

## A SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO TEACHER EDUCATION

### Introduction

My comments are derived principally from my experience as a Careers Counsellor/Director of a University Careers Service at a major university, and subsequent experience over the past 8 years as a specialist executive recruiter in the education sector. In my careers role I undertook research into cohorts of Diplomates in Education over a three year period where the major findings were quite consistent

### Selection of students into teacher training courses

- The selection process should not be based entirely upon academic performance but include an interview, and assessment of other evidence relevant to teaching
- Applicants presenting with work/life experience should be advantaged or at least given entry credits in calculating their eligibility and suitability

### Attracting high quality students

- Offering financial inducements may attract students but often leads to training individuals with low motivation to teach for the longer term
- My research suggested around 80% of those completing Diplomas in Education had wanted to pursue a teaching career for five years or more. One possible explanation for this, apart from teaching still being perceived as a vocation, is that teachers are themselves significant motivators of students to teach
- Women are over represented in the teaching profession
- Women from government schools are most likely to take up a teaching career
- Males from Independent Schools are least likely to take up a teaching career
- There is a serious mismatch between the teaching methods in which teachers are trained and the areas of need in schools
- Appropriate incentives should be available to mature students to retrain as teachers or for teachers to retrain themselves. Mature graduates, upon completing training should be given advanced standing as teachers and not be treated as new graduates with no experience

### Attrition rates

- I am aware of a number of instances where newly trained graduates have been so offended by the treatment they have received from schools while seeking a first position that they have abandoned all thoughts of teaching

### Primary/secondary split

- Many primary teachers have reported to me that they suffer from a perceived credibility gap stemming from secondary trained teachers. I favour production of multi-skilled teachers who can cross between subjects and year levels

## Ongoing professional learning

- Provision of HECS exempt scholarships when they were available made a positive impact on teachers needing retraining, or those seeking to fill areas of need
- Teachers require adequate support and encouragement for undertaking further studies
- In servicing programs should be linked to a national accreditation framework
- Teachers should be allowed to break their teaching service without penalty and even encouraged to pursue other careers for agreed periods of time, as a professional development exercise

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