Labour Market Research - Teachers
New South Wales
April 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations in cluster</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2411-11 Early Childhood (Pre-Primary School) Teacher</td>
<td>Metropolitan recruitment difficulty for positions in the long day care sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>2412-13 Primary School Teacher</td>
<td>No shortage</td>
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<tr>
<td>2414-11 Secondary School Teacher</td>
<td>No shortage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2415 Special Education Teachers</td>
<td>No shortage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key issues

- The proportion of surveyed vacancies filled this year was 87 per cent which was similar to the previous year, although the pool of applicants and number of suitable applicants declined over this period.
- Vacancies for primary school teachers, secondary school teachers and special education teachers were generally filled with relative ease.
  - Some schools reported receiving many unsolicited applications from primary school teachers.
- There was a recruitment difficulty for early childhood teacher roles in long day care in the metropolitan area.
- Early childhood teachers working in centre-based services will need to hold a degree in early childhood education from 1 January 2018 as the transition arrangements end this year. Thus recruitment difficulties for early childhood teachers are likely to continue.

Survey results

- A Department of Employment survey of employers who had recently advertised for teachers found that 87 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period (Figure 1).
  - The fill rate was 88 per cent in 2015-16 and averaged at 85 per cent over the previous eight years.
  - The filled rate for metropolitan vacancies (83 per cent) was lower than that for regional vacancies (91 per cent).
- In 2016-17, the number of applicants per vacancy was 9.8 with this being the lowest since the average of 8.5 at the start of the series in 2007-08.
  - While metropolitan vacancies attracted over twice as many applicants per vacancy (13.2) as their regional counterparts (5.6), the number of suitable applicants per vacancy were similar (1.4 and 1.5, respectively).
  - Primary school teacher vacancies attracted over twice as many applicants per vacancy and more suitable applicants per vacancy compared to the other teaching occupations surveyed this year.
- All teacher occupations, except primary school teachers, attracted fewer applicants per vacancy in 2016-17 than in 2015-16.
- The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was lower than the annual average in the previous four years for both early childhood teachers and secondary school teachers.
- For special education teachers the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was the same as last year (1.5), and lower than the average for the previous four years (1.7).
- There was an average of 7.6 qualified applicants per vacancy, which was the lowest since that data series commenced in 2012-13.
- The average number of qualified applicants per vacancy was lower than the annual average in the previous four years for both special education teachers and secondary school teachers.
- Around 84 per cent of teacher vacancies required qualifications. While all primary and secondary school teacher vacancies required a relevant teaching qualification, there were variances in qualification requirements for early childhood teachers and special education teachers.
  - Over three quarters of vacancies for early childhood teachers required applicants to possess a degree in early childhood education. Other employers were prepared to employ early childhood teachers who held a diploma level qualification in early childhood education and care and had completed at least 50 per cent of a relevant degree as per the transition arrangements for centre-based services.
  - In this year’s survey, qualified special education teacher applicants were deemed to be 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 who had these qualifications. For the remainder of the vacancies, while 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.
- All surveyed vacancies for primary school teachers and special education teachers were filled within the survey period. Additionally, the filled rate of 93 per cent for secondary school teachers was the highest since all surveyed vacancies were filled in 2013.
  - Since 2008 there has been no shortage of primary school teachers in NSW.
  - This is the third consecutive year there has been no shortage of special education teachers, and the second consecutive year there has been no shortage of secondary school teachers, following recruitment difficulties for the previous two years.
- The occupation of early childhood teachers was rated as having a metropolitan recruitment difficulty, with employers in Sydney filling 54 per cent of their surveyed vacancies and the vacancies that were difficult to fill being concentrated in the long day care sector. In contrast, 80 per cent of vacancies were filled in regional NSW where there was more than one suitable applicant per vacancy (compared to less than one in Sydney).
  - The consensus of employers was that positions in long day care centres are generally more difficult to fill than those with services operating in the school sector, because the hours of service, holiday entitlements and remuneration are different.
  - Some employers advised that it is more difficult to recruit in particular locations in Sydney (particularly the eastern suburbs, northern beaches and the north shore) due to demographics and transport issues.
This is the third consecutive year there has been a recruitment difficulty for early childhood teachers in NSW, and followed a shortage in the occupation from 2008 to 2014.

Figure 1: Proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.), School Teachers, New South Wales, 2007-08 to 2016-17

Source: Department of Employment, Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

Unsuitable applicants

- Around 82 per cent of qualified applicants were considered unsuitable by employers.
  - The main reason cited by employers was that applicants lacked experience. This included inexperienced new graduates and other applicants lacking the requisite experience such as in relation to teaching a composite class or the Higher School Certificate or of working in special education or the child care sector.
  - Other qualified applicants were considered unsuitable as they did not address the selection criteria, or had poor references.
- About 22 per cent of all applicants were unqualified.
  - For early childhood teachers, this included applicants who held a diploma qualification and were actively working towards a degree in early childhood education.
  - About 46 per cent of applicants for special education teachers did not possess a qualification in special education and have thus been treated as not being formally qualified for the occupation.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for teachers depends on enrolments, which in turn is dependent on population growth, government funding and policy.
  - The State Government estimates that student enrolments in Government schools will grow by 21 per cent or 164 000 students over the next 15 years.¹
  - The NSW Budget for 2017-18 included recurrent expenditure (excludes capital expenditure) on Government schools of about $13 million, which was an increase of 9.7 per cent over the previous year.²

This budget includes funding for about 1000 additional teachers.  

- Early childhood teacher and special education teachers have shown the strongest growth among the school teaching occupations in recent years.
  - Demand for early childhood teachers has been increasing due to higher underlying demand for early childhood education and care and new regulatory requirements under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care. These factors have been reflected in increasing government expenditure on early childhood education and care services. NSW State Government recurrent expenditure on preschool services increased by 3.0 per cent in 2012-13, declined by 8.7 per cent in 2013-14 but rose 9.9 per cent in 2015-16.  
  - 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.
- Demand growth for primary school teachers and secondary school teachers has been more modest.
  - Enrolments in NSW schools (primary and secondary) grew by 4.7 per cent over the five years to 2016.
  - The overall number of Full Time Equivalent teaching staff in NSW primary and secondary schools grew by 6.1 per cent over the same period.
  - Since 2013 the number of teaching staff in NSW government secondary schools has declined by 2.8 per cent and student enrolments have also declined by 1.0 per cent over the same period, and 2.0 per cent over the five years to 2016.
- The number of domestic students commencing an initial teacher training course in NSW universities peaked at 9430 in 2010. Commencements fell to under 9000 in 2011 but recovered to an annual average of 9003 over the subsequent two years before falling 8.4 per cent over two years to the 2015 figure of 8275. As a result, the average for the five years ended 2015 was 1.0 per cent higher than that for the previous five years.
  - Annual course completions fell by 3.4 per cent in 2012, however increased by 12.3 per cent over the two years to 2014 to a peak of 5824 before falling to 5226 in 2015. As a result, the average for the five years ended 2015 was similar to that for the previous five years.
- The number of primary applicant 457 temporary skilled migration visas granted for teachers averaged about 81 per year in the five years ended 2016-17 and remains a relatively minor source of supply for these occupations.

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3 Same as above.
5 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4221.0 – Schools, Australia, 2016, Table 43a
6 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4221.0 – Schools, Australia, 2016, Table 51a
7 Same as reference 5 and 6.
8 Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Student Data Cube, 2015, domestic students, customised tables.
Other indicators and issues

- The NSW Department of Education advised that for Government schools there is an adequate supply of teachers with some exceptions.
  - There is an inadequate supply of special education teachers in particular geographic locations and in some specialist areas.
  - There is an adequate supply of primary school teachers, except in a very small number of geographic locations.
  - There is an inadequate supply of secondary teachers in the areas of mathematics, science with physics, technical and applied studies (TAS), and some specific subjects in particular geographic locations.
- A small number of employers advised they had difficulty recruiting casual teachers even though they received high numbers of applications for advertised vacancies and received unsolicited applications throughout the year.
- Some employers of early childhood teachers, usually in smaller centres, reported an inability to compete with some child care centres which do have the capacity to pay above award wages.
- 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.
  - Some employers are concerned that they may not be able to fill vacancies generated by mature age teachers retiring early as they do not want to undertake the accreditation process.
  - In response to NESA’s review of NSW teaching degrees, digital literacy skills will be included in the initial teacher education accreditation process.
  - On 1 January 2017, the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW was replaced by NESA.