

TEMAG Forum Joint Communique

In September, leaders in the education sector met at a Forum in Canberra to discuss the reforms underway to initial teacher education. The Forum was attended by 52 high-level representatives from ITE providers, teacher regulatory authorities, teacher employers, principals, parent groups and government agencies.

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Federal Minister for Education, opened the Forum, and emphasised his satisfaction with the progress made to date on the TEMAG reforms, and the broader challenge in education in Australia, for which skilled, capable teachers are essential.

Professor Greg Craven, Chair of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, addressed the Forum, and highlighted the significance of the teaching performance assessment reforms as a game-changer in initial teacher education. He also spoke to the need to improve the status of teaching as a profession.

Chair of AITSL, Laureate Professor John Hattie launched a [TEMAG Report Card](#), which illustrates the progress made to date in implementing the reforms.

Participants reiterated their commitment to the TEMAG reforms and discussed implementation of the reforms and how to capitalise on work undertaken to date.

Participants were encouraged by the collective level of commitment to improvement and the amount of effort being devoted to the reforms across the sector. The commitment of all involved to improve outcomes for Australian students should be lauded.

Conversation at the forum centred on six propositions describing the desired future state of initial teacher education in Australia around the themes of teaching performance assessment, national consistency, and standard setting and evidence of impact. These created much lively discussion and debate.

The propositions build on the current reforms arising from the work of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), seeking to fully embed the reform agenda across the sector.

Four propositions for the future state of initial teacher education were agreed by forum attendees as representing the next steps in the TEMAG reforms.

Teaching performance assessment

- 1 *There is confidence that all graduates are assessed to a comparable standard. This standard is verified based on benchmarking of teaching performance assessments.*

Implementing this would mean that we know that each teaching performance assessment is assessing graduates at the same level - giving us confidence there is consistency in the quality of graduates nationally.

- 2 *Research and data generated from teacher performance assessments is used for continuous improvement in initial teacher education (ITE) in different contexts.*

Implementing this would mean teaching performance assessment results are used to improve ITE courses.

Standard setting and evidence of impact

- 3 *All accreditation decision-making processes can be defended by reference to a consistently used, recognised standard setting process that is defensible if subject to public scrutiny.*

Standard setting methodologies are not currently used for ITE accreditation panel decision-making. Adopting them would drive more nationally consistent decision making.

4 Program evidence of impact data is analysed to contribute to a national evidence base.

All ITE providers must now collect evidence of impact data. An agreement for the analysis of this data to build a national evidence base will help to build the knowledge base about effective ITE in Australia.

Two propositions relating to national accreditation panels and the expertise needed for panellists were discussed in detail.

5 Accreditation decisions are made by nationally convened panels and recommendations are accepted by regulatory authorities

6 All accreditation panellists are drawn from a small national expert pool

Participants agreed that it was essential to improve consistency in accreditation decision making. It was proposed that the propositions as written were modified to read:

- *Moderation of decision-making is undertaken to ensure consistency within and across jurisdictions*

Moderating decisions of accreditation panels will expose any inconsistencies and drive improvements in the quality and consistency of panel decision-making.

- *The expertise, level of training and experience in accreditation of accreditation panel members will be increased*

More expert panel members will lead to better, more consistent decisions, however, there was also support for maintaining diversity on accreditation panels and providing a range of stakeholders with an opportunity to participate.

Participants agreed to keep working together to progress these issues.

There was also a strong consensus that relationships between schools and ITE providers are an important area for further work. This includes greater cooperation in the delivery of high quality, authentic professional experience placements that give preservice teachers the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge against the Standards, and also partnerships around induction and ongoing professional learning for teachers.

While participants remain committed to the reform agenda, resourcing, achieving consistency when jurisdictions have their own policy priorities and arrangements currently in place, and the need for clear communication of expectations were raised as important implementation issues.

Next steps

Given Australian ITE regulatory arrangements, implementing reform necessarily involves deep collaboration between state and territory teacher regulatory authorities, teachers, school leaders, employers and initial teacher education providers.

The participants agreed to continue to work together to progress the TEMAG reforms and to progress the directions agreed at the Forum.

Advice will be provided to all Education Ministers in early 2018 about how the agreed directions can be progressed.

In addition, a follow-up Forum will be convened in the first half of 2018 to further progress discussions about initial teacher education in Australia.
