

Labour Market Research – School Teachers

New South Wales

April 2018

ANZSCO code	Occupations in cluster	Rating
2411-11	Early Childhood (Pre-Primary) Teachers	No shortage
2412-13	Primary School Teachers	No shortage
2414-11	Secondary School Teachers	No shortage

Key issues

- In NSW, generally vacancies for primary, secondary and early childhood (pre-primary) school teachers were filled with little difficulty. Since 2007-08 the average vacancy fill rate for school teachers overall is
- 86 per cent, ranging from 77 per cent in 2010-11 to 89 per cent in 2017-18.¹
- The fill rate across the teacher occupations continues to be the lowest in early childhood
- (pre-primary) teachers. This has been the case since the start of the data series in 2007-08.
 - Similar to last year, employers state that positions in long day care centres are generally more difficult to fill than centres operating in the school sector, because the hours of service, holiday entitlements and remuneration are different.
- Since 2007-08, employers in regional areas have generally attracted fewer applicants per vacancy and have less suitable applicants per vacancy than metropolitan employers, as is the case again this year. However, there is no significant difference in the proportion of vacancies filled.

Survey results

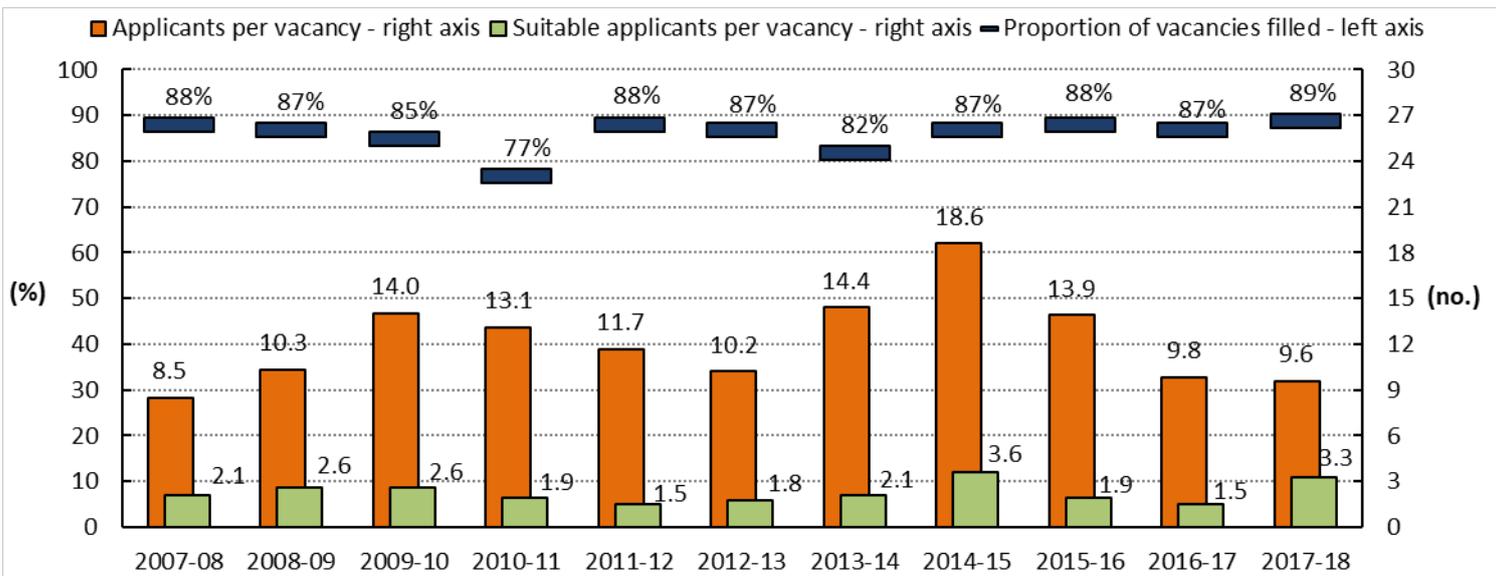
- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for school teachers.
- Employers were surveyed across State Government, Catholic and Independent schools, as well as the childcare sector (which includes long day care centres offering kindergarten programs).
- Across NSW, 89 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period (Figure 1), the highest fill rate since the start of the data series in 2007-08. The fill rate was 87 per cent in 2016-17 and averaged 86 per cent over the previous 10 years.
 - The fill rate of 90 per cent for vacancies in the metropolitan regions in 2017-18 is similar to the fill rate of 89 per cent for vacancies in regional areas for the same year.
 - The fill rate of 82 per cent for early childhood teachers is equal highest with 2015-16 since the start of the data series in 2007-08.
 - The fill rate of 93 per cent for primary school teachers is equal lowest with 2008-09 since the start of the data series in 2007-08.
- The average of 9.6 applicants per vacancy is the lowest since 2008-09, and is below the average for the past 10 years of 12.5 applicants per vacancy.
 - On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 11.5 applicants per vacancy compared to 7.0 applicants per vacancy in regional areas. However, employers in metropolitan regions considered an average of 4.0

¹ Department of Employment, SERA data time series 2007-08 to 2016-17, June quarter 2017, School Teachers, New South Wales

applicants suitable per vacancy compared to an average of 2.3 applicants suitable per vacancy in regional areas.

- The average of 10.4 applicants per vacancy for primary school teachers is the lowest since 2008-09 when there was an average of 10.2 applicants per vacancy. However, on average, primary school teacher vacancies have attracted more applicants per vacancy compared to the other teaching occupations each year, since the start of the data series except in 2008-09.
- All teacher occupations, except primary school teachers, attracted more applicants per vacancy in 2017-18 than in 2016-17.
- The average of 3.3 suitable applicants per vacancy is the highest since 2014-15, and is above the average for the past 10 years of 2.2 suitable applicants per vacancy.
 - The average of 2.4 suitable applicants per vacancy for early childhood teachers is the highest since the start of the data series in 2007-08, despite the average number of applicants per vacancy fluctuating each year.
 - Each year, since 2009-10, primary school teacher vacancies have attracted more suitable applicants per vacancy than the other teaching occupations.
- Across NSW, there has been no shortage of primary school teachers since the start of the data series in 2007-08.
- This is the third consecutive year there has been no shortage of secondary school teachers.

Figure 1: Proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.), School Teachers, New South Wales, 2007-2008 to 2017-18



Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business, Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

Note: Occupational coverage varies over time series.

- The majority of employers across all teacher occupations required applicants to have tertiary qualifications (recognised in Australia) and meeting the standard for accreditation with NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) or the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) qualification.
 - Employers also sought applicants with additional accreditations such as current NSW Working with Children Check clearance, registration with NESA, first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis training.
 - Employers also required experience and the ability to teach in the role in which the vacancy was advertised, for instance ability to teach subjects across the secondary school age range.

- Employers sought applicants with extensive knowledge and understanding of the current curriculum in NSW, various frameworks and regulations, for instance Kindergarten to Year 6 (K-6), Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Framework (NQF) and National Quality Standards (NQS).
- Some employers required an appropriate working visa before being considered.

Unsuitable applicants

- Employers considered around 64 per cent of qualified applicants unsuitable.
- The main reasons cited by employers why applicants were unsuitable was:
 - A lack of appropriate qualifications.
 - Insufficient work experience, for instance not having a minimum of three years experience or a minimum years working at a particular level.
 - A lack of specific experience in the industry, for instance prior employment in an independent or private school or childcare sector.
 - A lack of technical skills set.
 - Not possessing the communication skills sought by employers, such as not addressing the selection criteria and a poor quality application.

Demand and supply trends

- The NSW Budget for 2017-18 included recurrent expenditure (excludes capital expenditure) in Government schools of \$13.0 billion. This was an increase of 9.7 per cent over the previous year.²
- Data from the Department of Education and Training indicates that the number of students completing initial teaching qualifications (including early childhood, primary and secondary) in NSW was 4,568 in 2016. This was lower than the average for the previous five years of just over 5,400.
 - The number of students commencing teaching qualifications in 2016 (7,284) was also lower than the average for the previous five years (8,770).³
- Demand for early childhood teachers has been increasing strongly 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 (NQF). These factors have been reflected in increasing government expenditure on early childhood education and care services.
 - The number of children using long day care services in NSW in June 2017 was 231,180, an increase of 18 per cent over the previous five years.⁴ The number of 0-4 year olds in NSW is projected to grow by 7 per cent from 2016 to 2021 after rising by 8 per cent from 2011 to 2016.⁵
- Underlying demand for NSW primary and secondary school teachers has been increasing in recent years with student full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments growing by 9.2 and 2.2 per cent respectively over the five years to 2017.⁶
 - The number of FTE teaching staff in NSW primary schools grew by 9.2 per cent over the same period to 43,966 in 2017 (with a rise of 8.8 per cent for government schools and 10.8 per cent for non-government schools). The number of FTE teaching staff in NSW secondary schools grew by 4.2 per cent over the same period to 43,091 in 2017.⁷

² NSW Budget Estimates 2017-18, Budget Paper No. 3, Education Cluster, page 2-4.

³ Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Student Statistics Data Cube, 2016, domestic students. These figures include undergraduate and postgraduate courses and represent new supply to the occupation.

⁴ Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary, various issues.

⁵ NSW Planning and Environment, 2016 population and household projections.

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools, Australia, 2017 (Catalogue No. 4221.0).

⁷ Ibid.

- The strong rise in primary school enrolments over the five years to 2017 is likely to underpin secondary school enrolments in the next few years.
- In NSW public primary schools, student FTE enrolments were 1.1 per cent higher in February 2018 than a year earlier. Although NSW public secondary schools student enrolments declined by 0.2 per cent over the five years to February 2018, there was a rise of 0.6 per cent between February 2016 and February 2018.⁸
- From 1 January 2018, all teachers in NSW schools need to be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Some teachers were previously exempt from this accreditation requirement.
- The number of primary applicant 457 temporary skilled migration visas granted for teachers (early childhood, primary and secondary) in NSW averaged 77 per year in the five years ended 2016-17 and remains a relatively minor supply source for school teachers.⁹
- Data from the 2016 Census indicates:¹⁰
 - People aged 45 and over comprised a considerably higher proportion of school teachers (42 per cent) than was the case for all professional, technical and trade occupations (38 per cent). This suggests that the incidence of future withdrawals from the labour force due to retirement may be relatively high for this occupation. However, the proportion differs between the teaching occupations with secondary school teachers 46 per cent, primary school teachers 38 per cent and early childhood teachers 33 per cent.
 - Sydney's share of NSW employment in the cluster was, at 62 per cent, below that for all professional, technical and trade workers (70 per cent).
 - Over three quarters (77 per cent) of school teachers were female.

Other indicators and issues

- Most metropolitan employers for early childhood teachers were concerned about the high rate of turnover, given they are now competing with centres paying above award wages, poaching of several staff members to other centres, and the repeated use of early childhood teacher positions as temporary placements for teaching infants at primary schools.
 - Also, similar to last year, 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.

⁸ NSW Government Department of Education, <https://data.cese.nsw.gov.au/data/dataset/nsw-public-school-february-census-full-time-equivalent-fte-enrolments#>

⁹ Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, <https://data.gov.au/dataset/visa-temporary-work-skilled>. In March 2018 the 457 visa category was replaced by the by the Temporary Skill Shortage visa (details of which can be found at www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/482-).

¹⁰ ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.