

Independent Education Union

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Dr Tony Buti
Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests
Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

By email: Minister.Buti@dpc.wa.gov.au

Dear Tony

RE: Introduction of one-year teaching qualification in Western Australia

The IEU writes in relation to the recent announcement by Curtin University that a one-year graduate diploma in education will be offered from 2024.

Our members, and the school communities they support, have endured significant disruptions and workplace challenges due to staff shortages. The profession is keen to explore innovative ways to attract new teachers as well as retain experienced practitioners.

However, quick fix responses that potentially undermine the rigour and integrity of teacher education is not the answer. Rushing teachers into classrooms before they are ready will only exacerbate teacher burnout.

As a former teacher and lifelong advocate for education, you know the complexity and high-level demands required of teachers. It's essential that our next generation of educators are equipped with comprehensive practical skills and a deep pedagogical knowledge.

Simplifying or reducing initial teacher education (ITE) programs conflicts with broader education reforms being deployed in response to teacher shortages.

A key component of the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan seeks to 'elevate the profession' to better value our teachers. This objective is undermined by moves to reduce the standard or duration of teaching qualifications that in turn impacts the status of teaching.

The Teacher Education Expert Panel recommended major changes to ITE in their July 2023 report. The report makes 14 recommendations that include mandated core course content and a stronger focus on practical teaching experience and skills.

Short cut teacher qualifications will struggle to meet these outcomes - we can't improve teacher-readiness by fast tracking graduates through truncated programs.

The Federal Government's *Improving Outcomes for All* NSRA review, released just last week, recommends greater consistency in national teacher registration and the harmonisation of registration across Australia. The decision by Curtin University to now offer an ITE program that will restrict their graduates' registration to only Western Australia is clearly at odds with this aspect of the Federal report.

Following a comprehensive review in 2013, all Education Ministers endorsed two-year Master's degrees as a key measure to safeguard and enhance the qualifications of Australian teachers within a consistent national framework.

We seek your government's support of appropriate ITE standards and the rejection of knee jerk responses that will ultimately harm the profession and the status of teaching in the community.

Regards



BRAD HAYES
FEDERAL SECRETARY

cc: Jason Clare, Federal Minister for Education, jason.clare.mp@aph.gov.au
Rebecca Collopy, Secretary IEU Western Australia Branch, rcollopy@ieuwa.org.au
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