



ANZSCO 2415 Special Education Teachers

New South Wales
April 2017

Current labour market rating

No shortage

Previous labour market rating (April 2016)

No shortage

Comments

For the third consecutive year, there is no shortage of special education teachers in NSW. Surveyed metropolitan and regional government and non-government schools were able to fill all vacancies for special education teachers with little difficulty.

Survey results

- A Department of Employment survey of employers who had recently advertised for special education teachers found that all surveyed vacancies were filled within the survey period.
 - This is the third consecutive year there has been no shortage of special education teachers.
 - The fill rate was 92 per cent in 2016 and at least 90 per cent in each of the past five years.
- There was an average of 7.6 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 1.5 were considered suitable by employers.
 - While metropolitan employers attracted a similar number of applicants per vacancy to their regional counterparts, the number of suitable applicants per vacancy was lower (1.3 compared to 2.0).
- The average number of qualified applicants per vacancy (3.6) was lower than the average for the previous four years (5.3) as was the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy (1.5 compared to a four year average of 1.7).
 - Qualified applicants are those with a degree in teaching and a formal qualification, major or accreditation in special education.
- Around 42 per cent of the vacancies surveyed were for special education teachers with a degree in teaching as well as a formal qualification, major or accreditation in special education. This was lower than the proportions in 2016 (77 per cent) and 2015 (57 per cent).
 - While for the remainder of vacancies many employers preferred that applicants had such a qualification, most were willing to consider applicants with experience relevant to the special needs requirements of the school.
- Employers across various industry sectors including government, independent and Catholic schools were able to fill vacancies for special education teachers in primary and secondary schools.
- Employers successfully advertised for special education teachers in various settings including learning support and classroom teaching in mainstream or special schools.
- Vacancies were filled across various specialisations including numeracy and literacy support, autism, behavioural difficulties, multi-category and mild intellectual disability.

- Some regional employers stated there is more demand for special education teachers as the number of special education classes has increased in their schools.
- In this year's survey there were no vacancies identified for teachers specialising in teaching students with hearing impairment or sight impairment.
- The occupation is rated as not being in shortage with all the surveyed vacancies filled and an average of 1.5 suitable applicants per vacancy. Employers were able to fill all vacancies across various sectors and locations.

Unsuitable applicants

- Around half of all qualified applicants were considered unsuitable by employers.
 - Most of these applicants were inexperienced new graduates or did not have experience working in special education.
 - A small number of applicants were deemed unsuitable because they had poor references.
- About 46 per cent of applicants did not possess a qualification in special education and so have been treated as not being formally qualified for the occupation.
 - A few employers advised that some qualified teachers were applying for positions in special education as they were unable to secure other teaching positions.

Demand and supply trends

- Underlying demand for special education teachers has grown strongly in recent years due to increased identification of students with behavioural problems, mental health disorders, disabilities such as autism spectrum disorders, and other special learning needs.
- The qualifications for entry to this profession are a four-year bachelor degree with a major in special education or completion of a postgraduate qualification in special education.
- The number of domestic students completing qualifications in the field of special education teaching from NSW universities was around 425 in 2015. This was 39 per cent above the average for the previous five years. However, student commencements in 2015 were 36 per cent lower than the average for the previous five years.¹
- From 1 January 2018, all teachers in NSW schools will need to be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Some teachers were previously exempt from this accreditation requirement.
 - On 1 January 2017, the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW was replaced by NESA.
- The number of primary applicant 457 temporary skilled migration visas granted for special education teachers averaged about four per year in the five years ended 2015-16.²

Other indicators and issues

- The NSW Department of Education advised that there is an adequate supply of special education teachers, except in particular geographic locations and in some specialist areas.

¹ Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Statistics data cube.

² Department of Immigration and Border Protection, <https://data.gov.au/dataset/visa-temporary-work-skilled>.