

House of Representatives Inquiry into Teacher Education, to inquire into and report on the scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools.

1. Examine the educational philosophy underpinning the teacher training courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure and materials, and methods for assessment and evaluation) and assess the extent to which it is informed by research.

My comments are in relation to course content or more particularly lack of content relating to the teaching of Aboriginal Studies and teaching Aboriginal children. Both aspects are presently neglected in many teacher education programs despite Indigenous Australians being the most unsuccessful students and all Australians needing understanding of Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

If we are to address these two areas of concern, trainee teachers need preparation to do the job well.

This also has implications for the ongoing research and development of the teaching service, to continue the growth of understanding and knowledge relating to Aboriginal education.

Another aspect of concern is the delivery of education to Aboriginal students in remote locations.

It is easy to blame Indigenous people for poor outcomes but it must be noted that teachers are providing this education. Therefore, it is the educational encounter for students with teachers that is the problem. There is frequently high staff turn over of teachers in remote locations largely due in part to the lack of preparation/training during teacher education which in turn negatively impacts on student learning and success.

Teacher education institutions must take on the challenge of teaching teachers to teach Australia's Indigenous children.

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"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us". Ralph Waldo Emerson.