



ANZSCO 2415 Special Education Teachers

Tasmania March 2017

Current labour market rating

No shortage

Previous labour market rating (April 2016)

No shortage

Comments

Recent research indicates there is currently no shortage of special education teachers in Tasmania. All surveyed employers were able to fill all vacancies with suitably qualified applicants.

Survey results¹

- A Department of Employment survey of employers who had recently advertised for special education teachers found all vacancies were filled within the survey period. This compares with an overall fill rate of 100 per cent last year and 80 per cent in 2015.
 - In the survey period, there was an average of 1.8 qualified applicants per vacancy of which an average of 1.0 per vacancy were considered suitable by employers.
- Surveyed employers were based in primary and secondary schools from the state, Catholic and independent sectors.
- Vacancies were for a range of teaching positions, predominately in the areas of language, literacy and numeracy support.
- All employers sought to fill their vacancies with applicants who held a formal qualification in special education. In comparison, in 2016, only 25 per cent of vacancies required the formal qualification.
 - Employers reported historically it can be challenging recruiting for teachers with special education qualifications and experience. Additionally, a small number of employers indicated they occasionally struggle to fill vacancies located in the more remote areas of the state.
 - Employers reported they were prepared to negotiate the tenure of their positions in order to secure a suitable applicant.
 - Some employers reported higher wages and attractive working conditions were offered to special education teachers as they are highly valued.

Unsuitable applicants

- The most commonly cited reason for the unsuitability of applicants was that they lacked formal qualifications in special education.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for special education teachers is largely driven by student enrolment numbers. Underlying demand for special education teachers has grown in recent years.

¹ 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.



- There are four special schools across the state. Additionally, students with special needs can attend mainstream local schools.
 - The number of children attending special schools in Tasmania has increased by almost 9.4 per cent over the five years between August 2010 and August 2015.²
 - Additionally, the number of children with a disability attending mainstream state schools has increased by 6.3 per cent between 2013 and 2015.³
- Anyone seeking a career as a special education teacher in Tasmania must secure registration, provisional registration or a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) from the Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania (TRB). They are not required to hold a post-graduate disability related qualification in order to be employed.
 - In November 2015, there were 11,529 individuals registered in Tasmania overall, which represents a 4.9 per cent increase on the number registered in November 2011.
 - There were 393 individuals granted LATs in the 2015 calendar year which is a decrease of almost 27.0 when compared to the number granted in 2011.⁴
- The University of Tasmania offers a Graduate Certificate in Education (Inclusive Education) course for postgraduate students interested in pursuing special needs teaching. This course was introduced in 2015; graduate data is unavailable at this stage.

Other indicators and issues

- In August 2015, the Tasmanian State Government Ministerial Taskforce Report *Improved Support for Students with Disability* was released. In 2016, the State Government announced the *Inclusion Advisory Panel – Disability Focus* would oversee the implementation of the Ministerial Taskforce recommendations across all education sectors within the context of the national and state agenda for students with disability. This will be supported by an additional \$12 million allocation over four years to assist all Government schools to be disability ready and responsive. Work has started on implementing the first three Taskforce recommendations:
 - Provision of access to Family Partnership Training to assist school communities to work together effectively.
 - Provision of incentives and scholarships to increase the number of teachers and teacher aides with formal inclusive education qualifications.
 - Provision of practice models for support staff and classroom teachers to work more effectively together to improve student learning.⁵

² Tasmanian Department of Education, *Annual Report 2010/2011* and *Annual Report 2015/2016*

³ Tasmanian Department of Education, *Annual Report 2014/2015*

⁴ Teachers Registration Board, *Annual Report 2011* and *Annual Report 2015*

⁵ www.premier.tas.gov.au , Media Release, *Funding for Students with Disability gets a \$4.09m boost*, 8 June 2016