



# ANZSCO 2415 Special Education Teachers

# Northern Territory March 2017

## Current labour market rating

Previous labour market rating (March 2016)

## Recruitment Difficulty

Recruitment Difficulty

## Comments

*Employers are continuing to experience difficulties in attracting suitably experienced and qualified special needs teachers. However, while Northern Territory employers may stipulate a requirement for a qualification as a special needs teacher, it is not a requirement for the purposes of teacher registration.*

## Survey results<sup>1</sup>

- The Department of Employment surveyed employers who had recently advertised for special education teachers and supplemented the survey through cold canvassing employers in the industry who had not advertised in this survey period.
- This year's survey primarily contains data relating to recruitment by the Northern Territory Government.
- Overall, 93 per cent of applicants were qualified and 74 per cent of vacancies for special education teachers were filled. A decrease from the 84 per cent reported in the 2016 survey.
- There were an average 2.6 applicants per vacancy, with an average of 2.4 qualified applicants per vacancy. This is an increase from the 1.9 applicants per vacancy and 1.5 qualified applicants per vacancy recorded in 2016.
- The number of suitable applicants remained steady from 2016 with less than one applicant per vacancy considered suitable by employers.
- Vacancies in regional areas accounted for 70 per cent of all vacancies surveyed, with 69 per cent of vacancies filled. There were on average 1.9 qualified applicants per vacancy and less than one applicant per vacancy considered suitable by employers.
- All employers preferred and sought applicants with degree level qualifications and experience in teaching students with special needs.
- Despite this preference, most employers were willing to compromise on qualifications if the applicant held adequate experience working with special needs students, or were qualified teachers with training in the autism spectrum, behavioural management systems, etc.
- Northern Territory Department of Education advises that there is a shortage of quality teachers in high demand vacancies, such as Special Education.

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

### Unsuitable applicants

- 64 per cent of all qualified applicants were considered unsuitable.
- The main reasons cited by employers were if applicants lacked sufficient experience and sufficient skills set to work with special needs students or satisfactory references.

### **Demand and supply trends**

- Special education teachers mainly work in the education sector and deliver specialised learning programs for students who have a range of disabilities and learning difficulties.<sup>2</sup>
- There are five Specialist Schools in the Northern Territory and a number of Special Centres and Schools with Specialist programs identified and approved by the NT Department of Education as settings for students with high support needs.<sup>3</sup>
- In the Northern Territory there are approximately 5,467 teachers registered with the Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory, a slight increase from the 5,413 registered in 2016.<sup>4</sup>
- The major source of supply for this occupation comes from university graduates who have completed a relevant degree in Teaching. In the Northern Territory, Teaching qualifications can be achieved through Charles Darwin University or Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.
- Available data suggests there has been a marked decrease in the number of students commencing and completing teaching courses in the Northern Territory in 2015.<sup>5</sup>
- Vacancies for special education teachers has increased over the past two years.<sup>6</sup>

### **Other indicators and issues**

- Positions in the NT public school sector are filled through a centralised recruitment process which has a pool of applicants it may recruit from. Most of the Government special needs teaching positions are filled prior to the commencement of or early into, the 2017 academic year.
- The Northern Territory Government provides support for school leaders, teachers and support staff through online special education courses and activities.<sup>7</sup>
- It should be noted that in both the current and previous surveys for this occupation, employers have consistently noted the lack of specialist trained teachers.

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<sup>2</sup> ABS, Population data, Northern Territory, 2011 Census

<sup>3</sup> ABS, Cat 4221.0 Schools, Australia, 2016, Table 35b, NT. data as at February 2017 and Northern Territory Government website (NT.GOV.AU).

<sup>4</sup> Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory, Registrant Data 2016, as at 25 May 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Student statistics Data Cube, 2015 domestic students. .

<sup>6</sup> Department of Employment, Internet Vacancy Index, April 2017, 12 month moving average. Data is for May to April

<sup>7</sup> <https://education.nt.gov.au/education/support-for-teachers/special-education-courses>