

February 2012

## INTRODUCTION

In its recent draft research report, the Productivity Commission has drawn attention to the fact that there is a large achievement gap in Australia and that the school workforce is most directly responsible for student learning outcomes. In addition, the Productivity Commission notes that there is a need to address workforce shortages especially in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas. This will help to address Australia's future workforce needs and to close the gap between high and low SES students.

Teach For Australia agrees with the Productivity Commission's points above and wishes to provide further input for consideration.

## TEACH FOR AUSTRALIA – OVERVIEW

Teach For Australia (TFA) is an independent, non-profit organisation supported by public and private sector partners. Our vision is of an Australia where all children have excellent educational opportunities.

Teach For Australia's mission is to develop leaders in the classroom and beyond who are committed to addressing educational inequity. Hence, we attract and select Associates (teachers) who are specifically committed to working in educationally disadvantaged schools across the nation. We work in partnership with schools, government, and universities develop quality teachers, a robust mentoring system for new entrants, and leadership skills and mindsets.

Our aim is to not only create quality teachers but also future school and system leaders who are committed to closing the educational gap in Australia.

The TFA program encompasses this mission, and includes a highly-selective, 2-year employment based pathway into teaching composed of:

- A rigorous selection process to assess mindsets and competencies correlated with excellent teaching
- A *Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (TFA)* developed and administered by the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education (MGSE).
- 1.6 years of classroom teaching (2 years at 0.8 FTE)
- Ongoing support by an in-school mentor (teacher), a TFA Training and Leadership Adviser, and a MGSE Clinical Specialist.
- A Leadership Development Program designed to leverage the highest impact on student outcomes and deliver projects that impact their schools and communities.
- Post-program support to encourage and facilitate a lifelong commitment to addressing educational disadvantage, including an Alumni program.

References to Teach For Australia within the Productivity Commission's report should reflect the overall mission as well as the program's structure. An overview of the organisation and program's achievements to date can be found in **Appendix A**.

## **RESPONSE: HOW TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS WHO CAN ENTER VIA ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS**

In Teach For Australia’s experience, regulations are the largest binding constraint on Teach For Australia’s ability to grow to scale and, in doing so, meet schools workforce needs—particularly those of Low SES schools. Please see **Appendix B** for a brief analysis of current regulatory environments for employment-based pathways by jurisdiction.

In order to increase the number of high quality teachers who can enter via alternative pathways a number of supply issues must be addressed.

1. Removing legislative and/or regulatory barriers to employment based pathways in some jurisdictions
2. In jurisdictions where employment based pathways are currently possible, removing undue regulatory barriers to what participants can teach
3. Ensuring new teaching and accreditation standards support, rather than further constrain, employment based pathways
4. Increasing the competitiveness of teaching for quality graduates, especially math and science graduates

In the following sections we take each of these in turn, and conclude each section with key insights to inform the Productivity Commission’s Report.

### **ISSUE #1: BARRIERS EFFECTIVELY PROHIBITING EMPLOYMENT-BASED PATHWAYS IN SOME JURISDICTIONS**

As outlined in **Appendix B**, in many jurisdictions employment-based pathways are effectively prevented from operating based on a variety of legislative barriers, the most common of which is preventing schools from employing Associates until they have proven—usually through extensive evidence requirements—that “no other suitable, registered teacher could be found”. This is a substantial and costly burden of proof, which denies principals equal choice amongst applicants for their workforce. It also creates dramatic barriers to entry for employment-based pathway teachers.

This is despite principals across the country being very keen on employing Teach For Australia Associates and talented Associates wishing to teach in disadvantaged, and particularly remote, schools across WA, QLD, SA and TAS.

#### **Real examples:**

##### Candidate X – Unplaced in WA or QLD

- Bachelor of Arts and Indigenous Studies (Honours), UoM
- TER – 99.45
- Winner of the David Abraham Award for Public Policy
- Has worked in Fitzroy Crossing
- Led Ormond Indigenous Program

##### Candidate Y—Unplaced in WA or SA

- Bachelor of Engineering, UWA
- TER – 96.9
- President United Nations Youth Association WA
- Laboratory Demonstrator
- Tutor - Scotch College

## Our recommendations for the Schools Workforce Report:

### 1. Ensure new teaching entrants are treated equally under legislation.

Provided there are reasonable quality assurances applied to teaching entrants, any legislation and/or regulatory practices which favour or protect entrants from particular pathways over others should be removed.

### 2. Establish a national, employment-based “permission to teach” registration category and associated specialisation guidelines.

We believe that a nationally consistent and recognised category of “Permission to Teach” or equivalent should be established specifically for employment-based pathways and to overcome the inconsistencies in policies which govern employment-based pathways across jurisdictions. NOTE: A second-best arrangement would be to subject Permission to Teach” categories to the standard of mutual recognition, much in the same way as jurisdictions recognise teacher qualifications and registration from other jurisdictions.

## ISSUE #2 – BARRIERS TO WHAT SUBJECTS PARTICIPANTS CAN TEACH

(Note: please refer to our first original submission dated 25 August 2011 for details regarding our rigorous, multi-stage and multiple competency selection process.)

Employment-based pathways are opportunities for individuals to both study and teach at the same time. Because the individual is not fully qualified until the end of the pathway (after 2 years), individuals must usually get an interim “permission” or “limited authority” to teach for the 2-year period of time that they are in the pathway and concurrently pursuing their degree in education.

This “permission” has varying conditions attached, and in at least Victoria and New South Wales, the “permission” explicitly limits what individual secondary subjects individuals can legally teach. In Victoria, the Victorian Institute of Teaching issues specific guidelines regarding subject eligibility—for both teaching and studying—based on an assessment of academic transcripts. This seeks to ensure subject knowledge of participants, but does not generally allow for other methods of assessing or demonstrating subject knowledge. Neither does it allow the employer to nominate subjects he or she would like the individual to teach, based on his or her assessment of the individual’s strengths relative to the school’s current workforce capabilities.

Whilst such regulations and guidelines had well intended origins to ensure teacher quality and subject knowledge, in the context of employment-based pathways such as Teach For Australia these regulations are having negative and arguably unintended consequences on overall teacher supply and shortage subjects, as the following vignettes demonstrate:

**Real examples:**

Candidate A – Prevented from teaching English

- Bachelor of Arts & Law, UWA
- TER: 97.8
- President, St. Georges College
- Volunteer teacher, Nepal

*Eligible for Legal Studies, LOTE, TESOL, SOSE*

Candidate B – Prevented from teaching Maths

- Mechanical Engineering, Monash
- TER: 97.9
- Worked as Mechanical Engineer at McConnell Dowell
- Project Engineer at Ford

*Eligible for Physics, LOTE, Media*

Candidate C – Prevented from teaching Physical Education or Science

- Bachelor of Physiotherapy, Univ of Melbourne
- TER: 99.3
- Worked as physiotherapist and sports trainer with Fitzroy Football Club

*Eligible for Biology*

Candidate D – Prevented from teaching Maths, Science

- Aerospace Engineering, RMIT
- 3 tertiary units of pure maths, plus further maths in engineering faculty
- TER: 96.7
- Worked as Engineer designing aircraft

*Eligible for Physics and Technology*

Left unchanged, these barriers to what Associates can teach under “permission to teach” regimes will serve to constrain both the number of new, quality entrants into the teaching profession as well as the ability of these and other employment-based programs to address areas of subject shortage.

Current regulations must change to consider additional evidence beyond just the transcript.

Additional evidence could include:

- Principal assessment of the individual’s subject knowledge;
- Principal assessment of the individual’s subject competency relative to his or her existing available workforce;
- The rigorous selection criteria which have already been applied as part of entry into the program; and
- Other evidence of the individual’s subject knowledge—including secondary school results and/or significant work or volunteer experience.

### Allowing additional subject-knowledge evidence increases supply of teachers for shortage subjects

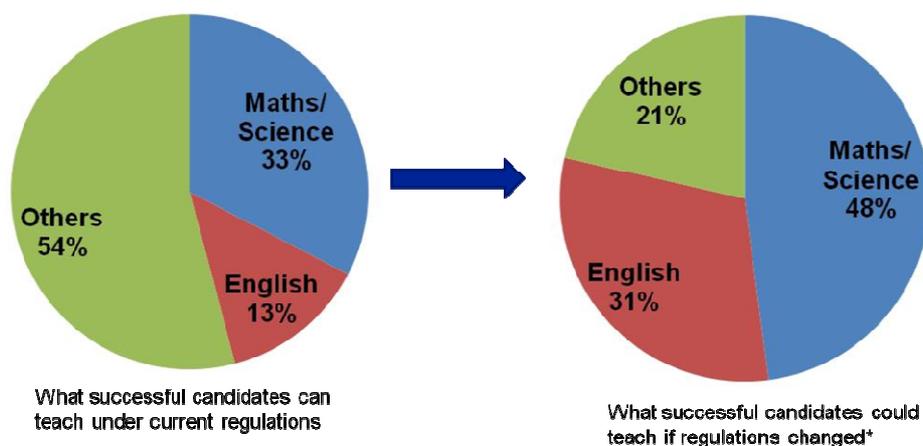
To illustrate the potential effect of allowing additional evidence to be considered in determining “permission” to teach subjects, Teach For Australia analysed the results of our most recent recruitment efforts. Out of approximately 800 applicants in 2011, 98 successfully completed the rigorous selection process and were considered candidates to join the program.

Breaking down the subjects that current regulatory guidelines would allow these 98 candidates to teach, we find that 33% were assessed as being eligible to teach Math or Science, and 13% English, again under current guidelines in Victoria.

However, by expanding the allowable evidence to include Year 12 results (of A or A+ in a relevant subject), we would increase the number of eligible maths and science teachers by ~50% and of eligible English teachers by 120%.

In total, this would increase the total number of candidates in 'in demand' subjects from 46% to 79%, creating a substantial difference in Teach For Australia's ability to place great talent and meet school workforce needs. A similar impact would be expected for other employment-based pathways.

Figure 1: Impact of wider eligibility criteria on teacher-candidate subject eligibility



\*In this analysis, we have assumed for Maths/Science an A+ or A grade in the relevant subject at upper secondary school as the minimum required to demonstrate a specialisation in that subject, and for English an A+ or A grade plus at least one relevant tertiary unit. Where specific grades for the relevant subject were not available, we assumed that a TER (or equivalent) of above 90 would mean all A grades at senior secondary level. *Note: Such criteria are used by the Training and Development Agency (UK) in the Teach First (UK) program. See Attachment D.*

What is more, our experience is that these same regulatory barriers also prohibit Associates from enrolling to study the pedagogy of those same subjects (e.g. Maths, Science, and English).

### Barriers to creating qualified subject specialists

Similar to determining the subjects individuals may teach under a "permission to teach" license, regulations also determine the learning area specialisation (also called subject areas or method areas) of the individual as they enrolled in pre-service teacher education. Again, these regulations (or policy guidelines) are based solely on the prior tertiary study the individual has undertaken.

As a result, the above aerospace or mechanical engineer is not only unable to *teach* maths during the two years, he is also prevented from learning how to teach maths, which he will no doubt be called upon to do by his principal after he has graduated at the end of 2 years and is fully registered. Teach For Australia already has such evidence from our first Cohort of Associates who are now fully registered and no longer have permission to teach constraints. Despite their extensive prior work and study, these engineers would now be deemed as teaching "out of field".

### Disincentives to enter teaching

The consequence of such narrow assessment of teaching areas also *acts as a barrier to entry* into the teaching profession. Teach For Australia regularly converses with potential applicants through campus activities and presentations, career fairs, information sessions and phone-calls. Many individuals choose not to apply for the program after learning that they will not be able to teach subjects that they feel suitably qualified for, either because they have not completed the requisite amount of tertiary study or have no way of getting their prior work experience acknowledged.

In summary, currently the only way for any teacher education student to demonstrate a specialist learning area is through prior tertiary study. Secondary performance, a wider range of tertiary units, professional or other experience is not considered. For employment-based pathways, this has the concurrent impact of restricting suitably-capable people from both *learning to teach* and *actually teaching in* shortage subjects. Based on Teach For Australia analysis, the impact of current guidelines is a significant constraint on the supply for shortage subjects.

### Our recommendations for the Schools Workforce Report:

#### 3. Allow principals to assess the individual's subject knowledge and competency, and inform which subjects an individual should teach and/or specialise in.

We agree with the Productivity Commission's recommendation to support school autonomy. We believe that principals and their school communities have the most current information and thus are best positioned to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of their current workforce, particularly as regards assigning teachers to specific subjects..

Thus, to support autonomy the regulatory environment should allow principals greater degrees of freedom (within reason) to determine which subjects employment-based pathway teachers are best suited to teach, given each school's unique workforce .

Any new national "permission to teach" registration category and/or specialisation guidelines would take principal assessment into account.

#### 4. Expand the relevant evidence base for assessing "permission to teach" subjects and education-course specialisation areas

Such reforms should account for the extra degree of candidate screening in such pathways and to allow for a wider set of criteria in determining subjects candidates can teach, and specialisations for which they qualify. Wider criteria could include:

- Results of Secondary-level VCE/HSC results, as with Teach First UK subject knowledge criteria--see **Attachment D**; or
- Highly accelerated subject knowledge refresher courses, as with certain training pathways in the UK—see **Attachment D**; or
- Results of an independently-administered subject knowledge test, as is common practice in the United States, see **Attachment D**.

Any national "permission to teach" registration category and specialisation guidelines would outline what additional evidence would be favourably considered.

### ISSUE #3: POSSIBLE IMPACT OF AITSL STANDARDS

Whilst the full impact of the new AITSL Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation, Standards and Procedures is unclear, we felt it important to raise two possible issues affecting the viability of employment-based pathways:

1. AITSL Standards may further restrict the supply of teachers in shortage subjects, by even further increasing the number of tertiary units of study required to specialise in secondary teacher education beyond current guidelines; and
2. AITSL Standards for a sector shift to a 2-year Master degree may create further operational difficulties for two-year employment based pathways.

#### Possible impact on teacher supply for shortage subjects

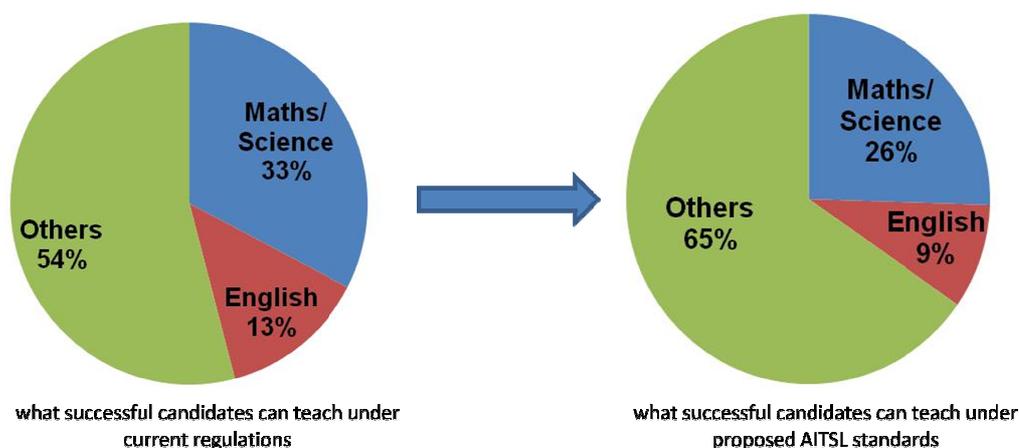
AITSL’s standards propose that graduate-entry initial teacher education programs require at least a major sequence of study (usually equivalent to six university subjects) in order to qualify for a specialist area. This is a substantial increase in requirements, as currently in most jurisdictions the requirement to qualify for a specialist area is a sub-major sequence of study (usually equivalent to four university subjects).

Furthermore, as with current regulations, the AITSL standards do not address the recognition of prior professional experience or other relevant evidence.

AITSL’s move to a major sequence of study will increase the difficulty of obtaining a specialist area and further restrict the supply of would-be teachers in shortage subjects such as Maths, Science, Technology, and English.

Using our analysis of the 98 successful applicants from 2011 recruitment efforts as a guide, we applied AITSL’s “major sequence” standards and, as expected, found that eligibility in Maths/Science was constrained a further 20% and in English a further 30%, reducing the overall applicant eligibility for ‘in demand’ subjects from 46% to just 35%. See below:

Figure 2: Impact of new AITSL standards on teacher-candidate subject eligibility



## Implications of a minimum two-year degree requirement

AITSL's Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation, Standards and Procedures also include migrating, over time, all Post-graduate Diploma in Teaching courses to a 2-year or equivalent Master-level degree.

Currently Teach For Australia is accredited as a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching, with participants needing to complete a further 50 credit points after the two years to earn their Master of Teaching. Our understanding is that other employment-based pathways—such as Career Change in Victoria and the Federally-proposed Teach Next program—are also accredited as Postgraduate Diplomas in Teaching and also run for 2 years.

As employment-based pathways are relatively new and small-scale, it is difficult to assess the full impact of this Master-level requirement on the viability of these pathways. However, of primary concern is the level of additional study required of the individual whilst teaching, in order to complete the total units of study required within a reasonable two-year program time frame.

Maintaining the two-year program time-frame is important to both schools and candidates, as any longer may be perceived as less attractive or more costly (due to continuing reduced workload, reduced pay, and increased mentor/cover requirements by school).

According to the AITSL Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education, Standards and Procedures; Standard 5.2 School Partnerships:

The professional experience component of each program must include no fewer than 80 days of well-structured, supervised and assessed teaching practice in schools in undergraduate and double-degree teacher education programs and no fewer than 60 days in graduate entry programs.

In practice, participants of employment-based pathways exceed the number of professional experience component days required of both Post-graduate and Master-level courses, given participants are actively teaching for 2 years (assuming a 0.8 FTE load this is equivalent to 320 days, or over 5x the required practicum amount).

Were participants able to use the excess 260 days of 'practicum' for either credit outright, or to submit a more extensive teaching-based portfolio (demonstrating mastery of course content), it is likely and reasonable to assume that employment-based pathways could meet the new AITSL Master-level standards within the two-year program design parameters. Whether such recognition of additional practicum would be admissible remains to be tested, hence the viability of employment-based pathways under the new AITSL standards remains unclear.

## Our recommendations for the Schools Workforce Report:

- 5. AITSL standards for specialisation areas should not mandate minimum criteria, and should explicitly allow for additional evidence of subject knowledge to be presented.**
- 6. For employment-based pathways, AITSL standards for two-year Master degree should also recognise the extra 270 days of practicum employment-based entrants perform.**



## SUPPLY ISSUE # 4: THE COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE FOR QUALITY GRADUATES

### Up to 40% of Maths and Science Graduates accept “better offers”

Teach For Australia historically attracts approximately 800 applicants per year, and historically selects 10% or less. The final number ultimately placed in schools depends upon candidate acceptance rates (as below), the effect of regulations governing the program (as discussed above), and low-SES employer demand (which varies from year to year and school to school).

In 2011, 98 applicants received an offer to participate in the program. Overall, 31% declined to participate (a standard decline rate for graduate programs across industries). Specifically, of those applicants deemed by regulations as able to teach Maths or Science, 40% declined to participate.

The most commonly cited reason for declining participation is to **accept a competing employment offer**. This accounts for almost 60% of all declined offers. This reason is even more often cited by candidates from Maths or Science backgrounds, as competition is particularly fierce across a number of sectors and industries for graduates from these disciplines.

In elaborating on their reasons for declining participation in the Teach For Australia program, candidates cited **higher starting salaries** in other industries and a **perceived lack of prestige** and **lack of professional/career development opportunities** in the teaching profession. In this context, it is also important to note that the average pay for a newly graduated science, technology or maths degree holder is \$65,000 p.a., with some candidates revealing job offers of as much as \$83,000 p.a., compared to an average starting pay for graduate teachers of \$47,000 p.a. Furthermore, most graduate or new-entry programs promise additional, significant professional development, for example extensive mentoring, leadership and management training, etc.

### Our recommendations for the Schools Workforce Report:

7. **We agree with the case for explicit remuneration incentives to help address workforce shortages – but only where the quality of teaching entrants is clearly maintained or enhanced.**
8. **We endorse the need to improve performance management Improve performance management of new teachers and career development opportunities for new teachers, to increase competitiveness of the teaching profession. We support actions to increase flexibility in industrial relations regimes where such flexibility would support better teacher development, performance management, and career development.**



## CONCLUSION

Teach For Australia wishes to increase the number of high quality applicants who can enter the profession via alternative pathways. In particular we seek to target low SES schools which can struggle to recruit and retain high quality staff. We also seek to address subject shortages in these schools, including but not limited to Maths and Science teachers.

In order to increase the number of high quality applicants who can enter via alternative pathways we recommend the following to the Productivity Commission for consideration:

1. Ensure new teaching entrants are treated equally under legislation.
2. Establish a national, employment-based “permission to teach” registration category and associated specialisation guidelines.
3. Allow principals to assess the individual’s subject knowledge and competency and make a decision or recommendation as to the subjects the individual can teach and/or specialise in.
4. Expand the relevant evidence considered for assessing “permission to teach” subjects and education-course specialisation areas beyond just tertiary transcripts.
5. Ensure AITSL standards for specialisation areas should do not exacerbate subject shortages by imposing additional criteria to be able teach and specialize in subjects.
6. Ensure AITSL standards for two-year Master degree facilitate employment-based pathways and recognise the extra 270 days of practicum employment-based entrants perform.
7. Maintain or improve the quality of teaching entrants by offering explicit remuneration incentives.
8. Improve performance management of new teachers and career development opportunities for new teachers, to increase competitiveness of the teaching profession

## APPENDIX A

### TEACH FOR AUSTRALIA – EVIDENCE TO DATE

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) evaluation has been commissioned by DEEWR to undertake an evaluation of the program. The first phase of the report indicates the strengths of the program as:

- The quality of the recruits who are rigorously screen and selected by TFA
- The quality of the education program delivered by MGSE
- The rigorous supports provided to participants over the two years by schools, Teach For Australia, and MGSE

ACER also notes an emerging sense of community and social purpose amongst TFA Associates.

In three years, the Teach For Australia program has attracted about 2500 applicants and selected, placed, and trained 127 Associates across Victoria, ACT and the Northern Territory, with Western Australia close to adopting the program.

#### **Entrant quality**

- Approximately 43% of Associates are male.
- Over 1/3 come from Science, Technology, and Math disciplines and another 13% teach English. The remainder teach subjects including Technology, LOTE, TESOL, Humanities, Business Studies, Legal Studies, Psychology, Art, etc.
- Over 50% of Associates have prior full-time work experience.
- The average ATAR for Associates is 95.

#### **Disadvantaged placement schools**

- 100% of Associates teach in educationally disadvantaged secondary schools.
- An increasing number of these schools (~40%) are located in regional, rural, or remote areas.
- Associates teach subjects in need by the school and in line with their regulated teaching areas.

#### **Associate Leadership and Teaching Efficacy**

- Over 50% of Associates assume positions of responsibility or leadership within their first year.
- 90% of principals have rated Associates as 'outstanding' in comparison to other new graduates of similar tenure, with 100% saying they were at least 'similar to'.
- 63% of Associates to date (first cohort) remained in teaching with another 20% working in educational organisations or doing further studying in education.

#### **Student outcomes**

- Whilst government(s) has not yet conducted a summative evaluation, formative evaluation and principal feedback report substantial gains in student literacy and numeracy, record VCE results, and significant impact on student wellbeing and school/community engagement.

## APPENDIX B

### EMPLOYMENT-BASED PATHWAY REGULATORY ENVIRONMENTS, BY JURISDICTION

#### Barriers effectively prohibiting employment-based pathways:

Below is a list of states where regulations or policy stipulates that unregistered teachers may only be employed if no other registered teacher can be found. This effectively restricts principal/ employer ability to select an employment-based pathway teacher as an appropriate resource for their school, and disadvantages employment-based pathway entrants relative to traditional pathway entrants.

##### Western Australia

*Western Australian College of Teaching Act 2004 s38(1)(c)(i).*

Note: this Act is currently under review and new legislation to replace WACOT with a Teacher Registration Board has been introduced

##### Queensland

*Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 Ch2 s10(1)(a)*

<http://www.qct.edu.au/registration/permission.html>

##### Tasmania

*Teacher Registration Board policy*

<http://www.trb.tas.gov.au/Web%20Pages/Limited%20Authority%20to%20Teach.aspx>

##### South Australia

*Teachers Registration Board of South Australia policy*

[http://www.trb.sa.edu.au/pdf/Policy\\_Special-Authority.pdf](http://www.trb.sa.edu.au/pdf/Policy_Special-Authority.pdf)

#### Barriers to employment-based pathway teachers teaching in subjects of need:

As discussed in the main section of this submission, **Victoria** has a policy determined by the Institute of Teaching which determines subject eligibility—for both teaching and studying—based on an assessment of academic transcripts. This seeks to ensure subject knowledge of participants, but does not generally allow for other methods of assessing or demonstrating subject knowledge.

[http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/PDF/1672\\_Specialist-Area-Guidelines-Nov08.pdf](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/PDF/1672_Specialist-Area-Guidelines-Nov08.pdf)

Our understanding is that **NSW** has a similar regime.

<http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Teaching-in-NSW/Subject-Content-Requirements-abridged/>

#### Regulatory environments currently conducive to employment-based pathways:

**Northern Territory**

**Australian Capital Territory**

## APPENDIX C

### ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION OF REGULATORY BARRIERS TO WHAT ASSOCIATES (OR OTHER EMPLOYMENT-BASED ENTRANTS) CAN TEACH

Employment-based pathways are opportunities for individuals to both study and teach at the same time. Because the individual is not fully accredited until the end of the pathway, individuals must usually get a special “permission” or “limited authority” to teach, usually for the period of time that they are concurrently pursuing their degree in education.

This “permission” usually has a number of conditions attached. In Victoria for example, one of the conditions is a Victorian Institute of Teaching-imposed restriction on the individual subjects. The permissible subjects are determined by VIT guidelines which guide an analysis of an individual’s existing tertiary transcripts. Certain specific units of tertiary study are aligned with certain secondary school subject.

Not considered in these guidelines are:

- Principal assessment of the individual’s subject knowledge;
- Principal assessment of the individual’s subject competency relative to his or her existing available workforce;
- Other evidence of the individual’s subject knowledge—including secondary school results and/or significant work or volunteer experience; and
- The rigorous selection criteria which have already been applied as part of entry into the program.

Compounding this challenge is that, in Victoria, these same guidelines also regulate the university course of study—determining an individual’s allowed learning areas (also called subject areas, specialisation areas, or method areas). Again, these learning area assessments are based solely on the prior tertiary study.

As supported by the many vignettes and sample analysis in the main body of this response, Teach For Australia’s experience over the last 3 years demonstrates that the supply of teachers in shortage and/or demand areas, such as Maths, Science, and English, is overly constricted by regulatory barriers.

Individuals entering through employment-based pathways, with knowledge of and competencies in these subject areas, are being prevented from **both** teaching subjects and studying the pedagogy related to these subjects.



## APPENDIX D

### EVIDENCE FROM TEACH FOR AMERICA (USA) AND TEACH FIRST (UK)

Given the Productivity Commission's draft report references similar overseas program, such as Teach For America (USA) (p. 67 of Draft Report) Teach For Australia asked both Teach For America and Teach First to also contribute relevant information to this submission.

Teach For Australia is part of a 23-member international knowledge-sharing network called Teach For All ([www.teachforall.org](http://www.teachforall.org)), which includes Teach For America and Teach First as members. All members share a similar mission of addressing educational disadvantage in their home countries, and all members commit to sharing freely with each other best practices and lessons learned as we seek to attract our respective nations' future leaders to teach in disadvantaged schools and commit to long-term leadership in education.

The following sections specifically address how those overseas programs have tackled the challenges of educational disadvantage, eligibility to teach, subject shortages, and the cost efficiency of employment-based pathways.

#### Evidence from Teach For America

##### Teach for America and the United States Landscape

Teach For America was established in 1990, with the mission that one day, all children in the United States will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education. Since inception, Teach For America has reached more than 3 million students, and last year, selected another 5,100 corps members (Associates) to teach in America's most disadvantaged schools.<sup>1</sup>

Currently in America, 9 year-olds in low-income communities are three grade levels behind their peers in high-income communities.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that half will not graduate from high school. Those who do graduate will have literacy and numeracy levels, on average, at the level of 8th graders.

Across America in the 1999-2000 school year, 54% of all schools reported mathematics vacancies, and 22% of all schools had difficulties finding a suitable teacher for those vacancies.<sup>3</sup> This subject shortage continues, with a projected need from 2004 of 240,000 new science and mathematics teachers in middle and high schools over the period 2004-14.<sup>4</sup>

##### Eligibility to teach and demonstrating subject knowledge proficiency

The route to teacher eligibility and demonstrating subject knowledge proficiency differs slightly from state to state, but all who intend to teach in America's public schools must be certified by the relevant State Education Department. To take New York as an example, one can obtain

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<sup>1</sup> Teach For America Press Kit (October, 2011)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.cpre.org/images/stories/cpre\\_pdfs/math%20science%20shortage%20paper%20march%202009%20final.pdf](http://www.cpre.org/images/stories/cpre_pdfs/math%20science%20shortage%20paper%20march%202009%20final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> *Before It's Too Late*, National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, U.S. Department of Education, 2000

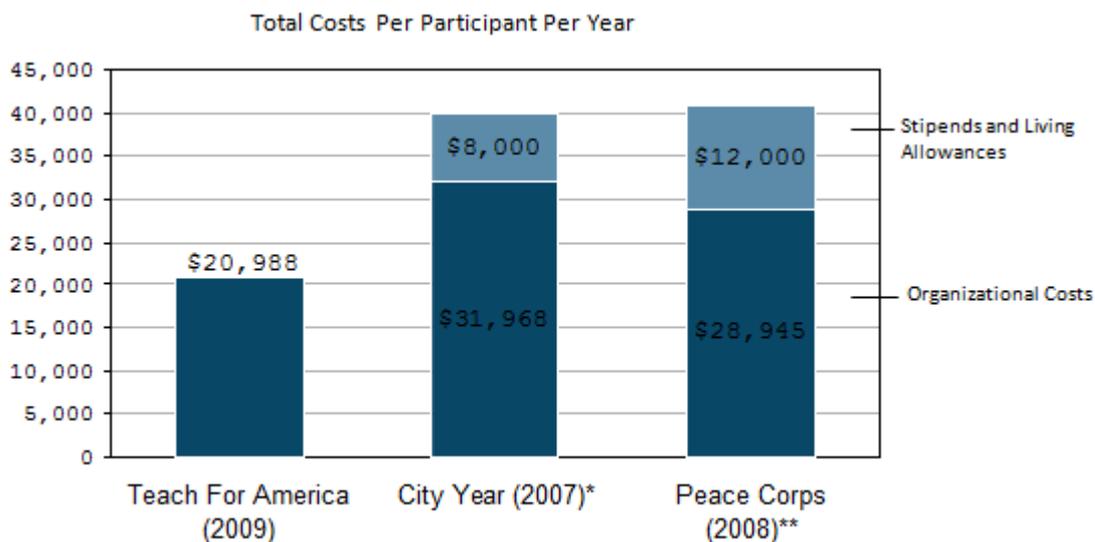
certification in one of several ways – the traditional route of New York State Certification, gaining certification through interstate and international reciprocity recognition, via one of various alternative routes (including Teach For America), or going through a Career and Technical Education Certification Process.

The number and range of alternative routes (around 35,000 new teachers enter the profession through alternative pathways each year; nearly half of such teachers say they would not have become a teacher if alternative routes were not available)<sup>5</sup> available reflects the value placed on learning and teaching in tandem – and Teach For America is an example of this. As another example, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Certification, a 3-step program for those with industry experience in career and technical subjects, reaches 142,000 students a year while allowing those with specific expertise to enter the teacher profession.

Many alternative routes to teacher certification allow for both academic transcript and knowledge-testing as ways for aspiring teachers to prove their suitability. If aspiring teachers have not completed specific college courses as part of a major or minor related to the subject they intend to teach, they may gain entry by passing a independently-administered content-knowledge test. These tests measure the knowledge of specific subjects, as well as general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge.

### Cost Efficiency

As one of the alternative pathways into teaching in the United States, Teach For America remains cost efficient. In 2009, the cost per participant nationally was approximately \$21,000.<sup>6</sup> Even with the additional investments and value add Teach For America brings, its cost per participant remains significantly lower than that of other service programs:<sup>7</sup>



<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ncei.com/Alt-Teacher-Cert.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Teach For America Financial FAQ's (August, 2009)

<sup>7</sup> \*Based on City Year 2007 annual report - \$48M in expenses; 1200 corps members. Assumes living stipend and weekly allowance totaling on average \$800 per month for 10 months.

\*\*Based on Peace Corps 2008 projected budget & volunteers as of September 2007– \$330M in expenses; 8,079 total volunteers. Allowances include ~\$6K for living expenses and a \$6K stipend upon completion of the program

### Additional Value and Benefits

Teach For America continues to be the most widely recognised leader of alternative pathways in America, and a pathway of choice for high-calibre graduates. In 2011, 12% of all seniors at Ivy League schools applied to join the program,<sup>8</sup> including 18% of Harvard's senior class, and 16% of those from Duke University. Teach For America encourages diversity in the teaching profession, specifically targeting minority populations in its recruitment, and has seen a significant number of seniors from historically black colleges applying, including 1 out of 4 seniors from Spelman College.

Of the 5,100 corps members selected (~11% of all applicants) in the 2011-12 school year:

- taught in 43 regions across 30 states
- 100% had college leadership experience
- an average GPA of 3.6 (out of 4.0)
- 35% were people of colour.

Studies continue to show a positive impact in the classroom. A study by The University of North Carolina (UNC, 2009) found that students taught by Teach For America participants did as well as or better than those taught by traditionally prepared UNC graduates. Middle school math students of Teach For America teachers received the equivalent of an extra half-year of learning.<sup>9</sup>

### Completion and Retention Rates

Teach For America now has 33,000 Alumni. This group of Alumni work at every level of education, policy and other professions, to ensure that all children can receive an excellent education.

- 67% of Alumni are still working full-time in education,
- more than 550 are serving in school leadership,
- more than 50 hold elected office,
- and there are more founders and leaders of education organisations that participated in Teach For America than in any other organisation or program.<sup>10</sup>

### Evidence from Teach First

#### Teach First and the United Kingdom Landscape

Teach First is another of Teach For Australia's sister organisations in the 23-member global network, Teach For All. Based on a similar model, Teach First similarly exists to 'address educational disadvantage by transforming exceptional graduates into effective, inspirational teachers and leaders in all fields.'<sup>11</sup>

Teach First works with primary and secondary schools where more than half of the pupils come from the poorest 30% of families in the UK, according to the IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index).

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<sup>8</sup> Teach For America Press Kit (October, 2011)

<sup>9</sup> Teacher Preparation and Student Test Scores in North Carolina, Henry et al (2010): [publicpolicy.unc.edu/files/Teacher\\_Portals\\_Teacher\\_Preparation\\_and\\_Student\\_Test\\_Scores\\_in\\_North\\_Carolina\\_2.pdf](http://publicpolicy.unc.edu/files/Teacher_Portals_Teacher_Preparation_and_Student_Test_Scores_in_North_Carolina_2.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Teach For America Press Kit (October, 2011)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/AboutUs/>



There is a real shortage of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) teachers in the UK. This also has broader productivity implications, with 45% of employers in the UK concerned they will not fill posts in their organisations that require graduate or higher level STEM qualifications.<sup>12</sup>

Teach First believes that more students must be opened to the possibilities of a career in a STEM area; a passion that may be sparked by training more teachers in STEM disciplines.

### **Eligibility to teach and demonstrating subject knowledge proficiency – UK generally**

Teaching in mainstream schools in England is a graduate profession and teachers are expected to hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). QTS is awarded to those who successfully complete an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) program, as determined by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA).

As for subject eligibility, a graduate's degree must be relevant to those subjects. If it is not, a graduate may undertake Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses<sup>13</sup> - conditionally-available places to trainees who meet all the entry requirements to an ITT program except for the need to improve subject knowledge.

The TDA's support of SKE courses is clear, that 'by promoting SKE courses and encouraging SKE and ITT providers to work collaboratively, it is possible to widen the pool of potential teachers and improve the quality of teacher training, especially in those hard-to-recruit subjects of mathematics, physics and chemistry.'<sup>14</sup> SKE courses are government funded in line with demand, with £565 awarded per physics, chemistry and maths SKE place, £510 for 'other sciences', modern languages, design and technology, ICT, music and religious education SKE places, and £410 per primary and all other secondary subject places.

### **Teach First-specific eligibility and demonstrating subject knowledge proficiency**

The entry requirements and subject eligibility for Teach First are slightly different. As a minimum, Teach First looks for applicants with:<sup>15</sup>

- A 2:1 degree or above 300 UCAS points (university assessment)
- A degree that relates to one of the 12 national curriculum subjects
- Grade C in GCSE Maths and English
- Flexibility to work anywhere within Teach First's seven regions
- Be committed to the duration of the two years
- Competence across the 5 Teach First values (collaboration, commitment, excellence, integrity and leadership)

Specific to addressing shortage in STEM areas, applicants who achieved an A or B grade on their A levels (secondary school), in certain subjects (Maths, Science, English, ICT, Design and Technology) are eligible to teach that subject.

<sup>12</sup> <http://graduates.teachfirst.org.uk/about/stem.html>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.tda.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/subject-information-enhancement/age-groups/teaching-secondary/boost-subject-knowledge.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> <http://graduates.teachfirst.org.uk/faqs.html>

Once accepted, Teach First participants then have to undergo a Subject Knowledge Audit (SKA)<sup>16</sup>. This is an electronic self-assessment of participants' suitability to teach their subjects, as even if they have the appropriate academic qualifications, this may not match with the elements of the National Curriculum.

However, rather than restricting the participant from teaching that subject altogether, the SKA enables the participant to develop any areas of subject knowledge weakness, in collaboration with the University provider. The SKA tests the participant on both their subject content and delivery nous, and once submitted, is read and reviewed by a University Tutor. After this, an individualised Action Plan is developed for that participant for study during their Summer Intensive.

### Cost Efficiency<sup>17</sup>

Similar to Teach For Australia, Teach First has developed a unique approach to recruiting and training teachers distinct from traditional routes into teaching. It has a significantly different financial model which reflects the more systematic support offered to participants who are not just training but actually teaching classes in challenging schools from day one. The high quality of this approach was recently confirmed by an Ofsted inspection which rated the training as outstanding in every category for every Teach First University partner.<sup>18</sup>

The TDA recently submitted a paper to the Education Select Committee outlining the funding provided by the Department of Education (DfE) and the TDA to Teach First, Graduate Teacher Program (GTP) and Postgraduate Certification of Education (PGCE) routes. It highlights the fact that the total DfE/TDA funding per participant including funding to schools and universities is £23,277 for Teach First, £23,750 for the GTP and £16,470 for comparable PGCE students. This does not include the additional saving for schools on recruitment costs, which can be considerable.

### Additional Value and Benefits<sup>19</sup>

In addition to cost savings, Teach First provides tangible and valuable benefits that should be considered in addition to comparing simple net costs. The following list, while not exhaustive, describes some of these:

*Teaching prestige* - Teach First has helped make teaching attractive to a new stream of highly capable graduates who would never have considered it as a career previously. In 2010, 282 applications were received from Oxford grads – almost 10% of the graduating class

*High quality degrees* – the vast majority of Teach First recruits have a 2:1 degree or better.

*Shortage subjects* - A high proportion of Teach first recruits are teaching in shortage subjects, with 54% of the 2011 cohort teaching STEM subjects and 67% of the 2012 cohort teaching priority subjects.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://teachfirst-ska.org.uk/>

<sup>17</sup> Teach First additional evidence to the Education Select Committee Inquiry *Attracting, Training and Retaining the best teachers* (December, 2011)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/rising-challenge-review-of-teach-first-initial-teacher-training-programme>

<sup>19</sup> Teach First additional evidence to the Education Select Committee Inquiry *Attracting, Training and Retaining the best teachers* (December, 2011)

*Training Quality* – the 2011 Ofsted inspection into Teach First’s ITT provision rated it as ‘Outstanding’ in every one of eleven categories each for four universities rated - 44 outstanding ratings in total. It added; “The level and quality of support for participants’ well-being and professional development results in exceptionally high retention and attainment.”

*School Improvement* – Teach First is the only training route where research has demonstrated a statistically significant correlation with improved results in the schools participants are placed in. The study found that GCSE results of schools which partner with Teach First are increased across the whole school.<sup>20</sup>

*Targeted placement* – Teach First only places participants in schools in challenging circumstances serving low-income communities which have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff otherwise. The TDA’s research shows that only 1 in 10 teachers through other routes would choose to work in such schools (TDA survey 2008). Furthermore, in 2009, 78% of ambassadors still in teaching were working in Teach First eligible schools.

*Gender balance* - Recruitment through Teach First of males is strong (38%)

*Leadership* - Teach First teachers are developing the leadership capacity of the profession. By 2011, Teach First developed 49 senior leaders including head teachers through Teach First (ahead of their target of 40 by 2013) and 238 middle leaders in the pipeline.

### Completion and Retention Rates<sup>21</sup>

Between 2005 and 2009, Teach First provided the highest rates of completion and retention during training of any route. The proportion of participants who start training with Teach First, who gain QTS, is 95% compared to 86% for PGCE. This low wastage makes Teach First better value for money for the tax-payer.

The retention rate of Teach First teachers in the profession continues to steadily increase over the existence of the program. Across all cohorts of Teach First, 68% of ambassadors remain employed in education, while 54% remain employed specifically teaching in the UK.<sup>22</sup>

These retention rates compare well with other routes according to the DfE School Workforce Census 2010 – which measures retention from the start of training rather than just after completion of QTS. The census shows the proportion of standard PGCE trainees who go on to teach in a maintained school in the year after completing QTS is 63% - a lower rate than that for Teach First.

In terms of long-term retention, the DfE workforce data shows that, for standard post-graduate training routes, 57% of those who started training are still in teaching five years later. This is comparable to Teach First’s average long-term retention in teaching of 54%.

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<sup>20</sup> University of Manchester, 2010

<sup>21</sup> Teach First additional evidence to the Education Select Committee Inquiry *Attracting, Training and Retaining the best teachers* (December, 2011)

<sup>22</sup> TDA Report, November 2011