

Education Regulation

Ground Floor, 114-116 Murray St Hobart, TAS
GPO Box 104, Hobart, TAS 7001 Australia
P (03) 6165 6580
E educationregulation@decyp.tas.gov.au



11 OCTOBER 2024

Vicki Baylis

Independent Reviewer and Education Specialist
Independent Education Review

Dear Vicki,

I make this submission in my capacity as Director, Education Regulation. Each of the regulating boards have worked with their offices to provide a response towards the content of the Consultation Paper in line with their functions and work streams.

To provide context, the Review of Education Regulation aimed to modernise the regulatory framework for education in Tasmania. The [Review of Education Regulation Steering Committee Report \(December 2020\)](#) proposed 24 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the then Minister for Education, Jeremy Rockliff.

14 of the recommendations required legislative change. The enabling legislation, [Education Legislation Amendments \(Education Regulation\) Act 2022](#), commenced on 1 July 2023.

A key recommendation was the transition of the Non-government Schools Registration Board (NGSRB) and the Teachers Registration Board (TRB) from a representative to a skills-based board as well as the establishment of a board for Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification. The new boards commenced on 1 July 2023 with the commencement of the legislation. Other significant recommendations included:

- The introduction of Education Regulator Principles, set through [Ministerial Instruction 16](#), and broader application of the *Education Act 2016* principles to facilitate an approach to regulation that is centred around the learner and achievement of outcomes for learners.

- A performance framework for the regulators, including the development of outcome-based performance targets.

Of the 24 recommendations to implement only two remain, and these are currently underway.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide a response to the Consultation Paper and to reiterate Education Regulation's support towards work that will inform future impactful reforms to further improve Tasmania's education systems and educational outcomes over the next decade.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Katharine O'Donnell', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Katharine O'Donnell
Director Education Regulation

Attachments:

1. Response from the Office of the Education Registrar and the Non-government Schools Registration Board
2. Response from Home Education
3. Response from the Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification Board
4. Response from the Teachers Registration Board



Office of the Education Registrar

Compulsory Conciliation Conference

The Compulsory Conciliation Conference (CCC) process was established under the *Education Act 2016*. CCC involves everyone necessary to work towards and best support a resolution for school non-attendance. Referrals are received from the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) schools, Catholic schools and Independent schools.

A conciliator is appointed to a CCC. Once the CCC has taken place the conciliator is required to provide a report to the Registrar which includes a set of recommendations that are based on the agreements made by those who attended the conference.

The Registrar considers the recommendations made within the report of the conciliator and may make a formal Requirement. A Requirement is a formal order issued by the Registrar, requiring relevant parties i.e. parent, school or third party to implement the agreements made at the conference along with any other requirement that the Registrar considers to be appropriate. Requirements that are based on agreed outcomes from the conference are preferable.

If attendance does not improve and a party has not complied with the Requirements issued a second conference, a reconvene may be held. If the CCC cannot resolve issues of non-attendance and the Requirements have not been complied with a Compulsory Schooling Order (CSO) may be made by the Principal Officer Non-attendance.

Number of referrals

Table 1: Number of referrals received between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2023.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of Referrals Received	182	144	234	205	273

The highest number of referrals received for an age group in 2023 presents at 14 years of age, followed closely by 15 years, 13 years and 12 years of age.

Theme 2 – Strengthening supports and engagement for all learners at all stages of their education

What can be done to better support students who are struggling or at risk of falling behind to get back on track?

CCC is a restorative process that provides students, their parents and the school with a way to participate in a process to resolve issues and identify any barriers that are preventing regular attendance at school. This process involves students so they can participate in the process and voice their needs to enable and support them to return to school.

CCCs have a positive impact on attendance rates. The best outcomes are achieved through CCC when there is:

- Early referral
 - trends indicate that the younger the student is the higher the chance of success.
 - it is crucial that as soon as attendance drops a referral for a CCC is considered, as early intervention delivers stronger outcomes
- The right people are in the room
 - there are often complexities to non-attendance that warrant additional support services such as for mental health, neurodivergence assessments, family violence, homelessness, low capacity parenting.
 - it is essential that support services participate so that wrap around supports can be provided to give the student the greatest chance of success.

Greater collaboration between other government services for young people and the CCC process will increase the outcomes for young people.

Non-government Schools in Tasmania

There are currently 72 registered non-government schools in Tasmania. This consists of:

- 35 independent schools
- 37 schools within the Catholic system of schools.

Since 2018 the percentage of Tasmanian students enrolled in non-government schools has increased by 3.12%. There has been a steady year-on-year growth, with 2023 seeing the biggest increase in the past 6 years, with 0.92% increase. Figure 1 shows the comparison of Government and Non-government enrolments from 2018-2023. Table 1 shows the total number of enrolments for both Government and Non-government Schools over this period.

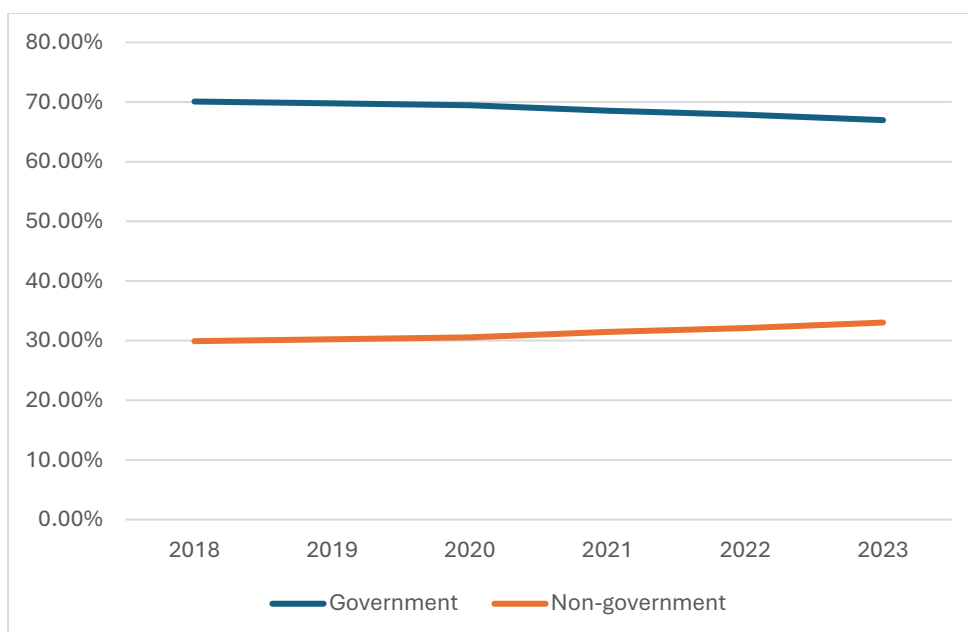


Figure 1: Percentage of Tasmanian Students enrolled in Government and Non-government Schools, 2018 – 2023.

Table 1: Total Enrolments in Government and Non-government Schools.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Government	56,558	56,632	56,675	55,748	55,066	53,983
Non-government	24,138	24,520	24,931	25,592	26,045	26,625

System of Schools

The Tasmanian Catholic Education System of Registered Schools was approved by the NGSRB in 2018 and consists of 37 schools. It is the only system currently registered in Tasmania.

Under this approval, Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) are responsible for ensuring that all system schools are complying with the standards of registration for non-government schools.

CET provide a report annually to the NGSRB about the compliance of its schools. In addition, each year a report regarding the system is tabled that includes observations from a non-government schools registration officer who attended inspections of 5 schools within the system in the calendar year.

The Non-government Schools Registration Board (NGSRB)

The Non-government Schools Registration Board (NGSRB) is an independent statutory body whose composition, functions and powers are defined under the [Education Act 2016](#) (the Act).

The NGSRB is responsible for the registration of non-government schools in Tasmania with specific Standards to be met, as outlined in the [Education Regulations 2017](#).

NGSRB's primary function is to make decisions on renewal of registration and regulation of existing schools. It does this with the support of the Education Registrar.

The NGSRB also makes recommendations to the Minister for Education regarding applications for new non-government schools.

The Review of Education Regulation

Following the [Review of Education Regulation](#) the NGSRB has actively implemented the recommendations to implement a modern regulatory framework. This includes the application of the Education Regulator Principles, such as in performing its functions and powers the NGSRB must consider the welfare and best interests of students to be of paramount importance.

Registration Standards

Non-government schools in Tasmania are required to meet specific Registration Standards set out under the [Education Regulations 2017](#).

The NGSRB has developed Non-government School Registration Board Guidelines for the [re-registration](#) of a non-government school and [registration of a new](#) non-government school. The Guidelines provide schools seeking to renew registration or establish a new non-government school with an understanding of the matters the NGSRB will take into account when determining whether a school meets the Registration Standards.

It is expected that non-government schools are compliant with the Registration Standards at all times.

The NGSRB, with the support of the Education Registrar, have mechanisms under the Act that allow them to check the compliance of a school through inspections at any time. These are currently conducted for renewal of registration, at the mid-point of registration and if a complaint that is within the scope of the Registration Standards is received.

When there are developments that arise from government initiatives or reviews the NGSRB considers any implications for non-government school sector regulation. When it is appropriate the NGSRB will incorporate requirements into regulatory activities. Examples of this include any requirements for any schools under the Child and Youth Safe Framework and the Lifting Literacy Framework.

Theme 5 – Accountability for improved outcomes

How do we ensure that policy initiatives are effectively implemented and that resources are used to improve learner outcomes?

For learners in the non-government school sectors the Registration Standards are a crucial mechanism for ensuring policy initiatives are effectively implemented. As shown in the case study below for Lifting Literacy, the scope of regulation by the NGSRB is confined to the Registration Standards but steps can be taken to ensure that the Registration Standards capture broader policy expectations.

Case study – Lifting Literacy Framework

Following the release of the [Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan](#) (the Plan) the NGSRB reviewed the Plan for implications for non-government schools.

The Plan details the requirement for the OER and NGSRB to embed systemic approach to the minimum schooling guarantee across Tasmanian non-government schools.

Each year, following the implementation of the recommendations from the Review of Education Regulation, the Minister for Education provides a Ministerial Statement of Expectations for the NGSRB. The previous Minister for Education, Children and Youth set the Ministerial Statement of Expectations for 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025. This includes the expectation that the NGSRB consider strategies for supporting evidence-based, structured literacy.

The NGSRB has considered the requirement from the Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan and the mechanisms available to implement this.

The mechanisms for the NGSRB to regulate the minimum schooling guarantee are in three stages:

- Education and consultation about upcoming requirements. The NGSRB is utilising mechanisms available, including non-government school's registration officers enquiring about school plans for implementation of the minimum schooling guarantee when visiting schools.
- Update the Non-government Schools Registration Board Guidelines for registration and re-registration of a new non-government school. This will involve consideration of the requirements for schools for the minimum schooling guarantee, consulting on these requirements and assessing how they fit within the current Registration Standards.
- Recommend updates to the Registration Standards. The Registration Standards are detailed in the *Education Regulations 2017*. The Regulations will be updated prior to their expiry in 2027. Following extensive consultation, the Registration Standards will be updated to align with the minimum schooling guarantee.

Home Education in Tasmania

Home education in Tasmania is a legally recognised alternative to traditional schooling, governed by the *Education Act 2016* (the Act).

The Office of the Education Registrar (OER) is responsible for the registration and monitoring of home education in Tasmania.

Parents who choose to home educate must register with the OER. This registration process ensures that home educators meet the required Registration Standards (Schedule 1 of the *Education Regulations 2017*) and provide a suitable educational environment for their children.

The Registration Standards include diverse learning needs, research, pedagogy, literacy, numeracy, range of learning areas, interpersonal skills, wellbeing, future directions and evaluation.

Applicants are required to address 10 Registration Standards within a home education summary and program (HESP) submitted to the Registrar

Number of Registered Students

The number of families and students being registered for home education in Tasmania is increasing.

Chart 1 (see below) shows a significant rise in the number of students and families opting for home education. This trend can be attributed to various factors, including changes in educational preferences, societal shifts, and the impact of global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2011 to 2024, there has been a noticeable upward trajectory in the number of students being home educated in Tasmania. This increase suggests a growing acceptance and recognition of home education as a viable alternative to traditional schooling.

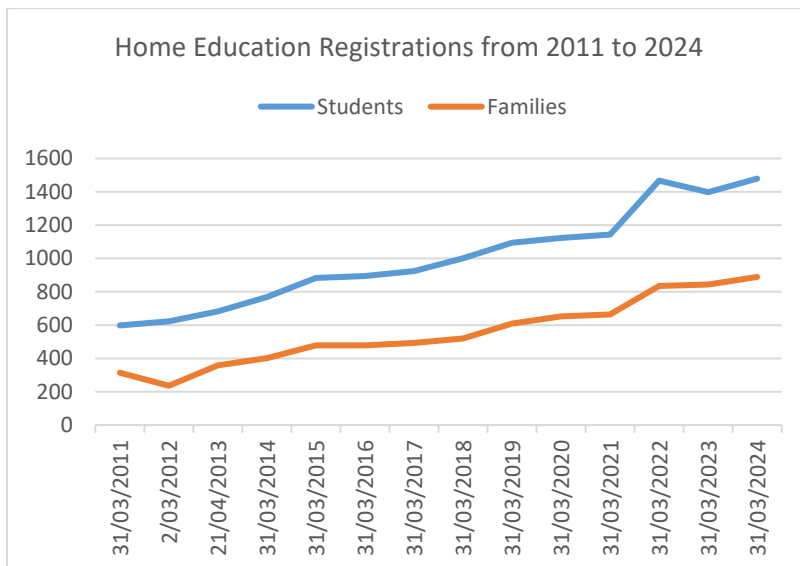


Chart 1: Home Education Registrations from 2011 to 2024

Chart 1 provides figures from 2011 to 2024 at a specific date. It should be noted that fluctuations occur outside the specific date as children enter and exit home education.

For example, on 31 March 2024 this year there were 1479 students registered for home education. However, there were 1,809 students registered for home education during the 2023 calendar year and up until 31 March 2024. This highlights the fluctuation in students entering and exiting home education.

Overall, the steady increase in home education numbers highlights a significant shift in educational trends. It underscores the importance of understanding the reasons behind this shift.

The number of homeschooled students in Australia has been rising for several reasons:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** The pandemic significantly influenced this trend. Many parents experienced homeschooling during lockdowns and found it beneficial for their children ([link to ABC news article](#)).
- **Dissatisfaction with Traditional Schools:** Some parents believe that mainstream schools do not meet their children's educational or emotional needs, especially for those with special educational needs ([link to SBS news article](#)).
- **Flexibility and Customization:** Homeschooling allows for a more tailored educational experience, aligning with the family's values, beliefs, and the child's learning pace (*covered in SBS article above*).
- **Safety Concerns:** Concerns about bullying, school violence, and overall safety have also driven some parents to choose homeschooling (*covered in SBS article above*).

- **Religious and Cultural Reasons:** Some families prefer to incorporate their religious or cultural teachings into their children’s education, which is easier to do at home ([link to The Other Cheek news article](#)).

Reasons for home education

The home education community in Tasmania is diverse, comprising families from various backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs. Their reasons for choosing home education are equally varied, ranging from dissatisfaction with traditional schooling to the desire for a more tailored educational experience for their children.

Families might be seeking more personalised and flexible learning environments for their children, which home education can provide.

The OER recently conducted a survey of registered home educators (September 2024). There were 229 responses (25%) from 905 registered home educators.

The survey highlighted the reasons for choosing to home educate with 102 out of 229 respondents stating that “school education does not meet the needs of my child.”

Reasons for choosing to home educate

Reasons	Number of Responses
Education choice (philosophical)	113
Child-led education	125
Individualised learning pace	155
Academic performance	63
Diverse learning needs	94
Anxiety about attending school	72
School education does not meet the needs of my child	102
Medical/Health	41
Religious faiths/beliefs	48
Lifestyle and travel flexibility	83
Bullying or social challenges	67
I do not wish to share this information	7
Other	21

229 responses were received – participants selected multiple reasons for choosing home education

Anecdotally, many parents have expressed to OER staff that they do not wish to home educate their children but feel they have no other choice due to the inadequacies of the current educational school system.

This sentiment also extends to children with diverse learning needs, where the educational system is often unable to provide adequate learning support.

An analysis of raw data from January 2024 revealed that out of the 900 students registered at that time, a significant portion, specifically one third, had diverse

learning needs. This translates to 300 students who required specialised support or accommodations to enhance their educational experience.

These diverse learning needs encompass a wide range, including but not limited to, learning disabilities, physical impairments, or other challenges that necessitate tailored educational strategies. Understanding and addressing these needs is crucial for fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed.

Alternative Education

Many applicants seeking to home educate actually want to “distance educate” instead. This means they want the curriculum, teaching and assessment to be provided by a service provider. This being an on-line virtual school.

However, this approach does not align with the principles of home education, where parents or guardians take full responsibility for their child’s learning. Consequently, the OER cannot register these applicants for home education.

We advise these families that they need to seek an exemption to be enrolled at school or be home educated (section 13 of the Act).

The OER has observed an increasing trend of families utilising service providers to provide a structured curriculum. Through discussions with these families, we have determined that their home education programs are often supplemented by this structured curriculum. Additionally, many other activities and teaching are provided by the registered home educator, and we can therefore register them for home education.

There is a concern that service providers who provide a structured curriculum and delivery/teaching of lessons are not operating in a regulated environment. Therefore, putting children and young people at risk as there are no checks on the persons who operate these businesses with many offering services across many jurisdictions.

There are only two non-government schools registered in Tasmania to provide Distance Education. There is also e-School overseen by the Department *for* Education, Children and Young People (DECYP), but specific enrolment requirements may prohibit many families from enrolling in e-School (on-line education).

The limitation of educational choice and accessibility to distance or on-line education may not be in the best interests of students, specifically where medical/health or anxiety about attending school contributes to non-attendance at school.

The 2024 OER survey notes that 72 respondents indicate that they chose to home educate due to their child’s anxiety. 41 respondents also noted that medical/health reasons were a reason for choosing to home educate.

Students with a disability

Home Education is inclusive of all students with diverse learning needs.

The OER does not currently hold data on the number of students registered who have a disability that may impact on their learning.

When preparing a home education summary and program, the parent is required to address the 'Diverse Learning Needs' Registration Standard.

Diverse Learning Needs is intended to require the parent to indicate whether their child has a diverse learning need, such as a disability that impacts their learning. Parents may choose to not disclose if their child has a disability if they do not believe the disability would impact the child's learning.

The State Government has "accepted in principle" a recommendation from the Disability Royal Commission which may require parents to provide information about their child's educational, social and behavioural progress, and support needs to improve the understanding of students with a disability who are being home educated and their outcomes.

This is a joint recommendation with the Australian Government that is accepted in principle. "We are committed to using evidence and data to inform improvement towards best practice." "We will work with the home education community in Tasmania to understand this recommendation." (Reference: Tas Response on page 117).

Funding

Registered Home Educators do not receive funding from the State Government to support the education of their child. Some parents may be in receipt of Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) payment, a federal government payment for students who meet specific geographical or medical criteria. Others may be in receipt of the Federal Government Family Tax Benefit due to low income, as many families are single income households.

As a result, access to allied health professionals may be cost prohibitive, as well as the waiting lists to see counsellors, psychologists, speech therapists, or occupational therapists etc may be extensive, especially in Tasmania.

Part time enrolment at school as part of a home education program

A home educated student may access a part time enrolment in a school, up to a maximum equivalent of two days per week.

A youth who is in Years 11 or 12 may undertake two subjects a week plus the home room attendance which is considered to be a two day part-time enrolment.

In 2023 and up to 31 March 2024, there were 51 students whose parents formally advised the Registrar that they had a part time enrolment with a school – 39 in government schools, 12 in nongovernment schools.

The OER is aware that there may be more students enrolled on a part-time basis, however the parent has not advised the office to include in our data collection.

Years 11 & 12 home educated students

Students may continue to be registered for home education in their years 11 and 12 equivalent years.

As of 10 October 2024, the OER has 79 registered students in years 11 & 12 equivalent.

Under section 93 of the Act, the Registrar can issue a year 12 completion certificate if the Registrar is satisfied that a person who is being home educated has completed a year of home education that is the equivalent of Year 12.

The Registrar has issued a total of 53 Year 12 Equivalent Certificates since the provisions of the Education Act commenced on 10 July 2017.

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
6	5	6	6	14	29	14

The achievement of these Year 12 Equivalent Certificates is not reported on in any way, apart from being contained within DECYP's Annual Report. Home educated students cannot qualify for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education.

For the 2023-24 reporting period and going forward, this information will be contained within the Office of the Education Registrar's Annual Report as required under section 227 of the Act.

At the end of each year, the OER seeks advice about the educational arrangements for a young person that has turned 16 years of age in that year.

The OER has an established process and an agreement with DECYP to provide information through the Youth Participation Database about the educational arrangements for home educated students who are considered to be entering into or are in their educational years of 11 or 12.

The purpose of this process is to ensure that there is oversight of youths transitioning from home education to an approved learning program, or that they will continue to be registered for home education. Regular updates continue to be provided to the YPD system during the year as youths enter or exit home education.

On 12 December 2023 there were 121 year 10 equivalent students registered for home education. 42 of these students exited home education at the end of 2023 and transitioned to college or to TasTafe for the start of their year 11 year in 2024.

As of 10 October 2024, there are 118 year 10 equivalent students. Advice about their educational arrangements for 2025 has not yet been sought by the OER.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the landscape of home education in Tasmania is evolving, with a significant increase in the number of families opting for this educational pathway. This trend highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding of the reasons behind this shift and the challenges faced by home educators. The data from the

OER 2024 Stakeholder Survey (whilst acknowledged as a small sample) indicates a growing dissatisfaction with traditional schooling, a desire for more personalised and flexible learning environments, and concerns about safety and wellbeing.

The OER plays a crucial role in ensuring that home education meets the required standards and provides a suitable educational environment for all students. However, there are areas that require further attention, such as the regulation of service providers offering structured curricula and the need for better support for students with diverse learning needs.

It would be productive for the Independent Review of Education in Tasmania to consider these factors and ways to create a more inclusive and supportive educational framework.

TASC BOARD SUBMISSION

INDEPENDENT EDUCATION REVIEW



THEME 1: DEFINING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

The definition of 'success' in the Tasmanian context is relatively traditional, and responsive to national expectations from higher education and industry. However, we welcome an exploration of what success looks like, and how best to report and celebrate the achievements of young people throughout their entire schooling journey.

One of Tasmania's key strengths lies in its flexible learning pathways. The state excels in providing opportunities for students to complete their final years of schooling in the classroom and/or through the completion of VET courses, apprenticeships, and traineeships. Part-time enrolments further enhance this flexibility, accommodating diverse learning needs and circumstances. To build on this strength, Tasmania should consider how to more prominently acknowledge these varied pathways, and the achievements of learners, when defining educational success. This broader definition would recognise that learning takes many forms and can be tailored to individual aspirations, potentially encouraging more young people to engage with education.

This broader recognition is important to set young Tasmanians up for lifelong learning, beyond the school setting, and for employers and the broader community to see the value in what is offered through the education system. The development of school-based apprenticeships that maintain age-appropriate support for young people as they transition to the work environment is one area that could benefit from greater recognition in terms of benefits to young people. It is also important to maintain the support of young people that the work environment is often not well equipped to do.

The state has undertaken a comprehensive review of curriculum and developed a framework to guide future development. However, the impacts of the pandemic have resulted in this now being paused prior to full implementation. This foundational work could provide a solid foundation for a refreshed curriculum that simplifies current offerings and the supporting documentation. This would make it easier for educators, students, and parents to interpret the curriculum, leading to clearer understanding of educational pathways and requirements.

The University of Tasmania's wide-reaching campuses across the state serve as a significant asset, reducing barriers to accessing further education. This geographical spread demonstrates Tasmania's commitment to making higher education accessible to all. To leverage this strength further, UTAS campuses should be promoted not just as educational institutions, but as community hubs that foster a culture of lifelong learning and aspiration. By emphasising the proximity and accessibility of these campuses, Tasmania can work to overcome perceived barriers to higher education, particularly for those in regional areas.

Tasmanian students also benefit from connections between the University and school sector through the University Connections Program and High Achiever Program. These programs enable senior secondary students to study University subjects as part of learning recognised by TASC and incorporated in the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) (and in some cases the ATAR calculation). This provides an extension of senior secondary curriculum to provide additional choice to young people.

Despite these strengths, Tasmania faces challenges in addressing barriers to educational success, particularly those related to regional remoteness, cultural priorities, and low socioeconomic status. While there are numerous support mechanisms and initiatives in place, awareness of these options among families and communities could be improved. By showcasing local success stories, providing mentorship programs, and offering tailored support, Tasmania can inspire its young people to aspire for more, regardless of their background or circumstances.

THEME 2: STRENGTHENING SUPPORTS

Education is a continuous journey that requires consistent support and engagement strategies tailored to each stage of a student's development. Flexibility and responsiveness are key to success. As students' progress, their needs and challenges evolve and support systems must adapt to meet these changing needs. Maintaining a focus on engagement, wellbeing, and career readiness throughout all stages of education would help to ensure every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential and embark on a fulfilling career path.

The transition from Year 10 to Year 11 represents a significant shift in a student's educational path. This transition requires dedicated support, regardless of school structure, to ensure that students can successfully transition to the different pedagogical approaches and assessment of senior secondary study.

Extending 'taster days' into longer orientation periods would allow students to acclimatise to the new environment and expectations. This would provide opportunities to work through structural changes, such as learning management system changes, and timetabling, whilst also demystifying senior secondary and creating connections with new peers and teachers. Increased interaction between senior secondary students and incoming students would foster mentorship and build community. Bridging programs to help students adapt to the adult learning environment of senior secondary years would also benefit transitions into further education or employment. There is also a need to ensure that teachers have a fulsome understanding of the curriculum links, pedagogical and assessment differences and possible pathways for students between secondary and senior secondary. As key influencers on student choice, this understanding is invaluable in providing guidance for students.

Students value the adult learning environment provided in the senior secondary years, often citing the transition to a new venue for the final two years as positive. However, they also speak of a disconnect between high school teaching methods and senior secondary

education expectations. Rather than structural change, we have an opportunity for collaboration between secondary school and senior secondary teachers to ensure curriculum continuity and pedagogical consistency.

Literacy and numeracy remain central to the curriculum throughout all years of education, with emphasis needed during primary and high school years. NAPLAN results help identify areas needing improvement and can help inform targeted interventions. Integrating explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy skills across all subject areas, not just in English and Mathematics classes, is essential. Additional support and resources for students struggling with literacy or numeracy would ensure no learner is left behind. Providing this support as early as possible will have the greatest impact on a student's educational journey, but it should never be 'too late' for students to gain the support they need in this area. Ensuring specialist literacy and numeracy support is available throughout all years of schooling is required.

Student wellbeing is crucial for effective learning. Age-appropriate wellbeing supports should be implemented throughout all years of schooling. Teachers and staff would also benefit from further training in recognising and addressing age-appropriate mental health concerns. Partnerships could be developed with external mental health professionals to provide additional support when needed. Safe spaces within schools where students can seek help or decompress would be beneficial.

Building and sustaining aspirations in young people to reinforce a purpose in fully engaging with educational offerings requires focussed attention on age-appropriate career planning. Hand-in-hand with success in learning, students should be able to participate in career exploration activities from primary school onwards. Regular career fairs and guest speaker sessions expose students to diverse career paths. Incorporating real-world applications of academic subjects into the curriculum would demonstrate their relevance to future careers and could be explored in course reviews. Comprehensive career counselling services, starting from early high school years, and targeted at both students and parents, would guide students in making informed decisions about their future. This would also provide valuable insights into course choices, both in secondary and senior secondary years.

THEME 3: OUTCOMES AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FORMAL YEARS OF SCHOOLING

Educational success at the end of Year 12 is not an isolated achievement but the culmination of a student's entire learning journey. To improve attendance, retention, and attainment, and to better support learning and career pathway choices, we need to adopt a comprehensive, long-term approach that addresses several key areas.

The foundation for educational success is laid well before a student reaches their final years of schooling. Addressing literacy and numeracy issues in the senior years of schooling is often too late. Instead, we must implement initiatives starting from early childhood, even before formal education begins. This early intervention approach ensures that students are

equipped with age-appropriate skills at each stage of their education, providing continuous support throughout the K–12 journey and addressing challenges as they arise.

Similarly, focusing primarily on the final two years of schooling overlooks the complex nature of student disengagement, which has roots in earlier years. Cultural factors play a significant role and are often established well before the last years of schooling. To address these systemic issues and ensure consistent support, a holistic K–12 approach is necessary.

It's important to acknowledge the strengths of the current system. Many senior secondary students are performing well, successfully completing courses that are nationally comparable and internationally recognised. University pathway courses align with content taught in other jurisdictions, providing students with a solid foundation for higher education.

Indeed, contextually, it is valuable to acknowledge that since its introduction the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) has significantly raised student's educational outcomes.

Introduced in 2008-09, the 'new'¹ TCE was developed in consultation with employers; industry bodies; education and training providers; parent and community bodies; schools and colleges; educational experts and learners.

The certificate was explicitly designed to raise student aspiration, with the TCE standards sending powerful signals that enhanced participation and achievement were both worthwhile and achievable by young Tasmanians.

In the 14 years following the new TCE's introduction (2009²–2023³) there has been:

- **40.3 per cent increase in TCE achievement** by Year 12 students, from 39 per cent to 79.3 per cent.
- **26.1 per cent increase in students completing 120 credit points** (a measure of two years of attainment in senior secondary education), from 55 per cent to 81.1 per cent.
- **17.3 per cent increase in students completing a Level 3 or above course**, from 58 per cent to 75.3 per cent.

This shows monumental increases in Tasmania's educational attainment with many more young people achieving more during their two years of senior secondary education and training. Enhanced achievement in the 'new' TCE includes students achieving at least 80 credit points in studies at Level 2 or higher courses and the Everyday Adult Standards in Reading, Writing and Communication, Mathematics and Use of Computers and the Internet.

In looking at measuring success, it is important to recognise that the TCE attainment rate of Year 12 students is very close to the percentage of students who are aspiring to achieve the TCE:

¹ With the introduction of the new TCE, the previous TCE became the [Qualifications Certificate](#).

² Source: *Tasmanian Qualifications Authority Annual Report 2014*, Table 4: Year 12/13 Student Attainment Data Profile.

³ Source: *Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification Annual Report 2023–24*, Table 1: Year 12 School Students (TCE, ATAR and VET).

- 83 per cent of senior secondary students reported that they aspire to achieve the TCE (2021 TASC Student Survey).
- 79.7 per cent of Year 12 students in 2021 attained the TCE (2021 TCE attainment data used for direct comparison with survey year).

The value proposition in staying in school can be to keep future career choices as open as possible, particularly if young people aren't yet sure what they are most interested in pursuing. For students keeping their options open, having a senior secondary certificate that requires them to apply themselves to passing their chosen courses and develop a broad range of essential skills sets a healthy and balanced level of ambition and improvement.

In recent years, the TCE attainment rate has plateaued. Given the importance Australian society places on completion certificates it would be valuable to explore how best to further lift the proportion of young people achieving the TCE, though equally there is value in recognising the achievement of those who aren't selecting a pathway towards TCE.

While data is a valuable tool in shaping educational strategies, it should not be the sole driver of reform. Data should be used to inform and confirm outcomes, but always considered within the broader contextual picture. Combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from educators, students, and communities, will provide a more comprehensive understanding of educational needs and outcomes.

Increasingly, the relevance of industry-based pathways inclusive of vocational learning, traineeships and apprenticeships are regarded within Tasmanian society as a valid and important pathway. An advantage of the current system in Tasmania is that a young person's ability to achieve a TCE does not end after they leave school, nor is it constrained to 'traditional' classroom-based education offerings in Tasmanian senior secondary schools.

Vocational learning contributes to a young person's ability to achieve the TCE with each unit of competency completed contributing to the Participation and Achievement standard of the TCE. As RTOs report completion to TASC a young person can gain a TCE after leaving school (provided Everyday Adult Standards have been met). With work underway to implement online testing to show achievement of Everyday Adult Standards in Reading, Writing and Communication (in English); Mathematics; and Use of Computers and the Internet, a young person's ability to achieve a TCE through other education and work pathways should continue to rise.

Promotion of the TCE beyond the education community, to more broadly recognise the achievements of those who have attained the TCE, as well as encouraging attainment of the TCE after they have left school are areas that can be further enhanced. Of course, maintaining an achievable, high standard will be key in maintaining the TCE as a valued and worthwhile certificate for students to aspire to and that is meaningful when seeking further education and employment.

To maintain relevance and effectiveness of education in Tasmania several areas could be considered.

- A complete review of existing courses, along with industry consultation, would help to address inconsistencies and gaps. It would also allow the removal of courses that are

no longer viable. Nationally, course viability frameworks are being explored that, once complete, could be leveraged in Tasmania.

- Curriculum and assessment should not be separated but considered together (and independently of political or sectoral agendas) to ensure the alignment with evolving societal needs and career opportunities.
- Exploring flexible learning pathways that cater to diverse student needs and aspirations could help engage a wider range of students and improve overall retention and success rates. This could include the possibility of students taking a single year course over two years, or modularising 150-hour courses into 3 x 50 hour modules that recognise completion at the conclusion of each module.
- Making Maths and English compulsory, as occurs in other jurisdictions, may ensure a stronger foundation in preparing students for the rapidly changing world they will enter after graduation.
- Industry qualifications could be reported on more actively to allow the media and community to celebrate student success beyond academic ability.
- Learning beyond the classroom should be acknowledged as valid and ways in which this can be formally recognised should be explored.

Renewing curriculum in the senior secondary years requires resourcing for the full life-cycle of course design, development, accreditation, provision of resources and professional learning; quality assurance and moderation; assessment, resulting and recognition as well as for continuous improvement. It is important to recognise that at present these functions sit across separate areas of the education system and need to be considered holistically to be set up for success. In undertaking any curriculum refresh the focus should also be on reducing administrative burden to allow teachers more time for actual teaching. Effective initiatives require investment in both financial and human resources.

THEME 4: SUPPORT FOR OUR TEACHING WORKFORCE

As curriculum is refreshed, or new curriculum introduced, it is critical that teachers are provided with appropriate professional learning and resources. For the senior secondary curriculum this support is essential and must go beyond only curriculum documentation. This is particularly important in schools where there may only be a single teacher in a curriculum area or teaching a course. Provision of resources, including common assessment tasks are available to teachers in other states and would be of considerable benefit to Tasmanian teachers, particularly in new or revised courses.

This support extends to opportunities for teachers to engage in moderation. This well-established practice is important for quality assurance and consistency of assessment as well as providing opportunities for professional development through communities of practice. In recent years, workforce changes and resourcing challenges have seen a reduction in opportunities for face-to-face moderation which had diminished these important collaborative events.

Improving educational outcomes and supporting better learning and career pathways requires a multifaceted approach. By focusing on early intervention, providing continuous support throughout K–12, updating curricula, using data wisely, and building on current strengths, we can create an education system that truly prepares students for success in their chosen paths. A holistic strategy would recognise that educational success is not just about the final years of schooling, but about nurturing and supporting students throughout their entire educational journey.

Teachers Registration Board - Tasmania

The Teachers Registration Board (TRB) is an independent statutory authority under the *Teachers Registration Act 2000* (Tas) (the Act). The purpose of the TRB is to regulate Tasmania's teaching profession for schools, TasTAFE, and to promote, maintain and apply the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). The registration of teachers assures the safety, competency, and quality of the profession. Through promotion of the teaching profession, the TRB aims to build community confidence by raising awareness of teaching standards, the role of professional regulation and through highlighting the achievements of Tasmanian teachers.

Themes 2 and 4 in the Consultation Paper are particularly relevant to the function of the TRB and further information in relation to these is provided below.

Theme 2: Strengthening supports and engagement for all learners at all stages of their education

Guiding question: How can we ensure all Tasmanian learners get the most out of their education and reach their full potential?

Effective partnerships between teachers, school leaders, and parents enhance student engagement, learning, and overall well-being. Parents who feel involved are more likely to support their children's educational journey, fostering a positive learning environment both at home and school. These partnerships lead to better attendance, higher motivation, and improved student outcomes. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), that constitute teacher quality in Australia, require teachers to engage effectively with parents/carers.

Appropriately skilled/qualified and registered teachers are crucial for student engagement and re-engagement. The complexity of strategies needed to engage and re-engage learners cannot be overstated, and appropriate skills and qualifications to undertake the role is essential.

Initial Teacher Education programs

The TRB is the accrediting authority for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs in Tasmania. These programs equip graduate teachers to be classroom-ready and have the skills to make a positive impact on student learning and wellbeing outcomes. The training and professional

experiences undertaken in an ITE program, as aligned with Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL) program standards, are designed to ensure that registered teachers are provided with a robust range of skills needed to engage and re-engage learners. This allows teachers to employ effective teaching strategies that accommodate various learning styles and needs. Teacher expertise helps students stay engaged, reduces dropout rates, and improves academic success.

Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher

The Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Pilot commenced in 2021 and was completed in 2022. This informed the HALT Certification model which was launched in August 2024 and, at this stage, information session and HALT assessor training has been incorporated. Staff within the TRB have been training a number of HALT assessors and promoting certification which includes working with each of the education sectors.

Through the HALT certification, classroom-based teachers are able to demonstrate their exceptional practice and use their skills to share this expertise within their school community. This certification requires teachers to provide evidence on how they build collaborative partnerships with parents/carers, in line with the APST, and encourage reflection and discussion how these partnerships enhance student outcomes. The achievement of the HALT certification recognises and celebrates expert teachers who excel in their practice and contribute to being able to offer learners a high-quality education. The nationally consistent and accessible framework that has been implemented in 2024 by the TRB, in line with the revised AITSL's HALT framework, improves accessibility of HALT certification for Tasmanian teachers with the skills and leadership qualities needed to inspire student achievement and success. The TRB continues to work to increase recognition and support across all education sectors for participation in the HALT certification process.

In growing the numbers of HALT certified teachers in Tasmania, a more student-centric and quality education culture is cultivated. HALT certified teachers are leaders in student improvement strategies and projects within the education community. Just one HALT certified teacher can have many positive impacts in how they support all learners in their K-12 journey.

Provisional to Full

The Provisional to Full (P2F) registration pathway aligns the professional practice of teachers to the Proficient career stage of the APST. The lexicon of this career stage is focussed on learner impact as the core outcome for all aspects of professional practice. The review of the P2F process began in early 2024 and informed the new streamlined model which was rolled out early July 2024. This streamlined process includes teacher reflection on how best to support all learners, and engage with school leadership and colleagues to discuss teaching practices, which cumulatively leads to better educational outcomes.

The new P2F and HALT processes aim to reduce the workload for applicants (whilst maintaining the rigour of the assessment against the APST) and offer a significant opportunity to increase engagement of teachers and school leaders with the APST to support professional development and quality teaching. Support from school leaders and across education sectors is important to encourage engagement with the APST and progression through the various career stages.

Theme 4: Support for our teaching workforce

Guiding question: How can we get more great teachers and school leaders and help them do their jobs well?

Fostering a highly skilled and supported education workforce

The TRB works in a number of ways to foster a skilled and supported workforce. Section 6A of the *Teachers Registration Act 2000* (the Act) includes promoting the teaching profession as a function of the Board. To achieve this, the Board aims to build community confidence in the teaching profession by raising awareness of teaching standards, the role of professional regulation and highlighting the achievements of Tasmanian teachers.

Supporting pre-service and early career teachers is a responsibility shared by a range of individuals and organisations, along with ongoing career engagement and progression. More support for beginning teachers is recognised as important to improve the retention of teachers, particularly in the context of teacher workforce pressures.

Schools may apply for a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) as an alternative authorisation to address a workforce shortage, this also provides a sustainable pathway towards teacher registration. In late 2023, the TRB made amendments to their LAT policy position to align with current processes which includes revised requirements for both school-specific and generic relief LATs to enhance retention, ensure the welfare of ITE students, and support quality outcomes for Tasmanian learners.

Applying for teacher registration with the TRB is the first step in a teacher's formal entry into the teaching profession and is a critical part of teacher induction. Teacher registration assures the safety, competency, and quality of the profession by establishing minimum requirements in relation to qualifications and determining that an individual is of good character and fit to teach. The TRB's registration requirements are aligned with the National Framework for Teacher Registration, developed by AITSL in consultation with the Australasian Teacher Regulatory Authorities (ATRA), of which TRB is a member. Further, maintaining teacher quality is fundamental to retaining teachers. Providing accessible, scaffolded and well-supported programs is key to encouraging engagements with the stages of career progression under the APST.

The TRB is responsible for accreditation of ITE programs in Tasmania, consistent with the AITSL Accreditation Standards and Procedures that set out the minimum requirements that an ITE program must meet to be nationally accredited. An addendum to the ITE program standards was introduced in 2023 outlining changes to the accreditation requirements to include core content aimed at improving key skills such as managing classrooms, using explicit teaching and teaching phonics. Support for current teachers to upskills in these key areas is recommended, for example through participation in the Australian Government funded micro-credentials for classroom confidence.

Quality ITE programs are pivotal to preparing teachers for the classroom and supporting a sustainable profession and improving teacher retention. It is the view of the TRB that ITE programs should not be compromised in searching for solutions to teacher workforce issues – this wouldn't be in the best interest of Tasmanian children and young people. The TRB support exploring innovative delivery options for ITE degrees, but not a dilution of content.

Projects to implement the previously described P2F registration process, HALT certification, and streamline regulatory processes take a ‘rigorous not onerous’ approach and are aimed at supporting applicants for registration and the teacher workforce, in addition to increasing engagement with professional standards which lead to better teaching and learning outcomes.

The TRB establishes the frameworks that enable early career teachers to move from P2F registration and later HALT status - in line with the APST and national frameworks. The newly developed P2F registration process includes requirements for schools to implement supportive components such as mentoring, professional discussions and observations, and celebration of professional success. The TRB support this work through information sessions for applicants and mentors as well as facilitating communities of practice. Through the P2F registration information sessions, the TRB also directs teachers to valuable professional learning and resources in areas such as supporting First Nations learners, differentiation, and inclusive practice. For those who are in the classroom showing leadership, the TRB undertakes HALT certification and HALT Assessor training. The TRB also support appropriately experienced teachers who wish to undertake Initial Teacher Education panel training with AITSL to promote further professional development. These projects exemplify the TRB’s role in building a robust education workforce.

Whilst the TRB is responsible for accreditation of ITE programs, the professional conduct matters that have come before the TRB and managed and resolved by the TRB, would indicate a need for a more intensive focus by the University of Tasmania on both the legal and moral responsibilities of teachers. Furthermore, the legal literacy of teachers as a profession needs to be assessed so that appropriate responses can be provided to support the profession to sustain standards of both maintaining student interests at its centre as well as supporting teachers to be of good character. As mandatory Child Safeguarding and Reporting is now undertaken, consideration could be given to further overall mandatory Code of Conduct professional development across the career paths of teachers.

Supporting and retaining the Tasmanian teacher workforce

Teaching workforce shortages are recognised as an issue nationally and internationally. A number of measures are being progressed under the [National Teacher Workforce Action Plan](#) (NTWAP) to improve the attraction and retention of teachers (see page 4 for actions being undertaken by TRB in response to NTWAP).

The TRB is taking actions under the NTWAP, in collaboration with ATRA (or individually) on the following priority areas to support improvement of the attraction and retention of teachers:

<p>Priority Area 1: <i>Improving teacher supply</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborating with ATRA and AITSL to review the National Framework for Teacher Registration ● Contributing to national working groups to harmonise policies and processes
<p>Priority Area 2: <i>Strengthening initial teacher education</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with the University of Tasmania (UTAS) on program accreditation in line with Teacher Education Expert Panel recommendations and AITSL’s ITE program accreditation standards and procedures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 20 Tasmanian teachers who have trained to become panellists for ITE program accreditation, ensuring that the Tasmanian voice on the needs of early career teachers will be represented
<p>Priority Area 3: <i>Keeping the teachers we have</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with pre-service and early career teachers to build understanding of the role of registration, teaching standards and career progression through induction sessions and the preparation for the profession unit at UTAS • Embedding support for early career teachers into our policies, such as mandating mentors for ITE students working under a Limited Authority to Teach • Implementing revised pathways for career progression to make them more accessible and provide an opportunity for more of our quality teachers to progress to Full registration or achieve HALT certification • Actively engaging with the teacher workforce to increase understanding of professional boundaries to mitigate the risk of teachers facing conduct matters or disciplinary action • Refining our processes to ensure a proportionate, risk-based approach to investigation and resolution of conduct matters with input from experienced teachers where appropriate • Refreshing and refining our communications and processes with the 'end-user' in mind • Implementing a contemporary, fit for purpose registration system which will improve client satisfaction, reduce administrative burden and improve the TRB's data collection and reporting capability
<p>Priority Area 4: <i>Elevating the profession</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting P2F and HALT processes, which recognise quality teaching practice in line with the APST • Highlighting quality teaching practice through our external publications/communications
<p>Priority Area 5: <i>Better understanding future teacher workforce needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating as a member of the Education Workforce Roundtable (which includes senior leaders from DECYP, UTAS, the Union and Principals' Association) to better understand Tasmania's workforce needs and develop strategies to improve attraction and retention of teachers • Identifying opportunities, with other stakeholders, to improve data and evidence and to share information

Guiding question: “How can we keep the existing workforce feeling energised and supported so they stay?”

Ongoing professional development is vital for teacher growth and enthusiasm, contributing to curriculum alignment, collaboration, and innovation. Professional learning networks, which the TRB have helped to promote through HALT certification and P2F registration pathways, support collaboration and continuous improvement, enabling teachers to adapt their practices to better meet student needs. The TRB provides information sessions, advice and support to encourage Tasmania’s teaching community to engage with and progress through the career stages of the APST and to build awareness and understanding of professional boundaries and the Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession in Tasmania. Professional learning will be further considered as part of the review of the Teachers Registration Act.

To continue to support Tasmanian teachers, the following priorities and actions are outlined in the 2024-25 TRB Corporate Plan:

Priority	Actioning this priority will include:
<p><i>Improve regulatory, governance and administrative frameworks to deliver high quality regulation of the teaching profession.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to collaborate on legislative reforms to support contemporary regulation and governance. • Navigating policy change by demonstrating a contemporary, risk-appropriate approach in compliance with the principles. • Advocating nationally for an integrated response for regulation in education. • Interrogating the automatic mutual recognition recommendations.
<p><i>Support quality teaching and student safety.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising the wellbeing and safety of our students including supporting the Government’s priority to improve the teaching of literacy. • Implementing the Commission of Inquiry¹ recommendations. • Improving community and stakeholder understanding of the TRB and its functions. • Prioritising quality teaching through Initial Teacher Education and productive relationships with the University of Tasmania.

¹ Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government’s Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings

A need for incentives for HALT Certification and P2F

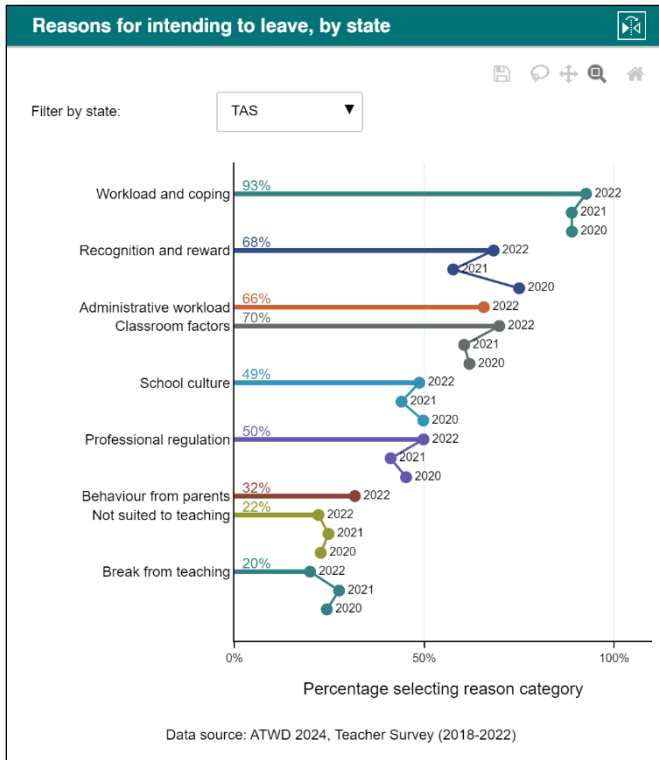
For both the HALT certification and P2F Registration to be widely adopted and embedded into teacher career pathways in Tasmania, anecdotal evidence would indicate that a financial incentivisation scheme be considered for development, aligned to teacher accreditation for both these opportunities. Whilst the TRB can streamline P2F processes, for access and achievability, it has no purview over increasing teacher motivation to participate in these pathways and to actually achieve such accreditations. As well as financial incentives being a key element, influencing and achieving a unified cross-sectoral position on agreed and tangible support for the HALT certification and P2F registration would be desirable. Tying career progression and promotion to certain levels of promotion could achieve meaningful and relevant incentives across all sectors. Other interstate financial incentive schemes that are used can provide models for adaptation for individual teachers as well as education providers.

Tasmanian teacher workforce

The TRB collect high level information on registration numbers and the demographic profile of registrants in Tasmania. The TRB is progressing the procurement of a new registration system, which will further enhance our capability in relation to the collection and reporting of data. Additionally, the TRB participates in the [Australian Teacher Workforce Data](#) initiative, circulating the ATWD survey to all Tasmanian registered teachers. The ATWD offers the most comprehensive data set on teacher intentions and workforce trends.

The TRB does not collect information on why teachers are choosing not to continue their registration and there are likely to be a range of reasons, from retirement, moving interstate or choosing to make a career change due to challenges in the profession. The ATWD survey report provides insight into reasons that teachers may choose to leave the profession, with the most common reasons given being '*workload and coping*' or '*recognition and reward*'.

Graph 2: Reasons for intending to leave teaching in Tasmania



² [Key metrics dashboard \(aitsl.edu.au\)](https://aitsl.edu.au), accessed 3/7/2024