

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Agency: AITSL

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000689

Senator O'Neill, Deborah asked on 21 October 2015, Proof Hansard page 113

AITSL - development of guidelines

Question

Mr Misson: I can provide that exactly. We were asked to develop and set clear expectations of universities in making sure that those going into teaching have the right mix of both academic ability and personal characteristics that give them the best chance of becoming effective teachers by, among other things, developing specific criteria to assist universities in selecting the right people, making clear the academic capabilities expected of teachers. That is the instruction that we received from then Minister Pyne.

Senator O'NEILL: Could you table that document or is that available publicly?

Mr Misson: I will have to take that on notice as well. That is a communication from the minister to the chair of our board, so I am not sure exactly what the rules would be.

....

Senator O'NEILL: As much detail as you can provide would be welcome. Who set the parameters for that report?

Answer

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has provided the following response.

The parameters for the Selection Guidelines were drawn from a number of sources:

Action Now- Classroom Ready Teachers Report

(https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/action_now_classroom_ready_teachers_accessible.pdf)

Below is a relevant extract from the Action Now Report concerning Recommendations 10 and 11:

Sophisticated and transparent selection for entry to teaching_(page x)

There is a unanimous view that we want the best people to go into initial teacher education. It is clear that teaching demands both academic skills and personal qualities to engage students and foster learning. These components are critical to ensure entrants to initial teacher education have the best chance of success in a teaching career. By selecting the right people, the investment of providers, school systems and schools in developing these new teachers will be put to best use.

To achieve this, all providers must use a blend of sophisticated approaches to select entrants that have both the academic skills – including literacy and numeracy skills – and the desirable personal attributes for teaching. Providers will be required to publish their selection processes for all initial teacher education programs to justify that they are selecting those best suited to the teaching profession on an appropriate basis. Students and future employers will have greater confidence in providers if these public processes are transparent.

Recommendation 10 (page xiii)

Higher education providers select the best candidates into teaching using sophisticated approaches that ensure initial teacher education students possess the required academic skills and personal characteristics to become a successful teacher.

Recommendation 11 (page xiii)

Higher education providers publish all information necessary to ensure transparent and justifiable selection processes for entry into initial teacher education programs, including details of Australian Tertiary Admission Rank bonus schemes, forced offers and number of offers below any published cut-off.

Australian Government Response to Action Now

(https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/150212_ag_response_-_final.pdf)

Below is a relevant extract from the Australian Government Response to Action Now:

In order to get the right people teaching in our schools we need to make sure the right candidates are selected for entry to initial teacher education courses. The Australian Government acknowledges that effective teachers possess a range of attributes that include both academic ability and the personal characteristics needed to engage students. The Government does not propose any single approach such as an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) cut-off for entry to teaching. It is acknowledged that some states are moving to identify specific academic requirements combined with the personal qualities necessary for teaching, as part of a focus on improving selection processes. The Government supports refined selection processes for entry to teaching. To ensure all universities are adopting a more sophisticated approach to selection, the Government will instruct AITSL to develop and set clear expectations of universities in making sure that those going into teaching have the right mix of academic and personal qualities that give them the best chance of becoming effective teachers.

AITSL will do this by identifying best practice in selection and developing specific criteria to assist universities in selecting the right people. This will make clear the academic capabilities expected of teachers, as well as examples of tools that can be used to examine the personal attributes of teaching candidates against those important for teaching. This will also help make sure university and school resources are directed to those best suited to a teaching career.

The Government agrees with the Advisory Group recommendation that more comprehensive selection processes should be adopted and published by every university delivering teacher education. Any alternative arrangements for entry will also need to be made clear. This greater transparency of selection information will assist aspiring teachers and the broader community to clearly understand course requirements and what is needed to successfully enter the teaching profession.

Importantly, teachers must possess strong personal literacy and numeracy skills to foster the development of these skills in their students. The Government will therefore work with universities to make available a national literacy and numeracy test for teacher education students graduating from 2015. From 2016, all teacher education students will be required to pass the test before they graduate. (page 6)

Further Information

Further, AITSL's work on the guidelines is also available on the AITSL website. (<http://www.aitsl.edu.au/initial-teacher-education/ite-reform>)