



ANZSCO 2414-11 Secondary School Teacher

South Australia
April 2018

Current labour market rating: **No Shortage**

Previous labour market rating (April 2017): No Shortage

Comments

There is no evidence of a shortage of secondary school teachers in South Australia. Most employers found suitable candidates to fill their vacancies. However, employers consistently stated that while there is a sufficient supply of secondary teachers in SA, many applicants were unsuitable.

Survey results¹

- The South Australian labour market has been adequately supplied with secondary school teachers for over ten years. However, employers filled fewer vacancies in 2018 (79 per cent), than in 2017 (94 per cent).
- The South Australian Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) is the largest single employer of secondary school teachers within the state. Approximately 57 per cent of all secondary school teaching staff work in the government sector.² Recruitment of government secondary school teachers is managed centrally and positions are not normally advertised externally.
- All surveyed vacancies were in the independent, private or Catholic school sectors across a range of subject areas including English, mathematics, science, geography, humanities and social studies, legal studies, media studies, physical education and dance. Due to limited vacancies in regional areas, all employers surveyed were in the metropolitan area.
- The average number of applicants per vacancy increased to 13.8 applicants, from 9.3 applicants in 2017. Consistent with this increase, the proportion of qualified applicants increased to 95 per cent, compared with 91 per cent in 2017.
- Historically, the average number of suitable applicants fluctuates between 1.5 and 4.5 applicants.³ In 2018, the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was consistent with last year, at 2.3 applicants per vacancy.
 - Employers consistently reported that overall, the quality of applicants was lower than expected.
- Most employers stated senior level mathematics teaching vacancies are generally more difficult to fill than other roles, mainly due to retirement of the mature (mathematics teaching) workforce, and fewer teaching undergraduates selecting mathematics as their major area of study.

¹ The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business - Document library, Australian Government](#) and can also be accessed by the QR code.

² ABS, Schools, Australia, 2017 (ABS Cat. No. 4221.0) Table 51a

³ Department of Jobs and Small Business, Historical SERA data 2007-2017



Employer Requirements

- All employers sought applicants who had a recognised secondary teaching qualification and registration with the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia.
 - Some employers sought candidates whose major area of study reflected the teaching discipline, for example, candidates holding a mathematics major for a mathematics teaching vacancy.
- All employers sought experienced teachers, particularly for permanent roles.

Unsuitable Applicants

- Almost all applicants were qualified, but employers reported 82 per cent of the qualified applicants were unsuitable. The most common reasons for unsuitability were applicants lacking
 - Specific experience, for example, teaching legal studies or Stage 2 English or mathematics
 - Experience in the occupation (mainly recent graduates)
 - Additional qualifications, for example, a science major or English as an Additional Language
 - Technical knowledge/skills suitable for teaching Year 12 English, Mathematics or Science.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for secondary school teachers is largely influenced by demographic trends impacting the number of children enrolled in secondary schools. The demand for secondary school teachers in South Australia has declined in recent years.
 - The number of enrolled full-time equivalent secondary school students in South Australia decreased by 0.6 per cent in 2017.⁴
 - In the five years to 2017, the number of enrolled full-time equivalent secondary school students in South Australia reduced by approximately 1 per cent.⁵
- Conversely, the number of full-time equivalent secondary school teaching staff in South Australia increased by 1.7 per cent in 2017, and by 1.3 per cent in the five years to 2017.⁶ This indicates supply has recently outstripped demand.
- The major source of supply to the occupation comes from university graduates who have completed a relevant degree in secondary school teaching. Course completions for secondary school teachers in South Australia have trended upwards since 2012, and increased by 7.7 per cent in 2016 to a number that is historically high.
- Based on the above indicators there is likely to be an adequate supply of secondary school teachers in South Australia over the next two years.

⁴ ABS Schools, Australia, Cat. No. 4221.0, 2017, Table 43a.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ ABS Schools, Australia, Cat. No. 4221.0, 2017, Table 51a.