teaching.

In the case of both the Victorian Career Change Program and the ATTP in New South Wales, recruitment may also be conditioned by location. In Victoria, career change teachers are either recruited to the program from the area in which the vacancy exists or they are required to relocate to the area where the vacancy exists. In New South Wales, recruitment in hard to staff rural locations is an additional criterion for selecting participants for the program.

Recognition of prior learning as an alternative incentive for career change

While existing qualifications are considered the key ingredients for eligibility to apply for the targeted career change initiatives, there are alternatives to assist potential career changers more generally with their move into teaching. That is, instead of condensing courses for all students, some universities prefer to offer a combination of advanced standing for existing qualifications, recognition of prior learning (RPL) and recognition of current competence (RCC) to enable individual students to reduce the time and costs associated with gaining a teaching qualification. In this way, the pathway into teaching is accelerated, as students only undertake studies in the areas in which they do not possess the required knowledge or skills. As noted by one course coordinator, “... each student has an individual program provided on the basis of previous education, work and life experience.”

In recognising the benefits of providing RPL and RCC to prospective students, academics from a number of universities acknowledge that, in many respects, the approach to recognising prior learning and competence is only in its infancy and that some universities do it better than others, leaving significant room for improvement in this area in the future. This issue is particularly relevant to career change initiatives as improvements in this area have the potential to streamline and, in some cases, truncate the structure and duration of teacher education courses.

4.2 *Programs and university courses*

4.2.1 Program marketing and promotion

The marketing and promotion of career change programs are largely achieved through:

- Launches - Usually by the relevant Minister for Education with follow up media releases which provide details of the aims of respective programs, the target participants, the program budget and expected outcomes;
- Information dissemination - Through websites, brochures and targeted advertisements;
- Local advertising - Through regional print media to recruit career change teachers from rural communities (particularly in Victoria); and
- Reporting - Generally through the print media, where the merits of career change initiatives are discussed and case studies of individual pathways are presented.

4.2.2 University courses

For the most part, courses which target career change teachers are developed in consultation with the relevant education authority and teacher registration/ accreditation bodies in each jurisdiction. While this process stops short of the quality assurance arrangements which have been developed in other parts of the world,²¹ the involvement of the teacher registration and accreditation bodies does give an authoritative, third party perspective to evaluating the features of a given course, as well as ensuring a close alignment between the course content and the standards and competencies required of a beginning teacher.

Modes of delivery

The two career change programs which have been targeted for this investigation feature block delivery of some aspects of each course. For the remainder of the course, participants in the ATTP and Victorian Career Change Program are involved in course delivery through distance education, with study packages being sent through the post and on-line learning combined with telephone and on-line tutorial assistance. In this respect, the programs 'package' the courses to bring

²¹ For example, the United Kingdom where the Office for Standards in Education (OfSEd) plays a major role in monitoring (including inspection) and reporting on the quality of teacher education courses against the standards established by a specialised third party organisation, the Training Development Agency. While giving a greater sense of rigour to course development, such a system is arguably incompatible with current self accreditation arrangements for Australia's universities. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/portal/site/Internet/menuitem.1c8478149b4a6342502b011069f034a0/?event=searchByProviderType&maxResultPerPage=10¤tPage=1&sortOrder=3&providerCategoryID=8192>

together pedagogical course work, school based practical training and ongoing support by mentor teachers in schools.

While academics and other stakeholders acknowledge the flexibility associated with the distance mode of delivery, some program participants and recent course graduates highlight the challenges associated with engagement in the block programs. In New South Wales, the challenges for students associated with participating in a block program (intensive residential course delivery within a designated timeframe) whilst balancing family commitments and part time employment²² are compounded by the requirement to travel to Wagga Wagga for the residential programs. In Victoria, the same challenges are compounded by the need to travel to Melbourne from largely rural locations.

More generally, similar issues are experienced with career change teachers enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate education courses which have block programs or 'on campus' delivery on weekends. Some universities endeavour to assist the high numbers of mature age/career change students enrolled in mainstream courses by conflating lectures and tutorials into three days per week or giving first preference to registering for tutorials to older students.

In this respect, the distance mode of delivery is noted by a number of academics to be the most popular for mature age students, including those undertaking a career change pathway into teaching, particularly those living in rural and regional areas. In contrast, other academics point to the potential isolation of the learner through distance mode delivery and the consequent need to balance distance mode with block programs, such as those evident through the ATTP and Victoria's Career Change Program, as well as online and other forms of support which are again evident in the ATTP and Victorian Career Change program.

Support initiatives

To support students in the transition from one career to another, many universities conduct workshops or orientation programs as the first component of the course for each new intake. Such sessions invariably cover both an orientation to study as well as orientation to teaching.

To provide a more portable form of support, Queensland University of Technology has produced a DVD for students, which covers the transition process from a career change perspective by drawing on case study examples of the experience of recent career change graduates. With similar objectives in mind, the University of Queensland has employed a retired school principal to act as a mentor and troubleshooter for students in education courses including mature age students.

²² For some students, the issue centres on balancing study with full time employment, even though DET strongly recommends that students reduce work commitments in order to concentrate on full time study.

Course duration and issues associated with timing

Although education courses vary in structure, content and the emphasis placed on different KLAs, they all have common elements related to teaching method and classroom management. Critics of career change initiatives argue that the amount of time devoted to pedagogy in Graduate Diploma programs is not sufficient to fully equip teachers for their role in schools. The varied length of Graduate Diploma programs which are evident across Australia range from 12 months through to two years. This illustrates the different perspectives which universities hold regarding the appropriate length of graduate entry teaching courses. The tension between the course duration and content has been highlighted as a critical issue by a number of universities as evidenced in the following comments:

“Because the program is only 18 months, timetabling is very tight and this limits the flexibility that would be ideal in terms of designing a program to meet individual needs particularly in relation to exploring and developing a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process.”

“We have just completed a massive restructure of our programs. There are still arguments going on about whether the Grad Dip should be two years or one year. The one year lobby will win out as we cannot compete in the marketplace otherwise, particularly if you want to attract career change students - you need to recognise their limitations in terms of finances and time.”

This issue is particularly relevant to career change initiatives as part of the attractiveness of the programs centres on the short timeframes for the respective sources when referenced against Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Teaching courses. The shorter the course, the lower the cost and the smaller the timeframe between substantive, rather than supplementary, sources of income. This is particularly the case for career change teachers in receipt of scholarships. Depending on the level of funding received as a result of the scholarship, career change students have found that, as a scholarship recipient, they are ineligible for other forms of government funding through Centrelink. Moreover, the Maths and Science Scholarship recipients in Queensland also found that a scholarship attracted the Fringe Benefits Tax which, for some students, meant that they were, overall, financially worse off (when other fees and costs were taken into account) than if they had undertaken teacher education using their own financial resources.²³

While the quality of Graduate Diploma courses with a duration of 12 months is questioned by some stakeholders, others highlight the pressure which is brought to bear on students as a result of attempting to cover all the prerequisite needs of pre-service teachers within a short timeframe - *“The accelerated program put students under enormous pressure – stress levels were high.”*

²³ FBT liability is also apparent with the funding incentives associated with targeted programs in some other jurisdictions. However, in these instances, the relevant education authority covers the cost.

For students, the timing of content within the overall course structure is also an important issue, particularly content related to pedagogy and program organisation. Students reflect that key theoretical underpinnings in areas such as adolescent development and the learning process need to be provided prior to interacting with school students in practicum experiences. As one student commented, "...the material we are receiving now would have been really useful in our last practicum."

Critical success factors

Intellectual capability is highlighted in a number of settings as being critical to successfully changing careers. As a generalisation, this issue regularly arises for people who have a trade background as a result of a lack of exposure to academic processes during their training.²⁴ For many, this issue is resolved through the support of the academic staff during the early stages of their course. In some instances, this support incorporates course extensions to enable students to complete their courses over a longer timeframe.²⁵ However, when these career change teachers continue to struggle with the rigours of their academic program, stakeholders suggest that this is a strong indicator of similar difficulties which will arise in their roles as teachers, post appointment.

"If they struggle with the demands of the academic content in their course, they are probably going to continue to struggle with the intellectual rigour associated with aspects of their work as teachers."

Notwithstanding the concerns expressed by some stakeholders, it is worth noting that the motivation of some career change teachers to 'make a difference' can be a powerful mechanism for overcoming difficulties in this area. Furthermore, emerging research suggests that such teachers may have a positive impact on improving the school experience for students who are themselves low achievers.²⁶

Current participants in career change programs, teachers and academics all stress the importance of the networking that arises through involvement in targeted career change initiatives. Indeed, most universities actively promote this interaction through the provision of chatrooms and university hosted email accounts. Through this networking, students are able to interact and support each other in responding to issues, as well as collaborating, where required, on work requirements. On completion of their courses, the networks continue to provide support, particularly where teachers find themselves teaching outside their area of specialisation.

²⁴ Students in the 10 per cent cohort that are admitted without an existing higher education qualification (see Section 2.2 for details).

²⁵ A recent evaluation of the New South Wales ATTP notes that the attrition rate of 6-7 per cent is lower for the ATTP course than that which is experienced in universities more generally. This positive finding is attributed to the additional support given to ATTP students. New South Wales DET (2003) *Evaluation of the ATTP*

²⁶ See Section A.2.2 for details

Principals and career change teachers also highlight the importance of having a direct point of contact with the education authority that has overall responsibility for administration of the career change program. To this end, the briefing sessions conducted by the designated departmental officers when students come together for the university component of their course (such as a residential school) are also acknowledged to be an important communication and support mechanism.

Where universities run block programs, course convenors note the challenge which often arises in responding to the needs of schools. This usually involves timetabling constraints associated with staff commitments to other courses and leave considerations, as well as gaining access to lecture theatres and seminar rooms which are used for on campus programs. *"...they do not like teachers being drawn away when they should be at school writing reports."*

4.2.3 Practicum experience

A critical element for each of the career change initiatives centres on the teaching experience which students gain through practicum placements. While in most instances the school or faculty of education assumes responsibility for the coordination of the placement, in others, students take on this role as is the case for participants in the ATTP. By contrast, in Victoria, the Career Change Program practicum experience is part of the overall 'package' in that students are recruited and interned to positions in schools where a vacancy exists. As such, the difficulties which are normally experienced by course coordinators and administrative staff in locating suitable schools for the placements do not occur.

Where students organise their own placements, their primary motivation for arranging the placement invariably centres on convenience and proximity to home. Whilst, for some students, there is a close correlation between their practicum and the reality of the school to which they are appointed, for others, the contrast between the two can lead to difficulties when they are appointed to positions in others schools. As one principal notes:

"It can be a recipe for disaster when students do their teaching practice in a middle class high school and then they come out here [western suburbs] and find that the kids have learning difficulties or challenging behaviour which they have never seen."

A further complication in the organisation of placements centres on differentiating career change teachers from teachers that are undertaking retraining.²⁷ Depending on the jurisdiction, schools have mixed views about the motivations of re-trainees and the effectiveness of the training they receive.

"Where schools have had a negative experience with a retrained teacher, we often have to work really hard to convince them about the difference between a re-trainee and a career change teacher."

²⁷ Either as primary teachers undertaking training as secondary teachers or secondary teachers gaining a qualification to teach in any area of specialisation which is experiencing staffing shortages.

In some instances, career change teachers are not openly welcomed by supervising teachers. While some see a highly qualified pre service teacher as a threat to their own standing in a particular curriculum area²⁸, others simply find it difficult to guide and provide feedback to a mature adult when their previous experience has been with pre service teachers under 25 years of age.

Given that many difficult to staff schools are in rural or remote locations, education authority representatives and academics agree on the importance of securing placement opportunities in country schools. Indeed, based on the experience in Western Australia, there is a close correlation between participation in practicum experiences in rural schools and the propensity for teachers to seek country appointments after qualifying. However, while recognising the benefits of country placements, stakeholders also acknowledge the challenges which such placements present for students and course administrators. The challenges include:

- Meeting the costs associated with travel to rural and remote settings;
- Locating suitable accommodation for the period of the placement; and
- For students, particularly mature age career change teachers:
 - leaving families behind or difficulties associated with families accompanying students on their placement;
 - leaving employment and a lack of income during the period of the placement; and
 - covering rental or mortgage costs whilst living away from home as well as potentially paying for accommodation during the placement.

As a result of these challenges, teaching practicum experiences are often disproportionately concentrated into metropolitan areas.²⁹ Moreover, it should be noted that, while the difficulties of placing pre service teachers in practicum experiences are evident for all beginning teachers, irrespective of age or career background, the issues are particularly pertinent to career change initiatives as, for the most part, rural and remote locations are where career change teachers are usually appointed.

Irrespective of the location of the practicum, principals and teachers highlight the importance of making connections between the theoretical components and the practical element of the practicum. While recognising the resourcing constraints faced by universities, teachers and principals share a literal view that this

²⁸ The experience of some supervising teachers is consistent with the findings of recent research into career change programs. See for example, Green's (2005) research which is briefly summarised in Section A2.2.

Some stakeholders also note that involvement with career change teachers is a potentially intimidating experience for some academics – *"Many are vastly more qualified than the people who teach them – some career change students take advantage of this."*

²⁹ This issue does not arise in the Victorian context as course participants are recruited to a position, often from within the local area. As such, difficulties with short term relocations do not arise.

connection between the school and the university should include site visits to schools by the academics with responsibility for the career change program. The realisation of this expectation is quite mixed. Some universities limit their involvement to coordinating the administrative arrangements for each placement, whereas others endeavour to respond to issues or queries through telephone or email contact and site visits where required.

Given the nature of the Victorian Career Change Program, which incorporates an internship for the duration of the course, Victoria University finds it important to interact with each student and their principal and supervising teacher on a regular basis. The course convenor schedules visits to each school to observe teachers and interact with supervisors and mentors.

In the ATTP, the internship placement (for the duration of Term 4) is viewed as being most critical to the program's success. Consequently, during the internship 'preparatory' period (Term 3), all schools are faxed an introductory letter from the practicum supervisor, including details of contact numbers and email addresses. All the supervising staff in schools are then invited to attend a one day seminar (in a location close to their school wherever possible) prior to the placement. At this meeting, supervising staff are briefed about all the requirements for the final placement, as well as receiving the opportunity to meet university staff. This is then followed up with telephone calls to each school.

Once the internship commences in Term 4, the supervising teacher is regularly contacted by the Charles Sturt University practicum supervisor. If there are any major problems during the internship, university staff visit the school to observe the student teaching and to discuss the situation and negotiate its solutions, including the development of a remedial action plan, if necessary, with the student and school staff.³⁰ The students are also encouraged to contact the university practicum supervisor directly at any time to discuss issues more privately - this may be by email, telephone or, if local, in person.

As previously discussed, the important role played by the support network of other program participants also becomes critical to the success of practicum experiences. By discussing their placements on the online forums and chatrooms established by universities, career change teachers explore the differences between schools, as well as gain support and advice from their peers and relevant university staff.

From a university perspective, the first teaching practicum is often a watershed for whether the career change will be successful.

“Mature students, including career change teachers, can have a romantic view of teaching – they expect schools to be like they were when they were at school.

³⁰ Site visits by university staff are also arranged if problems arise in any of the preceding practicum experiences

University staff can spend a lot of time counselling students to help them deal with the culture shock."

While any attrition at this point in the course is disappointing and may lead to organisational difficulties within the course, most stakeholders are philosophical that an early departure from the course is the best possible outcome where the student has any doubts about whether they are suited to the role.

Complying with the requirements of teacher registration/accreditation bodies

Depending on the course structure, some career change teachers receive partial registration from the relevant body in their State or Territory to enable them to teach in schools as part of the practicum or internship arrangements. Various labels, 'Permission to Teach,' or 'Limited Authority to Teach', this approval gives a teacher the authority to teach in areas of their specialisation with appropriate supervision provided by the school.

In reality, some career change teachers are assuming full responsibility for the delivery of programs in classrooms with very little supervision or guidance from teacher mentors or heads of department. In such situations, both the career change teacher and the school are relying on the teacher's maturity and content knowledge to sustain classroom management and overcome any inadequacies in terms of pedagogy.

While not necessarily prompting the need to curtail the operation of otherwise successful initiatives, this situation does present as a potential risk to all parties. As such, education authorities continue to provide explicit guidelines regarding their definition of 'appropriate supervision', as well as refining program structures to minimise risk in this area. For example, in Victoria, an evaluation of the Career Change Program identified occupational health and safety as an issue which was subsequently addressed through the inclusion of an induction/orientation period at the school to which the career change teacher was appointed. When combined with a summer school in December and January which covers occupational health and safety in some detail and intensive mentoring support in the first few weeks of teaching, the approach gives confidence to program managers that key stakeholders, principals, career change teachers, mentors and other supervising staff are all fully aware of their responsibilities in this area.

4.3 Appointment

The key aims of all career change initiatives centre on filling gaps in areas of curriculum specialisation and appointing qualified people to fill vacancies in schools which are difficult to staff through more traditional means. However, some participants in career change initiatives are not necessarily as predisposed to fulfilling these aims as might be expected. For some, the willingness to relocate to a difficult to staff location diminishes when faced by the challenges of moving or the 'cultural shock' which some teachers experience with the transition from metropolitan locations to small, rural communities.

For others, particularly career change teachers who have had limited experience during their training with challenging teaching environments, the reality of their appointment becomes overwhelming, leading to a resignation and the resultant requirement to repay funds provided during their training.

As with their involvement in a teaching practicum, some career change teachers find it difficult to be accepted by their new colleagues. Principals report that some teachers are intimidated by their qualifications whereas for others it is an age issue – *“... our school desperately needs younger staff, not someone who is the same age as the rest.”*

Others career change teachers find, for a range of other reasons, teaching as a career does not live up to their expectations or it is not as financially rewarding as expected. Anecdotal feedback suggests that the latter situation is particularly apparent in Western Australia and, to a lesser extent, in South Australia where former engineers are finding that the current ‘resources boom’ is proving to be a lucrative alternative to teaching.

A small minority of career change teachers also repay funds or have the funds repaid on their behalf as a result of using their recently gained qualification to begin a new career in another sector.

While career change teachers largely enter the profession with ‘their eyes open’ in regard to the differences between their former salaries and what they will receive as teachers, career change teachers in some jurisdictions express frustration with the lack of recognition of the skills and experience that they bring to their new role.

For the majority of career change teachers who do take up their appointment, there is usually a close correlation between areas of specialisation and vacancies which exist in hard to staff schools. However, the consultations reveal that the correlation between the specialist skills of teachers and vacancies does not always occur. In some jurisdictions, career change teachers are appointed primarily to fill a vacancy, with the area of specialisation being a secondary consideration. As a result, manual arts teachers with a career background in metals fabrication can find themselves teaching woodwork and former engineers with career backgrounds focusing on maths and physics may be placed in a school where their teaching load incorporates maths, physics and, less appropriately, biology.

In other instances, career change graduates are recruited by ‘the system’ without being appointed to a substantive position within a given school.³¹ These career change teachers report a lack of ‘connectedness’ in that they do not have any ongoing attachment to an individual school.

Herein lies a distinct advantage of the Victorian Career Change program in that career change teachers are recruited to the actual vacancies where the specialised requirements of the position form part of the selection criteria for the career change teacher. That is, if the vacancy is in woodwork, the school will seek to recruit a

³¹ For example, as ‘above establishment’ teachers in New South Wales.

career change teacher with a background in furnishings or carpentry, if the vacancy is in hospitality, the recruit will be drawn from the hospitality industry.³²

The apparent symmetry in the Victorian initiative is further strengthened where the teachers are recruited from the community in which their school is located. That is, whilst the vacancy arises because the school is in a difficult to staff location through traditional means, the negative becomes a positive in the eyes of career change participants as they do not need to relocate in order to change careers. In many instances, where the career change teachers already have connections through work or sport with the local community, they often enjoy the added advantage of being known and valued by parents and students.

“... [career change teacher] is a ‘legend’ he has been the local football coach for the last five years and has also been a builder. Everyone knows him and respects him.”

“... [career change teacher] has always been a part of this community, she was a student at this school and her kids go here Her professional expertise has always been respected and she now has the same impact as a teacher.”

With its emphasis on recruiting teachers from rural locations, the ATTP also provides career change teachers living in hard to staff country schools with opportunities (but not guarantees) to be appointed to a local school.

4.3.1 Registration or accreditation

On appointment, career change teachers, like all beginning teachers, are required to complete the registration or accreditation requirements which have been established in respective jurisdictions. While the specifics of these processes vary, at a general level, they centre on gathering evidence of satisfactory performance against a range of standards and recognition of competencies by the school principal.

Whilst most career change teachers are able to respond to these requirements, in some instances, career change teachers have argued that the expectations of completing this process within the first 12-18 months of teaching are unrealistic or even unfair. This critique centres mainly on the career change teachers seeking to consolidate in their roles prior to embarking on additional processes, whereas others find the actual standards against which the registration/accreditation is referenced to be too stringent or demanding - *“... this is far more difficult than the licensing requirements to become an electrician.”*

In this area, the participants in the Victorian Career Change Program are at a distinct advantage as the process for gathering evidence to demonstrate that they have achieved the VIT's Standards of Professional Practice is included as part of the

³² In reality, some career change teachers in Victoria may still be required to teach outside their area of specialisation. This is particularly the case in small, rural secondary schools where, for example, the one teacher may have responsibility for the entire manual arts program which may incorporate subjects such as woodwork, metal work, plastics and design and technology.

work requirements for their course. In this way, the cumulative process that each teacher undertakes to develop a portfolio of material to meet the VIT's standards achieves three, interconnected outcomes in that the portfolio delivers:

- Planning materials and other resources which teachers use in their day to day teaching;
- Materials to fulfil a work requirement for their course; and
- Materials to provide evidence to demonstrate competencies against the Standards of Professional Practice.

The same portfolio also provides a mechanism for salary progression once fully qualified.

From a principal's perspective, many see the registration and accreditation process as a useful resource to guide and support teachers in establishing themselves in their career. However, a small number challenge the validity of training and assessment procedures which precede the registration and accreditation process.

"For the most part the [career change initiative] has worked well. However, we currently have one teacher who simply doesn't get it! No matter how much support we provide or how many suggestions we make, the teacher will not meet the requirements. This fact should have been obvious throughout the course – the teacher should never have received his qualification."

This issue highlights the complexity of the teacher education process and the risks which some stakeholders attribute to courses which are of a shorter duration than others. By contrast, other stakeholders hold the view that signing off on the suitability of a graduating teacher who does not demonstrate the required competencies is more a product of one or more parties not fulfilling their responsibilities to the other parties than issues associated with course duration. To this end, the rigour associated with career change initiatives which incorporate on-the-job training that directly connected with externally provided education combined with regular contact between the school, the career change teacher's mentor and the training institution arguably illustrates a model of better practice which has broader applicability for teacher education.

4.4 Induction and ongoing roles in schools

4.4.1 Induction

Given the concerns which are evident regarding the extent to which Graduate entry programs adequately prepare career change teachers for their roles in schools, the need for systematic and comprehensive induction processes are universally acknowledged to be critical to the success of career change initiatives.

Irrespective of whether a beginning teacher has changed careers or entered the profession directly from post secondary school training, education authorities in

each jurisdiction and teacher registration/accreditation bodies, such as the New South Wales Institute of Teachers and the Victorian Institute of Teachers, provide detailed guidance on approaches to induction for beginning teachers. In the case of the respective institutes of teachers, this guidance is closely linked to the processes associated with accreditation/registration for beginning teachers.

In New South Wales, the importance of effective teacher induction has been recognised and promoted to the extent that DET introduced a Teacher Mentor Program in 2003. Currently, the program operates with 58 teacher mentors who are deployed in schools or groups of schools that have high numbers of beginning teachers.³³

In addition to the support career change teachers receive from the teacher mentors, participants in the ATTP have access to additional mentoring support which centres on:

- The identification of a mentor teacher, either in their own school or a neighbouring school, who may provide support and guidance to the beginning career change teacher;
- Participation in a two day, beginning teacher orientation program in which the mentor joins with the beginning teacher for one of the days to discuss planning for professional support;
- Funding for up to six days of teacher release to enable the beginning teacher and mentor to interact through a range of professional practices, including:
 - shared planning meetings;
 - observation of teaching (either the beginning teacher observing the mentor, the mentor observing the beginning teacher or both teachers observing another teacher); and
 - attending conferences or other professional development activities together.

While teachers in the ATTP value the support they receive from mentors of any type, principals are more supportive of the DET mentoring program, with some questioning the effectiveness of the ATTP mentor.

In contrast with other jurisdictions, the 58 DET funded mentors do not have a teaching load. Their responsibilities centre solely on the induction of beginning teachers. Universally, the principals consulted in New South Wales regarded this initiative as being critical to developing the competencies of beginning teachers including career change teachers.

³³ This ranges from 28 positions where the teacher mentor is 100% FTE in one school, 16 positions where the teacher mentor is 50% FTE in one school, 12 positions where the teacher mentor is 100% FTE in three schools to two positions where the teacher mentor is 100% FTE to a base school in a school district. In each instance, the teacher mentors are above the staffing establishment for each school.

“Beginning teachers need structure; the teacher mentors give them that. They are on the spot to help them with their planning and unpack what works and does not work in the classroom.”

By contrast, some principals have expressed scepticism regarding the ATTP mentors by questioning the rigour and validity of the processes through which the mentor is selected and expressing frustration with the allocation of six teacher release days.

“When the career change teacher takes one of the six days, it is a real burden on the school. He was appointed because we could not fill the vacancy, when he takes a day off, we still cannot fill it. Relief teachers are very scarce in this area.”

For many career change teachers, the need for support and guidance extends beyond that which relates to their role in the classroom. For some career change teachers, particularly those that find themselves with responsibility for a KLA, the support centres on knowing what needs to be done in terms of organising materials and equipment becomes critically important.

“Many find themselves ‘one out’ in a particular subject area and because that area has been hard to staff, often there is no detail about budgets, inventories and suppliers. Many don’t know where to start and find it difficult to take on this role while they are still coming to terms with what the need to do in the classroom.”

To overcome this situation, one Victorian school had the foresight (and possibly the good fortune) to be in a position to employ the previous teacher on short term contract as a teacher aide to assist the newly appointed incumbent in all matters associated with running the program.

For others, induction into the community has been an area of significant need. This is particularly the case where career change teachers experience ‘culture shock’ when relocating from a capital city to small, rural communities.

“We have had to work really hard in supporting [LOTE teacher] to become involved and feel accepted in the community. With her cultural background, she has found it extremely difficult to find her niche.”

Given the emphasis all stakeholders have placed on an effective induction process, it is necessary to reinforce the point that, while career change teachers bring a level of maturity to their new profession and possess clear strengths in terms of their content knowledge, they are still nevertheless beginning teachers. As such, it is incumbent on schools and school systems to support and guide career change teachers through their ‘fledgling’ period as beginning teachers. Equally, it is also incumbent on the career change teachers to recognise that their maturity and content knowledge are only two contributory elements to their roles as teachers and, as such, they have a responsibility to continue to learn and develop in their roles. As some universities note:

“One year isn’t long enough, however, it is too difficult to attract mature aged students to longer programs – what needs to be in place is further compulsory upgrading once in the system and better induction/support in the initial years.”

“The course aims to produce graduates who are able to enter the teaching profession with an understanding that they have just begun their professional development as teachers of young people and must take responsibility for their own life-long professional learning while merging their professional development with their own development as a person.”³⁴

At the same time, it is also important for schools to be open and receptive to career change teachers. The cultural orientation of some schools needs to be addressed to ensure that existing teachers are open and receptive to the skills, fresh insights and, in the case of teachers from a non-English speaking background (NESB) in particular, the cultural diversity that career change teachers will bring their schools.

4.4.2 The role of career change teachers in schools

While most stakeholders have reinforced the positive impact of career change programs, some principals have highlighted an apparent mismatch in the understanding of roles and performance expectations. In these circumstances, principals have indicated that some career change teachers are challenged by the workload, particularly around peak times, such as report writing. Others are reluctant to take on additional roles (which may be described as professional duties) beyond immediate classroom responsibilities. Such duties may include assistance with the organisation of camps, excursions, school sports and theatrical performances, contributing to policy development and participating on various committees.

Where career change teachers are reluctant to become involved in these activities, principals suggest that this reflects prior industry experience where *“... people clock on and clock off but have no responsibility for contributing to other aspects of the organisation – teaching is not like that, everyone has to pull their weight in order to make things happen.”* Furthermore, where these issues have emerged, some principals have questioned the initial motivation of the career change teachers inferring that they may have centred on perceptions of teaching as a *“...9.00 – 3.00 occupation with no additional commitments.”* By contrast, other principals point to the need for furthering the understanding of schools as ‘organisations’ as part of pre service teacher education.

While the issues associated with the reluctance of some career change teachers to contribute to school activity beyond their roles in classrooms was apparent in some settings, this is in no way universal. In many other instances, the opposite view exists with principals, other teachers and academics citing the enthusiasm and

³⁴ Deakin University (2004) Course Accreditation Submission

commitment that many career change teachers bring to their new roles that leads to a highly visible impact across a range of school activity and procedures.

It may be noted that, in Victoria, participants of the Career Change Program are actively encouraged to take an active role in the broader life of the school through an Applied Curriculum Project. Through this course requirement, the career change teachers engage in an additional role or activity which is of benefit to the school.

5 Conclusions and options for the future

5.1 *Effectiveness of career change initiatives*

5.1.1 Effectiveness of initiatives which encourage and support career change

Based on the quoted numbers of applications, particularly in relation to the ATTP which has the longest history as an Australian career change initiative, it can be reasonably argued that targeted initiatives do encourage and support career change. Many current and recent participants in the initiatives have reinforced that, while their motivation to become a teacher was based on a sense of altruism or more pragmatic issues associated with work/life balance, the trigger that translated interest into action was the financial incentives and guaranteed employment outcome at the completion of the course.

Equally, while still reinforcing the difficulties associated with balancing study with other commitments and responsibilities, course participants also acknowledge the 'practical' nature of their courses as being an effective way to complete their education. Few, if any, would have expressed an interest in changing careers if their course was solely an academic program.³⁵ Notwithstanding this view, other stakeholders, including some career change students, still question the extent to which the career change courses are delivering sufficient practical skills in the areas of pedagogy, classroom management and, to a lesser extent, the organisational culture of schools.

As noted in Section 4.2.2, current and recent students also acknowledge the support they receive from their university and the relevant education authority. However, high levels of support, while valued, can lead to high and unreasonable expectations. University representatives in particular note that career change students can be comparatively more demanding than other students and potentially quite resentful when education authorities are unable to deliver on expectations, particularly in relation to preferred schools for appointment.

Other alternatives to attract career change teachers

Although the current and recent students participating in the targeted career change programs provide a convincing line of argument regarding the effectiveness of the targeted initiatives in attracting them to change careers, the data analysis in

³⁵ It is noted that, in forming this view, respondents have not acknowledged that all teacher training courses in Australia have a 'practical' component. It may therefore be concluded that the respondents are, in fact, highlighting both the general benefit of the practical component of teacher education courses as well as the importance of linking theory with practice within specific and often more intensive career change initiatives.

Section 2 suggests that people are still changing careers into teaching without the need for such incentives.

Similarly, while many stakeholders hold the view that targeted initiatives encourage and support career change, others are more circumspect in evaluating the effectiveness of these programs. These stakeholders suggest that the same outcomes might be achieved by applying other 'triggers' to encourage people to change careers. Such triggers may include a mix of:

- RPL - Enabling career change teachers to accelerate progression according to the relevance of existing qualifications and demonstrated work or life experiences;
- HECS relief - Full or partial payment of HECS debt for a designated period; and
- Flexible delivery - Continuing to offer alternative delivery modes to suit the needs of people with significant commitments and responsibilities outside of study.

As noted in Section 4.1.1, targeted initiatives are effective in enabling education authorities to work with universities to prioritise recruitment around specific areas of need. However, it is conceivable that targeting could be incorporated into the arrangements discussed above by only giving HECS relief in the areas in which there are known teacher shortages - either in terms of location or subject specialisation or a combination of both.

Consequently, the contrast between the effectiveness of targeted initiatives and that associated with the application of triggers, such as RPL and HECS relief, centres on the 'by-products' of the process of investing in a targeted program. That is, as a result of investing in the education of career change teachers, education authorities and universities are more predisposed to being involved in the recruitment and selection of course participants. Equally, education authorities and teacher registration and accreditation bodies have a more direct interest in the quality of career change courses and in the effectiveness of induction processes post appointment.

Through this process of 'investing in the investment', stakeholders acknowledge the propensity (though not a guarantee) for better quality teachers to enter the workforce than what might be achieved through a more arm's length approach to career change pathways into teaching.

5.2 *Benefits of career change programs*

Consistent with the findings from recent research³⁶, the benefits of career change programs fall into three areas:

- Those which accrue to schools and school systems;
- Those which are evident in individual classrooms; and
- Those which ensue to the career change teachers.

5.2.1 Benefits to schools and school systems

The obvious benefit of the career change initiatives is that they are delivering qualified teachers to normally difficult to staff schools, as well as filling gaps in the delivery of school programs in curriculum areas which have previously experienced staffing difficulties. The continued investment in career change programs by the Victorian and New South Wales Departments of Education and Training, as well as the interest shown in a similar initiative by the South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services, would suggest that these education authorities find that targeted initiatives provide a good value for money proposition for recruiting teachers and appointing them to difficult to staff locations. As a recent evaluation of the ATTP concludes:

*"The information gathered [through the evaluation] indicates that the ATT program continues to meet with considerable success. There is a core belief amongst teachers, head teachers and mentors that the program is 'working' and that its graduates, by-and-large, are well placed to 'add value' to the New South Wales public education system."*³⁷

More generally, the development of career change courses, such as the Deakin University, Graduate Diploma (Applied Learning) and the University of Newcastle Bachelor of Education (Design and Technology), are providing the added benefit of fostering career change into areas of teaching which have experienced significant growth over the last decade such as technology, VET in Schools³⁸ and qualifications such as VCAL.

For schools, the benefits of career change teachers often centre on the connections the teachers are able to make with employers and industry. For some schools, this centres on the 'authoritative voice' that career change teachers are able to give to discussions about industry needs and employer expectations of schools and school systems. In other circumstances, the connection centres more on drawing on industry resources for excursions, materials or guest speakers, as well as enhancing the standing of school programs in the eyes of industry.

³⁶ See Section A2.3 for details

³⁷ New South Wales DET (2005) *ATTP Evaluation Report*

³⁸ See for example MCEETYA data which shows participation growth from 60,000 students to over 200,000 students since 1996. <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=11896>

"[Career change teacher] is one of the leaders of a local network of chefs – this has been a great boost to the reputation of our hospitality program."

"[Career change teacher] was one of the most respected mechanics in the town. Now that he has become a teacher, all the vehicle service managers come to our automotive program first to recruit their apprentices."

5.2.2 Benefits which accrue in individual classrooms

The consultations with principals and the site visits to schools in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland have revealed a largely consistent theme regarding the benefits of career change initiatives, with the benefits being most apparent in individual classrooms.

"[The career change teachers] are some of our best teachers. They are relatively young so they connect well with kids anyway, but it is their enthusiasm for the job and passion for the industry that they come from which really sets them apart from other teachers."

"They are potential leaders both at their current school and beyond."

"His maturity, passion and commitment already stamps him as a potential HOD³⁹ in only a few years"

The authenticity of industry background, and the capacity of the career change teachers to draw on this experience, is a clear benefit from the perspective of students. For example, students have highlighted the benefits of:

- Anecdotes of 'real events' in the workplace which give a new meaning to discussions about the relevance and importance of occupational health and safety;
- Problem solving exercises in maths classes which are referenced against day to day activity in the workplace; and
- Science lessons which are brought to life through connections to what happens in industry.

An additional and possibly unintended outcome of career change teachers interacting with students relates to the students' changing perspectives on career options. Through the focus groups, a number of students have indicated that their thinking about possible careers has been strongly influenced by career change teachers. For some students, this has opened their thinking about options in the industry from which the teacher exited, whereas for others it has sparked an interest in teaching, particularly in terms of undertaking a 'first career' in one industry and then transferring to teaching later in life.

³⁹ Head of Department

Although the messages regarding the benefits of career change initiatives have been consistent, they have not been universal. As noted in Section 4.3.1, where it is suggested that career change teachers do not have the pedagogical or interpersonal skills to interact with students, their strengths in content knowledge are not sufficient to assure a successful transition into their new role. Effective recruitment and selection strategies are seen as one means to minimise risk in this area.

“We need mechanisms to ensure we attract high quality applicants. A lot more needs to be done to target particular groups: those truly suited to teaching - versus those looking for a change and a romanticised view of what teaching is about.”

5.2.3 Benefits to career change teachers

For career change teachers, the benefits of involvement in career change programs include:

- Personal fulfilment and valuing of their previous career – *“The knowledge and skills I gained in my previous career actually amount to something; people recognise that I have something to offer;”*
- Revitalisation – *“I love it. Every day is different and working with young people keeps you on your toes;”* and
- Work life balance – *“... teaching takes up more time than I thought it would but it is still much better than split shifts and weekend work. I actually get to do things with my own kids now.”*

5.3 Level of support for career change initiatives

Based on the feedback received through the consultations and insights derived from the site visits, the level of support for career change initiatives is generally positive. However, in reaching this conclusion, it is apparent that, within some stakeholder groups, there are mixed views about the relative merits of career change programs.

For example, while some academics are highly supportive of career change initiatives, others point to mechanisms, such as RPL and HECS relief, as being equally effective in attracting people from other employment backgrounds into teaching. Similarly, other academics and some principals and teachers question the effectiveness of pre-service teacher education courses which are limited to 12 months in duration. Representatives of some teacher registration/accreditation bodies have similar views about the validity of shorter courses.

Principals and teachers condition their support for career change programs according to the quality of recruitment and selection processes. For these stakeholders, the maturity and content knowledge career change teachers bring to schools are only valuable if they can be combined with strong interpersonal and pedagogical attributes.

School students too, value the teaching skills of career change teachers where they are apparent and are generally supportive of career change initiatives because of the 'real life' experiences that career change teachers bring to classroom programs.

5.4 *Other insights and issues*

5.4.1 Difficulties experienced by teachers from a NESB

Three intersecting issues often impact negatively on non-English speaking career change teachers. Although not all NESB career change teachers experience these issues, the consensus view from the consultations would suggest that a proportion of non-English speaking teachers experience difficulties with:

- Communicating in English - even though an individual teacher's English may be technically sound, strong accents may cause students and other colleagues to experience difficulty in gaining meaning from spoken communication;⁴⁰
- Understanding the principles of behaviour management as they apply in Australian classrooms - many overseas trained teachers are not familiar with the manner in which teachers and students generally interact in Australian classrooms; and
- Implementing contemporary teaching and learning methodologies - many overseas teachers are trained in traditional 'chalk and talk' methodologies and struggle with group work and catering for individual differences.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the outcome of these issues is often characterised by a situation in which the performance of non-English speaking background teachers is compromised by a combination of communication difficulties and challenging student behaviours. In many instances, the issues have a compounding effect, with difficulties in one area increasing problems in another. Furthermore, stakeholders also report that the response to these issues is, at times, inappropriate - blaming students for the communication difficulties. As with all other new recruits to teaching, the issues are further compounded where NESB career change teachers are appointed to schools which are distant from their support networks and cultural identity. At the same time, many NESB teachers reportedly experience greater levels of difficulty in meeting the requirements of accreditation or registration at the conclusion of the period of probation.

⁴⁰ For example, in Queensland, applicants from most overseas countries are required to undertake the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test, and score at a level of 7 or higher in each area of the test. Scores of 4 for Speaking, Listening and Reading, and 3+ for Writing, on the International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR) are also accepted. Similarly, NESB applicants to the New South Wales ATTP have been required to demonstrate English proficiency before admission to the course through universities' language tests and before employment through the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT).

5.4.2 Retention issues

While career change teacher recruitment has been the focus of this investigation, consultations with education authorities in some jurisdictions suggest that an equally detailed focus on teacher retention is required, particularly during the first five years of appointment.

Education authority representatives note that the data varies considerably across jurisdictions as well as from year to year. Nevertheless, trends shared by two education authorities suggest that the need for aggressive recruitment would not be as apparent if fewer teachers were moving into other options. For example, in jurisdiction 'A', the graduate attrition trends are running at up to 20 per cent in the first 24 months and up to 50 per cent in five years and, in jurisdiction 'B', the trends for the same graduate cohort are running at up to 35 per cent within the first 24 months and up to 40 per cent in the first five years, including high levels of attrition reportedly experienced within the NESB cohort of teachers.

As an immediate response to retention concerns, some teacher recruitment initiatives, including career change programs, incorporate a bonus payment for teachers who remain at the school to which they are appointed for a prescribed period. In some jurisdictions, teachers are also able to access additional incentives which include isolation allowances, hot/cold climate allowances, rental subsidies and extended summer vacations. In other circumstances, incentive payments are combined with 'transfer points' in which the duration of an appointment in a difficult to staff location has a direct bearing on the 'points' which accrue towards a transfer - the longer the duration, the greater the number of points to enable an appointment to a preferred location.

While some stakeholders point to the nature of the appointment for beginning teachers as being critical to retention - "*Nobody invests in a beginning teacher if they are on a short term contract ...*"⁴¹, others identify issues associated with recruitment and induction which have some relevance for career change initiatives. Specifically, these stakeholders highlight the importance of interviews as a recruitment strategy to ensure a better 'fit' between teachers and their roles.

"While permanency helps, we have found that our attrition rates have dropped to between 5-10 per cent as a result of making better selection decisions through one to one interviews."

This message aligns closely with the views expressed by some academics and a number of principals who point to the need for close screening of applicants for career change programs to give greater assurance that the resources invested into

⁴¹ A recent (unpublished) evaluation of the ATTP reinforces the importance of permanency in that it concludes, "*Where teachers are appointed to a permanent position, the evidence indicates that they have a much more positive view about their 'circumstances' including their introduction to teaching, the likelihood of them remaining in the profession and the likelihood of them remaining as a teacher in a government school.*"

the career change initiatives pay dividends in the form of high quality (albeit beginning) teachers at the conclusion of the course.⁴²

A recent evaluation of the ATTP confirms this view in that it concludes:

“The first point made by principals was that the program produces a ‘varied product’ and that selection of candidates is a critical issue for the program.”⁴³

While closer attention to selection may have a positive impact on recruiting suitable applicants to career change programs, stakeholders are universally consistent in the view that there is a close correlation between the comprehensiveness and quality of induction and mentoring processes and the capacity for schools and school systems to retain newly appointed staff.⁴⁴

5.5 Options for the future

Given the substantial number of teachers who are nearing retirement, as well as the growing trend for younger teachers to seek employment offshore, education authorities throughout Australia will need to continue to seek innovative ways to recruit, train and retain high quality teachers.⁴⁵ At the same time, the teaching workforce will benefit from the provision of transparent pathways for former teachers to return to teaching, particularly younger trained teachers who have chosen to travel or pursue alternative careers.

While regular pathways into teaching will undoubtedly play a role, the data analysis in Section 2, combined with the insights from a range of stakeholders, would suggest that alternative pathways for mature age and career change teachers already exist and will need to continue into the future.

To this end, where targeted career change initiatives continue or are introduced, the findings from this investigation would suggest that characteristics of the continuum from recruitment to post appointment should encompass the following features.

⁴² Despite the research evidence which suggests that, in some fields, initial screening interviews have little or no impact on the effectiveness of recruitment processes. See for example, DeVaro and Fields (2005) *Waging the war for talent: do recruitment and screening strategies raise employee performance?* (Cornell University)

⁴³ New South Wales DET (2003) *Evaluation of the ATTP first cohort 2001-2003*

⁴⁴ This observation is consistent with the research literature which points to the benefits of comprehensive induction programs for all beginning teachers including career change teachers. See Section A2.1 for summary details.

⁴⁵ See for example MCEETYA (2004) *Demand and Supply of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Australia* located at <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=11582> which projects that, between 2005 and 2009, approximately 9,000 Australian teachers per year will turn 55 and be eligible to retire and *The Australian* 21 August 2006, which cites DIMA data illustrating that approximately 8,000 teachers are leaving Australia each year to work in other countries. <http://www.careerone.com.au/jobs/job-search/job-market-insider/teacher-joins-the-exodus-for-better-pay>

Element	Features
<i>Recruitment and selection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPL and RCC to enable academic programs to focus on the gaps in skills and knowledge of career change teachers • Using a range of selection techniques, such as those adopted by the ATTP (evidence of lifelong learning and interaction/engagement with young people), to short list applicants for career change programs • Where possible, recruiting program participants from the locations in which the vacancies exist and matching specialisations to the requirements of known vacancies
<i>Courses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, in consultation with registration and accreditation bodies and education providers, to ensure that courses meet the needs of all parties • Mixed mode delivery including distance and flexible arrangements for block components of programs • Emphasis on pedagogy, classroom management and practical guidance in working in schools • Wherever possible, basing practicum experience in schools with similar characteristics to those which career change teachers may be appointed (with additional support such as travel assistance or childcare to encourage practicum experiences in rural/remote locations) • Ensure career change teachers are adequately and appropriately supervised for the duration of their placement
<i>Appointment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match appointment to vacancies with the areas of specialisation of individual career change teachers • Give recognition to skills and experience for initial starting salaries
<i>Induction and ongoing roles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link induction programs with registration and accreditation procedures to expedite processes and give a longer term perspective to career choice • Provide access to mentors and other forms of support such as professional networks for career change teachers • Ensure that the cultural orientation of schools is receptive to the skills, insights and possible cultural diversity derived from the addition of a career change teacher to the teaching staff

The challenge for education authorities and universities is to ensure that career change programs are structured in ways that effectively capture the interest of people with the most appropriate motivations for becoming a teacher, combined with the quality of interpersonal skills necessary for engaging young people and sustaining their interest in learning.

As the feedback from the consultations continually reinforced, strong content knowledge, relevant industry skills and maturity are undoubtedly useful attributes

for teachers, but they must be balanced with the qualities and skills of effective teachers. While some of these qualities and skills may be acquired through study, others relate more to personality characteristics and personal values. The understanding of these differences must be at the forefront of program planning decisions, as well as in the determination of the mechanisms for assuring the quality of career change initiatives.

In taking a long term perspective, the opportunity exists for State and Territory education authorities and the Australian Government to work together to monitor shifts in the economy which may provide fertile ground for recruitment. As with the origins of the ATTP, an economic downturn in one sector has the potential to provide opportunities for recruitment in another. That is, shifts in the economy may release people from other fields who may possess the skills and background experience that will be beneficial to classrooms in the future. As such, a potentially negative situation may be transformed into a positive outcome where suitable candidates are provided with an appropriate pathway into teaching.

Furthermore, given the apparent trends in the teacher workforce, with the baby boomer generation departing and significant numbers of younger teachers choosing to pursue other interests, prospective career change initiatives may need to expand to address the potential school leadership vacuum which may emerge in the future.

5.5.1 Other options

In terms of more generally promoting career change pathways into teaching, the principles of RPL and RCC, combined with flexible/mixed mode delivery and HECS relief, need to be promoted. While the first two principles are already evident and may continue to be applied (albeit with the recognition by some universities that there is room for improvement in the provision of RPL), the application of HECS relief needs further consideration of the potential benefits and implications of such a strategy through open dialogue between universities, education authorities and the Australian Government.

Appendices

Appendix one - Mathematics and Science Scholarships - Queensland

During 2004/05, Education Queensland (now the Department of Education, Training and the Arts) established a program of Mathematics and Science Scholarships as a strategy to recruit teachers to areas of the curriculum which the Department was finding difficult to staff. Although not necessarily targeting career change, more than half the recipients were working in other fields prior to participating in the program.

The Mathematics and Science Scholarships took the form of financial assistance and access to a full-time accelerated Graduate-entry Bachelor of Education (Secondary) course at the QUT, based in Brisbane.

The Scholarship program ceased in 2005. The Department of Education, Training and the Arts suggests that the main reason for not continuing with the scholarship program centres on a one year Graduate Diploma being accepted by the Board of Teacher Registration (now the Queensland College of Teachers) as a legitimate qualification for entry into the teaching profession. As a result, there was no longer any incentive to opt for an 'accelerated' pathway.

Purpose

The Queensland Maths and Science Scholarships provided financial assistance and access to a teaching career in secondary schools for graduates with existing qualifications in Maths and Science.

Features

During 2004/05, the Department of Education, Training and the Arts offered up to 25 Maths and Science Scholarships, each valued at \$6,000 (before tax). Each scholarship was dependant on the provision that the scholarship recipient:

- Undertook the Graduate Diploma course in the year the scholarship was offered;
- Successfully completed the course;
- Gained an appropriate 'suitability for employment assessment' from the Board of Teacher Registration; and
- Agreed to take up employment with the Department of Education, Training and the Arts for an equivalent time of their full-time study load.

An important feature of the course involved intensive school-based practicum components, where successful applicants received mentoring and extensive professional support.

Target groups

The scholarships were advertised in the State newspaper under the joint banner of the Department of Education, Training and the Arts and Queensland University of Technology (QUT) delivering the teacher education course.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants had to be eligible for graduate entry to university and be interested in commencing a career as a maths or science teacher. In the first instance, the University assessed applicants for their eligibility for entry into the Graduate Diploma course. The Department of Education, Training and the Arts then formed selection committees to interview and select applicants. Representatives of those schools chosen to host the scholarship recipients participated in the selection process to finalise the scholarship recipients.

Twenty-five students were enrolled in the Maths and Science Scholarship program in 2004, with 17 currently employed as teachers in Queensland schools.

Course structure

Scholarship recipients worked with one or more host schools throughout the period of the course, participated in a school-based mentoring and induction program at their host school and participated in the *Spotlight on Science* induction initiative. As a part of the scholarship, recipients also participated in the *Professional Standards for Teachers* professional development program which was conducted by the Board of Teacher Registration.

The program was four semesters in length, and the University made special provisions to accelerate the course delivery by continuing student tuition over two Christmas periods. The students completed the same suite of units as any other Graduate-entry Bachelor of Education student. Where possible, students undertook units within mainstream classes, however, more than 50 per cent of the coursework needed to be undertaken as a separate cohort as a result of the accelerated timetable.

Following satisfactory completion of the course and suitability assessment, successful applicants were guaranteed permanent employment as a teacher with the Department of Education, Training and the Arts.

Appendix two - Perspectives on career change sourced through recent research

In 2003, the Australian College of Educators (ACE) completed a study to examine recruitment strategies for attracting people from other professions to retrain as teachers. The Terms of Reference for the study required:

- Development of a national profile of career change entrants to the teaching profession;
- Documentation of select attitudes, experiences and needs of career change entrants;
- Identification of the benefits and issues in attracting career change entrants;
- Mapping current Australian and overseas practice in attracting and training mature aged entrants to the teaching profession; and
- Providing options and recommendations for action by government, university education faculties, teacher employers and professional associations.

A2.1 Key findings - ACE survey of career change entrants

Benefits

The study found that career change teachers:

- Are a source of expertise in areas of teacher shortages;
- Help to redress the gender imbalance in teaching;
- Offer a richness of life experience; and
- Impart valuable vocational and subject knowledge.

Motivation

The study found that the strongest motivating factor to become a teacher was altruism, with respondents describing their previous work as insecure, poorly paid and unrewarding. The second strongest motivator were family reasons, specifically spending more time with their children and working more family friendly hours.

Recruiting

The study found that understanding the motivational factors is fundamental to successfully targeting and recruiting career change teachers, a practice that is well understood in the UK and USA but is lacking in Australia. The report suggests a series of opportunities for proactive recruitment:

- Targeting potential career changers who are in their 20s and 30s;

- Focusing on the altruistic dimension of teaching and the family friend aspects;
- Targeting specific groups to redress areas of short supply, e.g. males, science; and
- Using models of best practice where appropriate.

Preparation

The ACE findings report that the majority of career change entrants in this study trained in traditional Graduate Diploma of Education programs usually of one year's duration. The remainder completed two year Bachelor of Teaching or Bachelor of Education programs specifically designed for graduates. According to the study, there appear to be no alternative ways of delivering preparation.

Specific features of courses that were valued by participants in this study include:

- Practicum-based components including:
 - observations;
 - supervised teaching experiences;
 - problem based learning within schools (learning about schools as organisations); and
 - generally interacting with teachers and students;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or status for previous study;
- The opportunity to fast track; and
- Financial support.

The report cites a series of overseas programs of varying depth and suggests that those developed in New Zealand and Singapore are worthy of further consideration as both appear to have considerable theoretical substance.

Retention

According to the ACE report, it could reasonably be argued that the stressors that cause teachers to leave their chosen profession are similar for both 'traditional' teachers and career change teachers. The study found that there is a need for comprehensive induction programs for all beginning teachers, along with ongoing professional development and more clearly articulated career paths to ensure retention of career change teachers.

The study found that the key factors in retaining career entrants to teaching are:

- Effective induction programs;
- Mentoring support, especially in the early years;
- A total concept for teacher support and development;

- Professional development;
- Diverse teaching experiences; and
- Addressing causes of stress.

A2.2 Other research

The benefits that maturity and experience bring to teaching

A study on career change teaching by Chambers (2002) found that age and experience equips mature age entrants with immediately transferable communication, project management and analytical skills. The study found that these students exhibit the real-life application of expert knowledge and personal qualities that are generally more compassionate, less naïve and more tolerant of diversity.

In a separate study, Dills, Hayes and Johnson (1999) suggest that few of the graduates from traditional teacher training programs demonstrate the advantages to the classroom by 'mature' teachers. This study found that mature teachers bring life experience, ability that extends beyond 'knowing content and pedagogy' and an 'other-centeredness' that addresses culturally sensitive issues.

In a presentation to Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association, Green (2005) highlights that, while some career change teachers may have struggled in secondary schools and may continue to find difficulties with the academic side of teacher training, they are nevertheless highly motivated to make school a more rewarding experience for some cohorts of students.

"They have obvious strengths in terms of technological knowledge, but they have a very different view of pedagogy, student achievement and ability and the purposes and intent of the school system. One of the emerging themes that have already been identified is the desire to make school a more rewarding experience for the average and lower achieving students."

Motivation

Australian and international studies have confirmed that the major factors influencing people to change careers to teaching were altruistic and family related (AARE 2001, Whitehead et al 1998, Whitehead and Postlethwaite 2001). This literature is consistent with the ACE findings in that it suggests that factors motivating people to change careers into teaching are:

- Previous experience in working with young people;
- Family responsibilities;
- Security of employment, and family life;
- Teaching as a satisfying career;
- Wanting to make a difference;

- Need for a career change or a new job; and
- The desire to continue with their previous degree, subject specialisation or to obtain a postgraduate qualification or to enter a profession.

Recruitment and retention

While the ACE report identifies websites as an important point of contact when trying to attract prospective employees, two UK studies undertaken by Whitehead (1998) and Whitehead & Postlethwaite (2001) found that financial considerations have a significant influence on recruitment and retention in that, whilst rarely being the main factor influencing career change, financial considerations:

- Were a significant factor in students' access to and choice of teacher preparation institution;
- Had the greatest impact with those in the 25-29 age group; and
- Were the critical factor for between 10 and 15 per cent of students who considered leaving the course.

The study also found that money was used to help meet normal living expenses, to reduce the extent to which debt would have increased, and to reduce the need for part-time work. At the same time, financial incentives were seen to represent a tangible token of goodwill on the part of employers rather than simply a sum of money.

To address these concerns, the research suggests that universities have the capacity to provide greater incentives to people considering changing careers by communicating bridging support to fine tune study skills, promotion of RPL opportunities, explanation of different learning modes and explaining support systems available.

In relation to retention, American research confirms that key elements of approaches to retain teachers centre on:

- Behaviour management;
- Professional support;
- Participation in decision-making;
- Career opportunities;
- Financial incentives;
- Mentoring by accomplished teachers; and
- Enhanced roles for schools in teacher preparation.

Teaching style and school culture

In drawing on the perspectives of career change teachers in their second year of teaching, Green (2005) notes that they see themselves as very different from teachers who have followed the traditional pathways into teaching, and that this difference

was apparent to the career change teachers during their studies. The study reveals that this difference may be in style, approach, culture or even in the beliefs about the purposes and intentions of schooling.⁴⁶ Green further suggests that this different background, combined with a shorter teacher education program, can lead to confrontation with other teachers.

Preparation for teaching

While prior 'teaching' experience through working with apprentices or as a result of other interactions with young people is regarded as a strong motivating factor for people to change careers, Green (2005) suggests that this prior experience has little in common with the reality of the professional responsibilities of teachers. In addition, the participants in Green's study indicated a preference for more information in their training related to, "... *the practical ... realistic side of teaching.*" In addition, Green found that most would have liked more work on curriculum areas, particularly on how to read and interpret the syllabi and very pragmatic assistance with realistic and relevant programming.

A2.3 Key messages from the research literature

Benefits

The consolidated benefits of career change teachers, as derived from the ACE survey and literature review, are:

- Diverse backgrounds of people who find teaching an attractive option;
- Males from other work backgrounds can be attracted to teaching;
- They may help address areas of short supply, such as maths, sciences, information technology and vocational education;
- Many have had successful formal and informal teaching experiences with young people;
- Most bring maturity, optimism, and dedication to their work;
- Most have a strong, positive impact on school programs, the corporate life of the school and school relationships;
- Most have made a strong and definite choice to become teachers; and
- Most are seen by principals to be a positive asset.

Motivations

The consolidated motivations of career change teachers, as derived from the ACE survey and literature review, are:

⁴⁶ In this case, secondary education.

- People are most likely to make the decision in their 20s and 30s;
- They are most likely to leave their existing work because of working conditions or because of the nature of the previous work, particularly if they find it boring, repetitive, unchallenging and unrewarding;
- They are most likely to become teachers because of a basic sense of altruism, because they feel, or have felt for some time, to be drawn to it and for family reasons;
- Teaching working conditions that are most attractive as motivators are the school holidays, work variety and job and income security;
- Many people who choose teaching do so because of positive formal and informal 'teaching' experiences with young people – such as working with apprentices, youth groups, sporting teams; and
- Negative comments about teaching as a profession are considered by those considering a change to teaching.

Recruitment and retention

The consolidated elements of recruiting career change teachers, as derived from the ACE survey and literature review, are:

- People think about a career change at a fairly predictable age, usually their 20s and 30s;
- The intrinsic rewards of teaching, the variety, the challenge, the security and holidays are the things career change entrants believe make teaching an attractive profession;
- People feel drawn to teaching as a career – and, not infrequently, had been dissuaded from taking it up earlier;
- People's interest in teaching is increased if they think their skills, qualifications and experience are needed in schools;
- People feel confident that teaching will fulfil their desire to contribute to the community and satisfy the needs of their family arrangements;
- A significant number of career change entrants enjoyed positive formal and informal 'teaching' experiences with young people – such as working with apprentices, youth groups, sporting teams;
- On the whole, career change teachers are positive advocates for their chosen profession – the vast majority of career change entrants find teaching exciting and rewarding, despite the difficulties and disappointments;
- Most career change entrants enjoy the variety and the fact that no two days are the same in teaching;
- Most career change entrants have enjoyed the personal and professional growth that has accompanied their change to teaching; and

- Qualifications, skills and experience should be given due credit (RPL) in teacher preparation.

The consolidated factors influencing retention of career change teachers, as derived from the ACE survey and literature review, are:

- Most career change entrants will train at a university that is convenient to their current workplace or home;
- Most place highest value on their practicum and on practical and hands-on, classroom focussed teaching activities/assignments during their training;
- Most do not value the theoretical aspects of their courses unless these are tied specifically to the practical aspects of their work as a teacher in training;
- Most career change entrants recognise the critical importance of their competence in the area of information technology;
- Most attach importance and value to effective programs in student management and psychology;
- Some entrants found themselves 'obliged' to undertake units of work in which their pre-existing skills exceeded course content and requirements; and
- Many entrants, once working in schools, find themselves insufficiently prepared for the 'sheer hard working of teaching' - in particular, their school-wide responsibilities, the administrative and paperwork, the time pressures both within and outside school hours.

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Appendix four – Stakeholder consultations

Representatives from the following organisations contributed to the research.

Stakeholder grouping	Organisation
Education Authorities	Queensland Department of Education and the Arts New South Wales Department of Education and Training Victoria Department of Education and Training Tasmania Department of Education South Australia Department of education and Children’s Services Western Australia Department of Education and Training Northern Territory Department of Employment and Education ACT Department of Education and Training
Universities	The Australian National University University of Canberra Charles Sturt University Macquarie University Southern Cross University The University of New England The University of Newcastle University of Sydney University of Technology Sydney University of Wollongong Avondale College Charles Darwin University Central Queensland University Griffith University James Cook University Queensland University of Technology The University of Queensland The University of the Sunshine Coast University of Southern Queensland Christian Heritage College Flinders University University of Adelaide University of South Australia University of Tasmania Australian Catholic University Deakin University La Trobe University Monash University Monash University Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Swinburne University of Technology University of Melbourne Victoria University of Technology Curtin University of Technology Edith Cowen University Murdoch University The University of Western Australia University of Notre Dame Australia

Stakeholder grouping	Organisation
Teacher Registration Bodies	Queensland College of Teachers New South Wales Institute of Teachers Victorian Institute of Teachers
Schools – Principals, career change teachers and supervisors/mentors (as well as school students in 5 locations)	<p><i>Queensland</i></p> Cavendish Road State High School Kenmore State High School Narangbah Valley State High School Earnshaw State College Craigslea State High School Cavendish Road State High School Rochdale State High School Tullawong State High School <p><i>New South Wales</i></p> Quakers Hill High School Plumptre High School Chifley College Rooty Hill High School <p><i>Victoria</i></p> Cobden Technical School Swan Hill College Ararat West Primary School Berwick Secondary Corio Bay Secondary Numurkah Secondary Yarram Secondary Chelsea Heights Primary School <p><i>Western Australia</i></p> Podbury State High School Balga High School Ocean Road Primary School Bramfield Park Primary School Koorana Primary School Leda Primary School Narrogin Primary School Australind State High School Bicton Primary School Armadale State High School Churchlands State High School Cecil Andrews State High School
Other	14 career change teachers in the current intake of the ATTP attending the block residential program at Charles Sturt University