

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000064

Senator Carr, Kim asked on 10 February 2016, Proof Hansard page 51

Initial Teacher Education students - ATAR scores

Question

Senator KIM CARR: I am sorry I have come in late on this. Do you have any sense of what the minimum requirement for entry into a teacher education program is now?

Ms Evans: The selection guidelines did not set a minimum—

Senator KIM CARR: I understand that. Do you have any sense of what, in actuality, is happening? How many student teachers have been enrolled, for instance, with ATARs of less than 40?

Mr Cook: Fewer than 20 per cent of student teachers enter an ATAR school, so let's start with that.

Senator KIM CARR: Yes, I understand all that. I want to know how many of those are less than 40.

Mr Cook: There is a question on notice which answers your question.

Senator KIM CARR: All right. When you answer that, how many of them are real 40s as distinct from concessional 40s?

Answer

Publicly available data on students commencing teacher education courses does not include the proportion with an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) below 40, but does provide information on students with ATARs of between 30 and 50.

The *Initial Teacher Education: Data Report 2015* (ITE Data Report), prepared by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), brings together a range of 2013 data about initial teacher education programmes.

For the 5756 domestic undergraduate commencements entering from secondary education with an available ATAR in 2013, 321 (six per cent) had an ATAR between 30 and 50. ~~This compared with 2740 (three per cent) for all fields of education.~~

The ITE Data Report notes that the ATAR data should be used with caution as the admission of students to ITE programmes is at the discretion of providers and different selection methods can be used (such as prior academic performance, interviews or written applications). Having an ATAR does not necessarily mean this was the method, or the only method, by which a student was selected for a programme.

Data on concessions granted to students with low ATAR scores is not available.

The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group's report *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* identified how ATAR cut off points listed by many universities do not reflect actual student entry levels. To address this, the new accreditation standards, agreed by all education ministers in December 2015, require providers to describe the rationale for their selection approach, selection mechanisms used, threshold entry scores applied and any

exemptions used. All information necessary to ensure transparent and justifiable selection processes for entry into initial teacher education programmes, including student cohort data, must be published.