

ATWD Key Metrics Dashboard release

Teacher workforce characteristics

Public release: 29 March 2023

Data included in this release

This data release in the Key Metrics Dashboard (KMD) includes:

- Teacher Workforce Characteristics (2021–2022 preliminary data, unlinked)
 - **Note:** The ATWD connects different sources of data to provide a national picture of the teacher workforce across Australia. The 2021–22 data is preliminary data from the ATWD Teacher Survey, which has not yet been linked to teacher regulatory authority (TRA) and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) data.
 - The unlinked 2021–22 data is a preliminary release. It provides the most up-to-date insight into the teacher workforce for comparison with 2018–2021 trends. This data from 2021 and 2022 is indicative only and not directly comparable to 2018–2020 trend data until the linkage process has been completed. Linked data is due for release at the end of 2023). Any differences between the preliminary and final data are expected to be minimal.
- Teacher Workforce Characteristics (2018–2020 linked data) trends in out-of-field teaching and in the regional and remote teacher workforce. Trends by sector are also provided in the ATWD Key Metrics Dashboard, but are not included in this key findings document.

Definitions

The ATWD utilises the following definition conventions also followed in this document:

- Teacher workforce: Registered teachers and leaders in schools or early childhood settings, including classroom teachers, middle leaders, senior leaders and casual/relief teachers (CRTs).
- Classroom teachers: Registered teachers contracted on an ongoing/permanent or fixed-term basis, not including casual/relief teachers, or those with leadership responsibilities or who are leaders.
- Middle Leaders – those holding leadership roles such as department heads and assistant principals.
- Senior Leaders – those holding leader roles such as deputy principal and principal.

Key findings over the page

Key Findings:

Teacher Workforce Characteristics 2021–22 (unlinked preliminary data)

Career intentions

Intentions to stay in the teaching profession¹ have declined from 2020 to 2022, with more teachers intending to leave prior to retirement, fewer intending to stay until retirement and those who are leaving intending to remain for shorter periods of time before leaving.

- 'Workload and coping' and 'recognition and reward' were both consistently and increasingly cited as the two most common categories of reasons for leaving.
- Classroom factors was the reason for leaving with the largest increase between 2020 and 2022 with 60% of teachers citing this reason by 2022.

Intentions to leave or remain in the profession

- In 2022, the proportion of the teacher workforce saying they intend to leave prior to retirement was greater (35%) than the proportion who planned to remain until retirement (31%).
- In 2020, as many schools were disrupted by lockdowns, intentions to leave the profession prior to retirement decreased to the lowest recorded level (2020: 21%), however in 2022, with these disruptions largely finished, intentions to leave increased to their highest recorded level (2022: 35%; 2018: 26%).
- This was seen across all teachers and leaders in schools in 2022, compared to 2020:
 - Classroom teachers: +11 percentage points (2020: 23%; 2022: 34%)
 - Middle leaders: +14 percentage points (2020: 21%; 2022: 35%)
 - Senior leaders: +14 percentage points (2020: 16%; 2022: 30%)
- Conversely, in 2022 fewer teachers and leaders in schools intended to remain in the profession until retirement compared to 2022:
 - Classroom teachers -15 percentage points (2020: 44%; 2022: 29%)
 - Middle leaders -16 percentage points (2020: 46%; 2022: 30%)
 - Senior leaders -16 percentage points, (2020: 56%; 2022: 40%)
- In 2022, around one-in-three in the teacher workforce were unsure of their intentions to leave before retirement, unchanged from 2018 (2018: 34.8%; 2022: 34.7%).

Years planning to remain before leaving the profession

- In 2022, those in the workforce intending to leave before retirement planned to remain for a shorter time than planned in 2020. In 2022:
 - More than one-in-ten of those saying they intended to leave were planning to leave within one year (14%), 5 percentage points higher than in 2020 (9%).
 - Two-in-five of those saying they intended to leave intended to leave in four years or less (36%), 13 percentage points higher than in 2020 (23%).
 - Three-in-five of those saying they intended to leave intended to leave in 9 years or less (61%), 10 percentage points higher than in 2020 (51%).

¹ Intentions may not equate to actual attrition and are more useful as an indicator of the mood of the profession.

Reasons for leaving the profession

- In 2022, for those intending to leave the teacher workforce, the most commonly cited reasons remained as 'workload and coping' (2022: 89%) and 'reward and recognition' (2022: 71%).
- The proportion of teachers who said they intended to leave quoting these two reasons rose in 2022 compared to 2020:
 - Workload and coping:
 - Classroom teachers: +4 percentage points (2020: 87%; 2022: 92%)
 - Middle leaders: +4 percentage points (2020: 87%; 2022: 91%)
 - Senior leaders: +5 percentage points (2020: 86%; 2022: 92%).
 - Recognition and reward:
 - Classroom teachers: +8 percentage points (2020: 64%; 2022: 72%)
 - Middle leaders: +6 percentage points (2020: 66%; 2022: 72%)
 - Senior leaders: +11 percentage point (2020: 63%; 2022: 73%).
- Classroom-related factors were more often cited as a reason for intending to leave in 2022 compared to 2020 increasing across all positions in schools and cited 60% overall of the teacher workforce intending to leave in 2022:
 - Classroom teachers +10 percentage points (2020: 55%; 2022: 65%)
 - Middle leaders +11 percentage points (2020: 42%; 2022: 53%)
 - Senior leaders +14 percentage points (2020: 32%; 2022: 46%).

Reasons for staying in the profession

- For both teachers and leaders who did not intend to leave the profession before retirement in 2022, the three most commonly provided reasons for intending to stay in the profession included the personal fulfillment associated with teaching and the culture of the school:
 - 70% indicated that they enjoyed face-to-face teaching
 - 64% indicated they felt it was a personally rewarding profession
 - 50% cited the school culture.
- Notably, classroom teachers in schools rarely indicated that they stayed because they were well paid relative to their skills and experience (16%), and only one-in-ten remained because they did not believe their skills were transferable to other professions (11%).
- School culture was a more critical factor for senior leaders (58%) than for classroom teachers (43%) and middle leaders (49%).

Intentions and reasons to return to teaching

- In 2022, of all registered teachers, 9% were not attached to schools or early learning centres (ELCs) via employment or an extended leave of absence.
- Of those not employed in schools or ELCs, 6% were actively looking to return, almost half (47%) might consider returning to the teaching profession under the right circumstances and almost half (47%) would not consider returning to the profession. This translates to 0.5% (around 2500 nationally) of registered teachers who are not in the workforce and are actively looking to return, and 4% (around 20,000) who are not in the workforce and might consider returning.
- The most important areas of influence on registered teachers' decisions to return to the profession were workload and pay.
 - Half (50%) of those not currently deployed, indicated that a reduction in workload would influence their decision.
 - Almost one-third (29%) indicated that a higher salary would influence their decision.

Working conditions

- Compared to the trends across 2018 to 2020, In 2022, classroom teachers were less likely to be employed on short, fixed-term contracts of one year or less, and were more likely to be employed full-time.
- Working hours in 2022 remained high, with full time classroom-teachers working 40% more hours than they were paid to work. However, there was an improvement of around 1.5 hours less per week in unpaid overtime in 2022 for both teachers and leaders.
- There seems to have been a COVID-19 period impact on the hours of face-to-face teaching undertaken by full time teachers, with a slight decrease in face-to-face hours in 2020. This rose back to pre-COVID-19 levels by 2022.
- The preliminary data in 2021 and 2022, suggests there is a notable increase in the relative proportion of classroom teachers spending over ten hours per week on student supervision compared to 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Contracted and working hours

- Nationally, there has been an increase in the proportion of classroom teachers who are employed full-time, increasing 14 percentage points from 60% in 2020 to 74% in 2022.
- Additionally, there was a small decrease in the proportion of classroom teachers on short, fixed-term contracts of one year or less, decreasing from 19% of classroom teachers in 2020 to 15% in 2022.
- In 2022, full-time classroom teachers were still working more hours than contracted during the term at an average of 53.1 hours per week, equivalent to around 15 hours per week above contracted hours.
- Nationally, across all full-time staff in schools, there was a slight reduction in unpaid overtime of around 1.5 hours per week on average compared to 2020.
 - Classroom teachers: 53.1 hours per week in 2022 (2020: 54.9 hours per week)
 - Middle leaders: 55.3 hours per week in 2022 (2020: 56.7 hours per week)
 - Senior leaders: 58.6 hours per week in 2022 (2020: 59.8 hours per week).
- Notably, there was variation in unpaid working hours between states and territories, ranging from between 0.6 and 2.8-hours per week reduction in overtime working hours of the teacher workforce across states and territories.
 - **Note:** Due to a high response rate in Queensland, the national reduction in unpaid overtime may have been inflated by higher reductions in that state among full-time staff in schools (2.8 hours per week). The fully linked 2022 workforce data will provide clearer insight into these trends (release due end 2023).

Face-to-face teaching

- The proportion of full-time classroom teachers undertaking more than 25 hours per week of face-to-face teaching, including in person and online teaching, seems to have decreased somewhat during the COVID period, returning to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2022
 - In 2018 and 2019 just over half of full-time classroom teachers engaged in 25 or more hours of face-to-face teaching each week (2018: 53%; 2019: 55%).
 - During the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020, the proportion of full-time teachers teaching face-to-face for over 25 hours per week decreased to 48%.
 - In 2021 this returned to pre-COVID-19 levels (54%). In 2022, half (50%) of full-time classroom teachers engaged in face-to-face teaching for 25 hours or more per week.
 - In 2022:
 - Half (50%) of full-time classroom teachers engaged in face-to-face teaching for 25 hours or more per week.

- 36% of full-time classroom teachers engaged in 20 to 24 hours of face-to-face teaching.
- 13% taught face-to-face for fewer than 20 hours per week.

Task time allocation – classroom teachers

- The proportion of classroom teachers supervising students for 10 hours or more increased from 2018 (2018: 8%, 2019: 7% 2020: 10%; to 2021:31% and 2022: 30%).
- Further information on time task allocation will be available with the linked data release due at the end of 2023.

Professional learning

From 2020 to 2022, the number of hours of professional learning increased, recovering from the low seen during COVID-19.

- In 2020: 26% of the teacher workforce undertook 40 hours or more of professional learning. In 2022, 44% of the workforce on average achieved over 40 hours of professional learning. In 2018 and 2019, 38% undertook 40 hours or more of professional learning.
- Senior leaders were most likely to have completed 40 hours or more of professional learning (71%) compared to other positions (middle leaders: 53%, classroom teachers: 40%).

Early career teacher induction experiences

The proportion of early career teachers² who underwent a formal induction process decreased from 2020 to 2022 as did the range of induction opportunities.

- In 2022, almost two-thirds (59%) of early career teachers had received a formal induction, a 6-percentage point decrease from 2020 (65%).
- Compared to 2020, in 2022, of those who received a formal induction, the range of individual activities was reduced and focussed more on orientation, mentoring and observation, and less on networking and targeted professional learning.
- Activities most often provided, but decreasingly, as part of a formal induction were:
 - An orientation program – this decreased by 17 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and 11 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Mentoring – this decreased by 15 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 14 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Observation of experienced teachers teaching their class – this decreased by 25 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 21% for those with 1–2 years' experience.
- The largest decreases were seen in the provision of:
 - Networking within their workplace – this decreased by 41 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 37 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Targeted professional learning opportunities – this decreased by 33 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 30 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Structured opportunities to discuss experiences with other new educators – this decreased by 31 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 25 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.

² Teachers who have been teaching for less than five years.

Casual/relief teachers (CRTs)

From 2020 to 2022, it would seem that the increasing pressure on the teacher workforce resulted in increased mobilisation of CRTs, with CRTs working longer hours.

The experiences of the casual/relief teaching pool were notably similar to the permanent/contracted workforce – CRTs were increasingly intending to leave and cite workload and coping, reward and recognition and classroom factors.

Continuing from pre-COVID-19 years, in 2022 CRTs did fewer professional learning hours than the permanent workforce.

CRTs' intentions to leave or remain in the profession

- Compared to 2020, in 2022, the proportion of CRTs who intended to leave before retirement increased 10 percentage points (2020: 18%; 2022: 28%), and the proportion intending to remain decreased (2020: 48%; 2022: 40%).
- This still left CRTs more likely to intend to remain than the rest of the teaching workforce in 2022 (CRTs: 39%, overall 31%).
- The proportion of CRTs who intend to leave the profession within a year increased 9 percentage points in 2022 (2020: 13%; 2022: 22%), alongside a decrease in the proportion of CRTs who intended to leave the profession in 10 years or more (-6 percentage points; 2020: 14%; 2022: 8%).
- In 2022, of those CRTs who indicated an intention to leave the profession:
 - Workload and coping was the most common reason for intending to leave (76%).
 - Classroom factors became the second most provided reason to leave by CRTs (60%), following an increase of 14 percentage points from 2020.
 - Recognition and reward was the third most common reason (58%).
- Similar to the permanent/contracted workforce, most CRTs indicate that they will stay in the workforce due to personal fulfilment (73% enjoyed face-to-face teaching; 60% felt teaching was a personally rewarding profession).
- 27% of CRTs in schools indicated that they stayed because they were well paid relative to their skills and experience (11% more than the permanent / contracted classroom teachers).

CRTs' contracted and working hours

- CRTs' average working hours increased from 0.48 of a full-time contract in 2020, to 0.63 in 2021. This occurred through an increase in the proportion of CRTs working the equivalent of full-time hours (+20 percentage points from 2020:9% to 2022:29%).
- In 2022, 27% of CRTs had 25 hrs or more in face-to-face teaching, a 9-percentage point increase from 2020 (18%).

Professional learning

- In 2022, almost one quarter (23%) of CRTs had completed 40 hours or more of professional learning, a 5-percentage point increase on 2020 (17%).

Key Findings: 2018–2020 trends over page

Key Findings:

Trends in the teacher workforce 2018–2020 (fully linked data)

Out-of-field teaching

Out-of-field teaching is measured as the number of teachers who were not 'in-field' for at least one subject that they taught. Teaching in-field is defined as a teacher teaching a subject that they had studied, both content and pedagogy, during their secondary initial teacher education (ITE).

Providing better data to measure workforce specialisation is an ongoing project for the ATWD. Given this, this data is indicative of trends only, and relates only to secondary subjects.

This data suggests that rates of out-of-field teaching remained high among classroom teachers of secondary learners in 2020, with at least one-in-four classroom teachers who taught subjects in a Key Learning Areas³ (KLA) out-of-field.

- In 2020, at least, one-in-four secondary classroom teachers (24%) were teaching at least one subject in a KLA out-of-field.
- Nationally in 2020:
 - Two-in-five classroom teachers of science were teaching a core science subject out-of-field, with 41% in physics being out-of-field, 38% in chemistry, and 41% in biology.
 - Teachers of technology were most likely to be out-of-field (44%).
 - One-in-four classroom teachers of English (25%), languages other than English (LOTE) (27%) and performing arts (27%) were teaching out-of-field.
 - One-in-three classroom teachers of visual arts (32%), mathematics (34%), health/PE (35%), the humanities (36%), were teaching out-of-field in 2020.
- The extent of out-of-field teaching in 2020 had somewhat improved compared to 2018, with fewer teachers having taught subjects in KLAs that they had not studied during ITE across all KLAs, except humanities, LOTE and technology subjects. This trend will need to be monitored further in the post-COVID-19 period.
- From 2018 to 2020 for classroom teachers:
 - A 5–10 percentage point decrease in out-of-field teaching was seen across:
 - Health/PE: -10 percentage points (2018: 45%; 2020: 35%).
 - Visual arts: - 9 percentage points (2018: 41%; 2020: 32%).
 - Maths: -9 percentage points (2018:43%; 2020: 34%).
 - Science -8 percentage points (2018: 32%; 2020: 24%)⁴.
 - English: -5 percentage points (2018: 30%;2020: 25%).
 - An increase in the proportion of out-of-field teaching was observed in humanities (+3 percentage points; 2018: 33%; 2020: 36%).
 - There was no change in out-of-field teaching in technology (2018: 44%; 2020: 44%).

⁴ These figures are for science generally, and differ from the figures for physics, chemistry and biology cited above.

Key findings

Trends in the regional and remote teacher workforce 2018–2020 (fully linked data)

This release provides, for the first time, an analysis of the trends in the teacher workforce in regional and remote areas compared to trends in the workforce in metropolitan areas. This is based on linked trend data from 2018–2020. Further understanding of geographical trends in the workforce will be provided in upcoming data releases.

Characteristics of the regional and remote workforce

From 2018–2020 teachers in regional and remote areas were increasingly employed as permanent ongoing employees with a corresponding decrease in the number employed on very short-term contracts.

Comparing the regional and remote workforce in 2020 to the 2020 metropolitan workforce, the regional and remote workforce, overall, is as experienced as the metropolitan workforce; it tends to include more leaders with fewer years' experience, but this gap is decreasing.

- From 2018 to 2020 the workforce in regional and remote areas evidenced:
 - A decrease in the proportion of teachers on fixed-term contracts of less than one year (-6 percentage points: 2018: 18%; 2020: 12%).
 - An increase in the proportion on ongoing permanent contracts (+10 percentage points; 2018: 63%; 2020: 72%), bringing the regional and remote workforce on par with the metropolitan workforce for ongoing permanency (metropolitan 2020: 73%).
- In 2020, the experience levels of the regional and remote teacher workforce overall were similar to those found in metropolitan areas.
 - Early career (teaching for less than five years): 12% regional and remote; 11% metropolitan.
 - 10–19 years' experience: 27% regional and remote; 25% metropolitan.
 - 30 years or more experience: 29% regional and remote; 33% metropolitan.
- In 2020, regional and remote areas continued to have a higher proportion of leaders who were just starting as leaders, and fewer with over 10 years' experience, compared to metropolitan areas. However, the difference in the proportion of leaders with over 10 years' experience between regional and remote areas and metropolitan areas decreased by 4 percentage points from 2018 to 2020.
 - 1–2 years of leadership experience: In 2020 – 19% regional and remote; 17% metropolitan.
 - 3–5 years of leadership experience: In 2020 – 27% regional and remote; 24% metropolitan.
 - Over 10 years' experience: In 2020 – 32% regional and remote; 39% metropolitan; In 2018 regional and remote: 29%; Metropolitan: 40%.

Career intentions in the regional and remote workforce

As seen in the metropolitan workforce, the proportion intending to leave the profession in the regional and remote workforce decreased from 2018–2020 during the COVID-19 period. However, this trend was reversed for the whole workforce in 2022 (see above), and this will likely be the case for regional and remote workers (data to be released late 2023).

Reasons for leaving are the same across the metropolitan and the regional and remote workforce, and centre on workload and coping, and the level of remuneration and reward.

Intentions to leave or remain in the profession

From 2018 to 2020:

- The proportions of the workforce intending to leave the profession prior to retirement decreased similarly in regional and remote areas (-6 percentage points, 2018: 28%; 2020: 22%), to metropolitan areas (-5 percentage points, 2018: 25%; 2020: 21%).
- The proportion of the teacher workforce in regional and remote areas intending to stay in the profession until retirement increased slightly more (+9 percentage points, 2018: 36%; 2020: 45%) than in metropolitan areas (+6 percentage points, 2018: 40%; 2020: 46%).

Reasons for leaving the profession

- Teachers in regional and remote areas saying they intend to leave cite the same reasons as those in metropolitan areas, 'workload and coping' (85%), and 'recognition and reward' (64%).

Professional learning

- In 2020, the regional and remote teacher workforce completed professional learning on par with the metropolitan teacher workforce (regional and remote: 68%; metropolitan: 67% completed 20 hours or more professional learning).