



# ANZSCO 2415 Special Education Teachers

South Australia  
April 2017

**Current labour market rating**

**No Shortage**

Previous labour market rating (April 2016)

No Shortage

## Comments

*The previous labour market rating of 'no shortage' still applies for special education teachers. All surveyed employers filled their vacancies for special education teachers.*

## Survey results

- The Department of Employment surveyed employers who recently advertised vacancies for special education teachers. All vacancies (100 per cent) were filled within six weeks.
- The result was an improvement on previous years' surveys where 83 per cent of vacancies were filled in both January 2015 and January 2016.
- Vacant positions for special needs teachers in the government sector are not advertised externally as recruitment is managed centrally by the SA Department of Education and Child Development (DECD).
- All State Government special needs teaching positions were filled prior to the commencement of the 2017 academic year. This indicates no shortage of special needs teachers exists among government schools.
- The schools surveyed were predominantly Christian schools.
- The number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy has varied over successive years. The variation can be partly explained by surveying methodology:
  - In 2016 a number of independent private schools were surveyed. Compared with government and Christian schools, the independent private schools attracted high numbers of applicants and suitable applicants. In 2017, no independent private schools were surveyed.
- On average, 13 applicants per vacancy were recorded in 2017 survey results compared with 35.7 applicants per vacancy in the 2016 survey and 9.7 in the 2015 survey.
- There has been a decrease in the ratio of suitable applicants per vacancy from 9.7 in 2016 to 3.3 in 2017.
- Regardless of the variation in yearly results, the labour market for special needs teachers is rated as no shortage. The rating is consistent with survey findings in 2015 and 2016.

## Unsuitable applicants

- Employers required applicants to be qualified and registered teachers. While there was a sufficient number of applicants with qualifications (88 per cent), a large proportion of the total applicants were rejected by employers (77 per cent).
- Applicants were required to have experience teaching students with special needs and, in some cases, experience with specific disability types.

- The main reason applicants were found unsuitable was a lack of experience in a special education teacher role or a lack in of experience in a generalist setting teaching children with special needs.
- Some schools surveyed were denominational and required applicants to be committed to the particular religious faith. Some contacts in denominational schools indicated applicants were found unsuitable if they could not demonstrate active commitment to the relevant religious faith.
- Some employers found applicants unsuitable if poorly written or edited applications were submitted in the recruitment process.
- Applicants who lacked strong references were considered unsuitable by some employers.

### **Demand and supply trends**

- Special education teachers mainly work in the education sector, including special school education, primary and secondary education.
- Demand is influenced by the number of children with disabilities enrolled in education services.
- According to the SA Government State Budget 2016-17 the number of students with disabilities enrolled in South Australian government schools increased by 2 per cent in 2015. The State Government projected a moderate increase of less than half a per cent in 2016<sup>1</sup>.
- According to the Department of Employment's survey of internet advertised vacancies, the number of vacancies for special education teachers fluctuates slightly from year to year. In the year to January 2017 internet vacancies for special education teachers were the highest recorded in eleven years.<sup>2</sup>
- The major source of supply is from university training.
- During the period 2012 to 2015, the number of university students<sup>3</sup> who completed an undergraduate special education course remained steady. Masters completions increased moderately in 2016 compared with 2015.

---

<sup>1</sup> SA State Government Budget, Budget Paper 4: Agency Statements, Department of Education and Child Development

<sup>2</sup> Department of Employment, Internet Vacancy Index, January 2017, 12 month moving average

<sup>3</sup> Department of Education and Training