

ATWD Key Metrics Dashboard release

Teacher workforce characteristics

Public release: 11 June 2024

Data included in this release

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

- Teacher regulatory authority data (2018–2022) including:
 - Number of registered teachers, nationally
 - Category of registration
 - Registrations by state (including multi-state registrations)

- Workforce characteristics including:
 - Age of teachers
 - Proportion of teachers born overseas
 - Number of years in profession
 - Number of years being a leader
 - Gender breakdown

- Work and employment data for workforce groups including:
 - Professional learning hours
 - Contract types
 - Working hours
 - Face to face hours

- Workforce experiences of workforce groups including:
 - Out-of-field teaching
 - Career gap duration
 - Induction experiences
 - Career intentions
 - Reasons for leaving the profession
 - Reasons for staying in the profession
 - Barriers to returning to the workforce
 - Teacher duties
 - Leader duties

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 leadership roles such as deputy principal and principal.

Key Findings:

Teacher Workforce Characteristics 2018–22

Characteristics of the registered teacher workforce

Workforce data from teacher regulatory authorities in 2022 indicated that:

- There were a total of 489,879 unique registered teachers across participating states and territories in 2022 (excluding Western Australia), most of whom were registered in a single state (97.4%).
- There are an estimated 543,952 registered teachers nationally in Australia, with 527,399 registered in a single state and 16,553 registered in multiple states.
- Of those registered in a single state, NSW had the highest number of registered teachers (n= 175,195), followed by VIC (n= 137,509) and QLD (n= 106,634).
- More than one-third of all registered teachers (39%) were aged over 50 years.
- The proportion of men has remained consistent at 24% from 2020 to 2022.
- In 2022, 83% of registered teachers in participating states and territories were born in Australia, with 1.5% born in New Zealand and 16% born in other countries.
- Of all registrations in 2022, 82% are full registrations with the remaining being overwhelmingly provisional registrations.

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).

The data suggests that rates of out-of-field teaching remained high among classroom teachers of secondary learners in 2022, with at least one-in-five classroom teachers who taught subjects in Key Learning Areas (KLA) out-of-field.

- In 2022, almost one-in-five secondary classroom teachers (19%) were teaching at least one subject in a KLA out-of-field.
- Nationally in 2022:
 - One-in-five (19%) classroom teachers of science were teaching a core science subject out-of-field. Teachers of technology were most likely to be out-of-field (40%).
 - One-in-four classroom teachers of English (24%) and performing arts (26%) were teaching out-of-field.
 - One-in-three classroom teachers of visual arts (34%), mathematics (32%), and health/PE (34%) were teaching out-of-field in 2022.

- Three-in-ten classroom teachers of languages other than English (LOTE) (29%) and the humanities (30%) were teaching out-of-field in 2022.
- The extent of out-of-field teaching in 2022 had somewhat improved compared to 2020, with fewer or at least the same proportion of teachers having taught subjects in KLAs that they had not studied during ITE across all KLAs.
- From 2020 to 2022 for classroom teachers:
 - A 5–10 percentage point decrease in out-of-field teaching was seen across:
 - Humanities: -6 percentage points (2020: 36%; 2022: 30%).
 - Technology: -6 percentage points (2020: 46%; 2022: 40%).
 - Science: -5 percentage points (2020: 24%; 2022: 19%)¹.
 - There was almost no change in out-of-field teaching in other KLAs (below 2% change).

Career gap duration

- Clear differences remain in 2022 in relation to the career gap patterns observed between part-time and full-time classroom teachers. Part-time teachers were much less likely than full-time teachers to have ever had a career gap of at least one school term (40% vs 69%) but almost twice as likely to have had a gap of a year or less (39% vs 22%).
- The proportion of teachers with no career gap has continued its upward trend in the 2020–2022 period (2020:58%; 2022:61%), driven by full-time teachers, for whom a five percentage point increase was observed during this period (2020:64%; 2022:69%).
- By contrast, the proportion of teachers with career gaps of two or more years has continued to decline (2020:17; 2022:13%), a pattern observed for both full-time and part-time classroom teachers.

Updated Teacher Workforce Characteristics 2018–22

Career intentions

Intentions to stay in the teaching profession² 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 76% of teachers citing this reason by 2022.

Intentions to leave or remain in the profession

- In 2022, the proportion of those deployed in school saying they intend to leave prior to retirement was greater (36%) than the proportion who planned to remain until retirement (28%).
- In 2020, as many schools were disrupted by lockdowns, intentions to leave the profession prior to retirement decreased to the lowest recorded level (2020: 23%), however in 2022, with these disruptions largely finished, intentions to leave increased to their highest recorded level (2022: 36%).
- This was seen across all teachers and leaders in schools in 2022, compared to 2020:
 - Classroom teachers: +12 percentage points (2020: 24%; 2022: 36%)
 - Middle leaders: +15 percentage points (2020: 23%; 2022: 38%)

¹ These figures are for science generally.

² Intentions may not equate to actual attrition and are more useful as an indicator of the mood of the profession.

- Senior leaders: +14 percentage points (2020: 17%; 2022: 31%)
- Conversely, in 2022 fewer teachers and leaders in schools intended to remain in the profession until retirement compared to 2020:
 - Classroom teachers -13 percentage points (2020: 40%; 2022: 27%)
 - Middle leaders -14 percentage points (2020: 42%; 2022: 28%)
 - Senior leaders -14 percentage points, (2020: 54%; 2022: 40%)
- In 2022, 36% of those deployed in schools were unsure of their intentions to leave before retirement.

Years planning to remain before leaving the profession

- In 2022, those deployed in schools and intending to leave before retirement planned to remain for a shorter time compared to 2020. In 2022:
 - More than one-in-ten of those saying they intended to leave were planning to leave within one year (12%), 4 percentage points higher than in 2020 (8%).
 - One-in-three of those saying they intended to leave intended to leave in four years or less (34%), 13 percentage points higher than in 2020 (21%).
 - Three-in-five of those saying they intended to leave intended to leave in 9 years or less (61%), 14 percentage points higher than in 2020 (47%).

Reasons for leaving the profession

- In 2022, for those deployed in schools and intending to leave the profession, the most commonly cited reasons remained as 'workload and coping' (2022: 93%) and 'reward and recognition' (2022: 77%).
- 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: +6 percentage points (2020: 87%; 2022: 93%)
 - Middle leaders: +7 percentage points (2020: 87%; 2022: 94%)
 - Senior leaders: +7 percentage points (2020: 87%; 2022: 94%).
 - Recognition and reward:
 - Classroom teachers: +12 percentage points (2020: 64%; 2022: 76%)
 - Middle leaders: +9 percentage points (2020: 67%; 2022: 76%)
 - Senior leaders: +16 percentage points (2020: 64%; 2022: 80%).
- 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 by 62% of those deployed in school and intending to leave:
 - Classroom teachers +10 percentage points (2020: 56%; 2022: 66%)
 - Middle leaders +12 percentage points (2020: 44%; 2022: 56%)
 - Senior leaders +20 percentage points (2020: 32%; 2022: 52%).

Reasons for staying in the profession

- For those deployed in school and not intending 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:
 - 73% indicated that they enjoyed face-to-face teaching
 - 67% indicated they felt it was a personally rewarding profession
 - 49% cited the school culture.

- Notably, full-time classroom teachers in schools rarely indicated that they stayed because they were well paid relative to their skills and experience (14%), and almost only one-in-ten remained because they did not believe their skills were transferable to other professions (12%).
- School culture was a more critical factor for senior leaders (60%) than for classroom teachers (47%) and middle leaders (50%).

Intentions and reasons to return to teaching

- Of those not employed in schools or ELCs, 7% were actively looking to return, almost half (49%) might consider returning to the teaching profession under the right circumstances and almost half (44%) would not consider returning to the profession.
- The most important areas of influence on registered teachers' decisions to return to the profession were workload and pay:
 - Half (54%) of those not currently deployed, indicated that a reduction in workload would influence their decision.
 - One-third (33%) indicated that a higher salary would influence their decision.

Working conditions

- In 2022, a majority of non-casual classroom teachers (74%) were employed on ongoing/permanent contracts. These teachers were less likely to be employed on short, fixed-term contracts of one year or less (19%).
- Working hours in 2022 remained high, with full-time classroom teachers working an average of 50 hours per week, down from 53 hours in 2021. A quarter of full-time teachers in 2022 report that they are working less than 46 hours and another quarter report working more than 60 hours per week.
- Senior leaders reported working a median of 58 hours a week in 2022. A quarter of senior leaders reported working more than 65 hours per week and another quarter less than 50 hours a week.
- 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 2020 (2020: 12%, 2022: 30%).

Contracted and working hours

- The proportion of classroom teachers in 2022 who were employed full-time in 2022 was 74%, with 10% of classroom teachers employed for 4 days and 16% employed for less than 4 days.
- Additionally, there was a small decrease in the proportion of classroom teachers on short, fixed-term contracts of one year or less, decreasing from 23% of classroom teachers in 2020 to 19% in 2022.
- In 2022, full-time classroom teachers were still working more hours than contracted during the term at an average of 50 hours per week, equivalent to around 12 hours per week above contracted hours.

Face-to-face teaching

- The proportion of full-time classroom teachers undertaking more than 20 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.
 - During the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020, the proportion of full-time classroom teachers teaching face-to-face for over 20 hours per week decreased to 68%. In 2021 this increased to 75% and further to 79% in 2022.
 - In 2022:
 - 20% of full-time classroom teachers engaged in 20 to 29 hours of face-to-face teaching.
 - 21% 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 2020 (2020: 12%; to 2021: 32% and 2022: 30%).
- The proportion of classroom teachers conducting administrative tasks for 10 hours or more increased from 2020 (2020: 9%; to 2021: 14% and 2022: 17%).
- The proportion of classroom teachers spending 10 hours or more on marking assignments increased from 2020 (2020: 10%; to 2021: 15% and 2022: 16%).
- The percentage of teachers who spent 10 or more hours planning lessons increased by 8 percentage points from 2020 to 2022 (2020: 30%; to 2021: 39% and 2022: 38%).
- The percentage of teachers who spent 5 or more hours per week on teamwork activities increased by 6 percentage points from 2020 to 2022 (2020: 24%; to 2021: 27% and 2022: 31%).

Professional learning

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

- In 2020: 23% of classroom teachers undertook 40 hours or more of professional learning. In 2022, 42% of classroom teachers achieved over 40 hours of professional learning.
- In 2022, senior leaders were most likely to have completed 40 hours or more of professional learning (72%) compared to other positions (middle leaders: 54%, classroom teachers: 42%).

Early career teacher induction experiences

The proportion of early career teachers³ who underwent a formal induction process decreased from 2020 to 2022.

- In 2022, almost one-half (53%) of early career teachers with 1-2 years' experience had received a formal induction, a 5-percentage point decrease from 2020 (58%).
- In 2022, the best induction experience reported by teachers with 1-2 years' experience was being mentored (33%). Both participating in formal orientation programs and reduced face-to-face hours were seen as being most beneficial by 20% and 19% of these early career teachers respectively.
- In 2022, the best induction experience reported by early career teachers with 3-5 years' experience was also being mentored (30%). More experienced early career teachers valued reduced face-to-face hours as being the most beneficial (23%) and observation of experienced teachers (18%).
- Compared to 2020, in 2022 activities most often provided, but decreasingly, as part of a formal induction were:
 - An orientation program – this decreased by 21 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and 18 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Mentoring – this decreased by 17 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 15 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
 - Observation of experienced teachers teaching their class – this decreased by 24 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 27 percentage points 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 36 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.

³ Teachers who have been teaching for less than five years.

- Targeted professional learning opportunities – this decreased by 37 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 35 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.
- Structured opportunities to discuss experiences with other new educators – this decreased by 34 percentage points for early career teachers with 3–5 years' experience and by 24 percentage points for those with 1–2 years' experience.

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.

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: 25%), and the proportion intending to remain decreased (2020: 47%; 2022: 42%).
- This still left CRTs more likely to intend to remain than the rest of the teaching workforce in 2022 (CRTs: 42%, overall 30%).
- The proportion of CRTs who intend to leave the profession within a year increased 4 percentage points in 2022 (2020: 9%; 2022: 13%), alongside a decrease in the proportion of CRTs who intended to leave the profession in 10 years or more (11 percentage points; 2020: 25%; 2022: 15%).
- 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 (84%).
 - Classroom factors became the second most provided reason to leave by CRTs (68%), following an increase of 15 percentage points from 2020.
 - Recognition and reward was the third most common reason (66%).
- Similar to the permanent/contracted workforce, most CRTs indicate that they will stay in the workforce due to personal fulfilment (72% enjoyed face-to-face teaching; 64% felt teaching was a personally rewarding profession).
- 25% of CRTs in schools indicated that they stayed because they were well paid relative to their skills and experience (10 percentage points more than the permanent / contracted classroom teachers).

CRTs' contracted and working hours

- CRTs' average working hours increased from 20 hours per week in 2020, to 24 hours per week in 2021.
- In 2022, 29% of CRTs had 25 hours or more in face-to-face teaching, a 7-percentage point increase from 2020 (22%).

Professional learning

- In 2022, almost one quarter (24%) of CRTs had completed 40 hours or more of professional learning, a 6-percentage point increase on 2020 (18%).