2022

Teacher Education for a Rural-Ready Teaching Force: Swings, Roundabouts, and Slippery Slides?

Philip Roberts
University of Canberra

Natalie Downes

Jo-Anne Reid
Charles Sturt University

Teacher Education for a Rural-Ready Teaching Force: Swings, Roundabouts, and Slippery Slides?

Philip Roberts
University of Canberra
Natalie Downes
University of Canberra
Jo-Anne Reid
Charles Sturt University

Abstract: The preparation of teachers for rural schools has been a significant focus of research for many decades. In this paper we update previous reports of the extent of Initial Teacher Education courses that prepare teachers for rural schools in Australia. We found that despite significant and continued calls for rural teacher education, there are still very few rural-teaching units offered in teacher education courses, and there are no courses at all that seek this as an explicit outcome. As the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching claim the importance of teachers understanding students and their contexts, we argue that effective teacher education must not only focus on understanding rurality, and developing awareness of the affordances of place, but must also address the pedagogical requirements for present day rural teaching. We argue that the lack of teacher preparation for locational, geographic forms of social difference works to produce and sustain educational disadvantage when these intersect with economic and cultural difference. On this basis we call for government to address this major failing in the provision of education for Australian children through policy change to teaching standards.

Keywords: rural; diversity; pre-service teacher education.

Introduction: Swings and Roundabouts…

'Nicole' started her teaching career as a secondary History teacher in the K-12 Central School at 'Utopia Plains', a small town in rural Australia. It was a good 10-hour drive from the capital city she grew up in, where she had found only a little intermittent casual work in the eight months since graduation. Excited to have been given a full-time teaching position at last, she had left very early to avoid the kangaroos she had been warned about, and in the last two hours had passed through only one other small township. She was glad to see 'Tracy', a community representative, waiting at the school to welcome her. Tracy took her on a tour of the town and to meet 'John', the Principal. It was the Friday before the start of Term Three. Nicole was the only new teacher at this stage. John had not managed to fill a position in the primary stages this late in the year, but at least his only casual teacher was lined up for this term, even though she really didn't want the role full-time. Showing Nicole her timetable, John talked her through the program for her classes. The Head Teacher Secondary

wasn't likely to be back until the next day and Nicole wanted to start planning her lessons. She was excited to have been given the responsibility of a senior History class in her first year, along with her other secondary classes, though she was concerned about the primary drama class she was down to take and that the senior class was online with students at two 'nearby' schools. Tracy had explained that they hadn't had a 'proper' teacher for the Human Society and its Environment (HASS) subjects at Utopia Plains for over a term, and that such shortages were common. Two of her colleagues were allocated a couple of lessons of the general HASS subjects in the junior secondary, but they would be looking to her for guidance across the range of social and political history, human geography, religion, economics, and civics curriculum content taught under HASS. Nicole realised she had a lot of preparation to do. Nothing in her teacher education course had prepared her to be taking on so many responsibilities so early in her teaching career.

While fictional, as much as fiction can be when it is based on our collective experience of living, working, and researching in communities like 'Utopia Plains', the story of 'Nicole' reflects the reality of teaching and learning in many rural and remote communities in Australia. It is a familiar story, exemplifying the continuing inadequacy of education in schools characterised by the 'swings and roundabouts' of staff who come and go, effectively playing with the chances and opportunities of the students who stay on. And while attention to the preparation of teachers for rural and remote communities in Australia has been an ongoing concern for over a century, and a growing focus of research over the last two decades (Downes & Roberts, 2018), Nicole's story highlights the challenge that staffing rural schools remains for state governments and communities around the country (NSWDET, 2013; NSW DoE, 2021a; White et al., 2022).

In this paper we focus on the lack of attention to rural, regional, and remote schooling in Australian pre-service teacher education. We use the fictional Utopia Plains as an illustration of the inadequacy of teacher education standards and curricula that fail to attend to rural and remote schooling in this country. With reference to both the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011/2021) and the accreditation standards for teacher education programs (AITSL 2015), we provide an updated analysis of the prevalence and nature of initial teacher education [ITE] units that aim to prepare teachers for rural, regional and remote schools in Australia today. There are very few. Despite some evidence of good practice in a small number of Australian universities, we argue that the narrow, metrocentric focus of ITE curriculum echoes the narrow, metrocentric focus of the Australian *Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL 2011/2021) – and that this has left almost one third of Australia's teachers unprepared for the *almost one third* of Australian school students who live in non-metropolitan settings (ABS 2019; AITSL 2021a).

In what follows, we outline the background, methodological approach, and findings of our inquiry, before presenting the results of our analysis of the range and nature of course units that aim to prepare teachers for rural, regional, and remote schools in Australia. We argue that this is clear evidence of the need for Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011/2021) and the accreditation standards for teacher education programs (AITSL 2015) to recognise and address the needs of Australia's 'country kids' as a significant population group.

Background

We use the adjective 'rural' here, based on existing policy and research referencing the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ABS, 2016) for school geolocation. This is a geographically based definition that differentiates areas from major cities through to remote

areas, based on distance, population density and access to services. Non-metropolitan areas are often referred to as a single category, 'regional, rural and remote' – that is, everything that is not 'metropolitan'. The places in this category occupy vast areas of the Australian land mass, and account for approximately 28% of the population, and 29% of school students (ABS, 2019) and their teachers (AITSL, 2021a). Yet as has been argued for some time, now, Australian education policy is 'spatially blind' (Green & Letts, 2007) – centralised in state capital cities and designed around system standardisation. School education is primarily a state government responsibility, though national funding supplementation ensures that it is governed by the national *Australian Curriculum* for schools (ACARA 2013) and by the national standards for teachers (AITSL 2011/2021). The 29.3 per cent of Australian students who attend schools in 'regional, rural or remote' contexts are thinly spread – across 47 per cent of all schools (Halsey, 2017). Large numbers of private Independent and Catholic systemic schools are located in metropolitan areas, while public, government or State Schools make up 84 per cent of schools in regional, rural, and remote areas, and almost *all* of them in outer-regional and remote areas (Halsey, 2017, AITSL 2021a).

We are focusing our background policy review here on NSW, which has the largest number of schools, students, and teachers in the country (AITSL, 2021a), and where the 'fictional' Utopia Plains is located. The issues raised are national, with similarities across all jurisdictions (White, 2019; Roberts & Downes, 2020) such that too include an analysis of each would be a paper in itself. Like other Australian states, NSW provides a range of significant incentives to attract teachers to rural areas (White, 2019; Burke & Buchanan, 2022; Paul, 2022), along with valuable scholarships and support for their teacher education. Yet regardless of this ongoing need and policy focus (NSWDoE, 2021a), ITE courses accredited in this state are not required to provide opportunity for pre-service teachers to learn about the rural schools and communities where they are needed (NESA 2021). The state does not actually require new graduates to be 'community ready, or 'school ready' (White et al., 2011), let alone 'classroom ready' (Craven et al., 2014) when they enter rural schools. This exacerbates the already clear locational, social and economic disadvantages faced by country kids classified in policy as 'rural and remote students' – and it does so in spite of the explicit equity goal of the Australian Curriculum to "provide a clear, shared understanding of what young people should be taught and the quality of learning expected of them, regardless of their circumstances, the type of school that they attend *or the location of their school*" (ACARA 2013, p. 9, our emphasis).

Review of Literature on Pre-Service Teacher Education for Rural Australia

The concern for pre-service teacher education for rural Australia has been a continuing issue for well over a century now. Calls for the need for teachers to staff rural schools were already being heard in state parliaments by 1906 (Green & Reid, 2004). The first teacher education programs in most states attempted to address what was even then called 'the rural problem' for state education departments. The establishment of regional state Teachers' Colleges from the late 1920s onwards was promoted as a policy response to this need (Green & Reid, 2012). However, their graduates were sent to city schools from the start (Reid & Martin 2002), and *all* states have needed to use incentives to attract and retain teachers in rural and remote schools for decades (White et al., 2008). At Bathurst Teachers' College, for instance, specialised training for rural schools lasted for only just one decade, from 1951. Barker (1987) reports that although all student teachers at this rural Teachers' College followed the same curriculum in their first year:

> *... in the second year specialisation was required. [...T]raining for General Primary, Small School, Infants, or Lower Division teaching was offered, the students making their choice according to their interest. (Barker, 1987, p. 88)*

Male students were attracted to the rural-focused 'Small School' program during the 1950s, while the Lower Division specialisation "was to prepare women students to teach pupils from kindergarten to third grade in two-teacher schools" (ibid.). But during the 1950s, as post-war immigration and the 'baby boom' led to population growth in the cities, these teachers' specialised[1] training made them very competitive for city postings. The teachers training in country colleges were 'learning to leave' in Corbett's (2007) sense, and "this speciality ceased in 1962" (Barker 1987, p. 88). Almost every teacher posted to a small rural school from this time on has entered the service, like Nicole, without the benefit of any specialised preparation.

Researchers have consistently argued that teacher education that does *not* address rural schooling fails to support the policy goals of educational equity (Yarrow et al., 1999; Roberts, 2004; Halsey, 2005; Boylan, 2008; White et al., 2008; Reid et al., 2010; Downes & Roberts, 2018). Recommendations for specialised rural teacher preparation have been made consistently in government reports focussed on addressing the challenges of rural schools over time (Rawlinson, 1984; Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; HREOC, 2000; Halsey, 2018). In 1984, Rawlinson's NSW review into rural schooling found there was no specific rural preparation in pre-service education programs. Watson (1998) found that 88% of NSW and 84% of WA teacher education graduates had received no preparation of *any* kind for working in rural schools. Gibson & King (1998) reported on a national survey of Australian pre-service programs, which showed that only 45% included any compulsory consideration of rural contexts and only 12% offered a rural practicum. Boylan's (2004) examination of programs in NSW found that only three of 11 institutions provided any form of attention to rural education, and further, that in only one of these was it in a compulsory unit. This was re-confirmed some years later by White et al. (2008).

Hudson and Hudson (2008) argued that pre-service teachers need first-hand experiences to create attitudinal changes and instil the capacities to teach, and live, in rural areas, and Halsey (2009) drew attention to the often-prohibitive costs for students undertaking a rural practicum and called for support in this area. Boylan's (2010) extended study across all Australian undergraduate programs found only one university with a compulsory rural education unit, and only three with electives. When an option for a rural professional experience placement was available, it was not within standard course structures. But despite subsequent state government investment in support programs for rural practicum experience (McConaghy & Bloomfield, 2004; Beutel et al., 2011), when the AITSL *Graduate Teacher Standards* were first published in 2011 there was no mention of any Australian teacher needing the capacity to teach in the situations graduates like Nicole still find at schools like Utopia Plains. Their 2021 iteration is similarly silent in relation to rurality (AITSL, 2011/2021). And so, it is not surprising, that in 2022 the Report of the latest Quality Initial Teacher Education Review highlights the point that:

> *[M]any ITE graduates are under prepared in a number of key areas, including the teaching of reading, cultural responsiveness, supporting diverse learners, classroom management, family/carer engagement, and teaching in regional, rural and remote locations (Paul, 2022, p. 31, emphasis added).*

---

[1] Anecdotal information from graduates of the Small Schools specialisation indicated that the 'extra' preparation this course provided was related to the management of multi-grade classes, teaching and curriculum development; the development of collaboratively developed work programs for all curriculum areas; and instruction and practice in school management (including the completion of Departmental forms).

Sustained principal and teacher union recognition of the importance of preparing teachers for rural schools has led to several funded research projects focussed on this issue over the last two decades[2]. The most recent federal inquiry into rural, regional, and remote education (Halsey, 2018) again recommended the inclusion of a unit on rural schooling and access to rural professional experience for pre-service students, and research by White et al. (2011) and Carter (2012) proposed what teacher education curriculum for rural schooling might include. A recent NSW review of rural and remote incentives (NSW DoE, 2021b) suggests the need for specific preparation for teaching and living in rural schools. Without such preparation, and the normalising function it provides to professional expectations about teaching outside of metropolitan areas, staffing problems continue to affect the educational outcomes and aspirations of rural students (Downes & Roberts, 2018) – and rural education in Australia remains an 'imaginary': unknown, unreal, and understaffed. Submissions to the 2021 Review of Initial Teacher Education "also addressed the unique circumstances associated with working in regional, rural and remote locations, proposing that more could be done to attract ITE students from these locations as they would have a stronger understanding of the requirements" (Paul 2022, p. 41).

Elsewhere in the world the issue has begun to be addressed, as for instance, with the recent publication in the USA of a text on the specifics of teaching in rural schools for pre-service education (Azano et al., 2021). But the dominant policy logic in operation here is "metro-normative" (Green, 2013), which results in the assumption that the Standards are, and should be, 'placeless', and that implications relevant to rural and remote teaching should simply be read into them as needed. Graduating teachers are required to be able to: *Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum learning opportunities for students* (AITSL 2011/2021) for example. They must: *Demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds;* and *Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.* Further, they must: *Understand the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers' professional knowledge and practice* (AITSL 2011/2021). This means that *any* and *all* ITE courses *could* pay explicit attention to rural teaching (often involving networked classrooms), rural learners, and rural communities.

Our concern is that they continue to choose not to, even given the explicit focus on improving educational opportunities, experiences, and outcomes for rural students generally (ACARA 2012), and in the NSW Rural and Remote Education Strategy (NSW DoE, 2021a). There is little contestation of the need for such specialised preparation, with even *Next Steps: Report of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review* (Paul, 2022), which is to shape ITE practice in the short term, highlighting that the preparation of ITE students "for the unique circumstances of school students in regional, rural and remote locations" is essential. "Teaching in these locations can mean living remotely, engaging in the community, and experiencing isolation from family, friends and colleagues" (Paul, 2022, p. 40). This Report goes on to state that:

> *Some suggestions included co-funding regional universities to develop innovative ITE programs for local students [...] and supporting programs in rural and remote contexts that enable teacher education candidates from these areas to work in a school as a paraprofessional as they study [...]; [that] ITE programs should offer a major in rural and remote education, with modules on*

---

[2] These include: *Staffing an Empty Schoolhouse* (Roberts, 2004); *Rural (Teacher) Education Project (R[T])EP)* (Green, 2008); *Renewing Rural Regional and Remote Teacher Education Curriculum (RRRTEC)* (White et al., 2011); and *Teacher Education for Rural Regional Australia (TERRAnova)* (Reid et al., 2012).

> *teaching students with specific learning needs [...]; that such a course would need to include areas such as multi-age classrooms and curriculum tools, the distance education environment and specific communication tools; [and] that an understanding of the nature of geographically isolated students' school environments and strategies for coping with the unique dynamics of small rural and remote communities and schools is also vital. (Paul 2022, pp. 40-41)*

Yet in spite of the fact that "these locations" encompass almost one third of the entire Australian school age population, this Report summarised these calls in the following way – making no recommendations related to rural teaching in ITE curriculum at all.

> *In order to attract more ITE students to these locations, stakeholders suggested co-funding regional universities to develop innovative undergraduate-level ITE programs for local students with existing community connections ..., improving access to placements in regional, rural and remote areas and providing incentives such as scholarships to help students undertake placements in the regions ... (Paul et al., 2022, p.15)*

This is the research context framing our study. Following renewed national attention on rural schooling in the wake of the Halsey Report (2018), we wanted to know how many current teacher education courses are offering preparation for rural contexts, and how this is being done. This is especially relevant given that apart from Halsey's, the course survey studies cited above were undertaken before the regulatory context of initial teacher education introduced both teacher (AITSL, 2011/2021) and program (AITSL, 2015) standards for pre-service teaching education.

Method

In this analysis, we sought to identify whether the rural is given attention in initial teacher education degrees in Australia. Information about ITE courses is publicly available online from a number of sources, including: the national accrediting body, AITSL; teacher accreditation agencies in each state; the annual *Good Universities Guide[3];* and in the public-facing marketing material of each individual university. AITSL and state/territory teacher accreditation agencies identify institutions that are accredited to provide courses in initial teacher education and the *Good Universities Guide* provides prospective students with a list of all institutions and courses in Australia, along with their rating. Individual institutional websites provide a description of course structures, with unit aims, objectives and brief descriptions all available. Fully detailed information about curriculum and assessment is contained in subject or unit outlines, housed behind university firewalls, and is usually only available to staff, and to students enrolled in the courses. To complete the analysis of ITE programs in Australia we drew on a combination of the publicly available sources.

Firstly, the *Good Universities Guide* website was used to search for ITE programs, and each of the course descriptors was read and analysed for reference to preparation for teaching in rural contexts. Secondly, the AITSL website was used to identify all institutions in Australia that offer accredited ITE programs, and then the individual websites of each institution identified on the AITSL list were searched for descriptions of their preservice courses. The data collection from individual institutions went beyond the university marketing and recruitment material to include the outlines of courses and their progressions. The process of analysis is outlined in Figure 1 and described in more detail below.
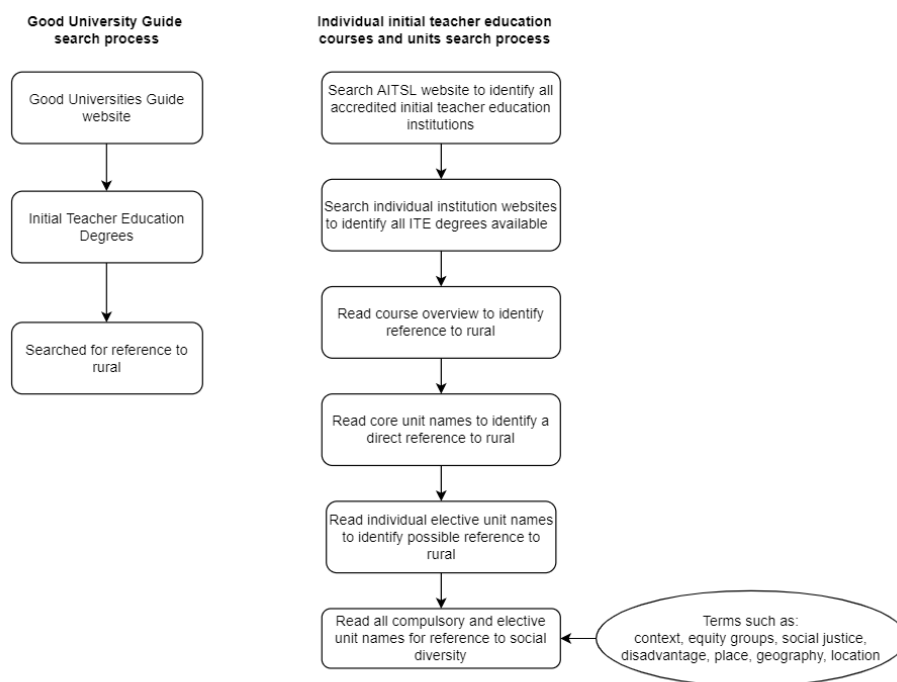
---

[3] https://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/

Figure 1: Process of analysis

The AITSL website identified a total of 47 institutions that provide accredited ITE programs in mid-2019; however, at the time of data collection one was no longer offering ITE and so was excluded, resulting in a final number of 46. Using this list, we then visited each university website and searched the outline of every teacher education course to produce a 'snapshot' study of the field as of February 2020, and confirmed our findings across the sample again, in 2021. Our initial search included all *undergraduate* Bachelor of Education qualifications (Early Childhood, Primary, Early Childhood & Primary, Secondary, K-12, and combined undergraduate 'double degrees' such as Secondary Teaching & Arts, etc.). Such undergraduate courses currently require the equivalent of four years full-time study. In addition, all two-year *postgraduate* ITE courses such as the Master of Teaching (Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary etc.) and other course variations were searched (e.g.: Bachelor of Arts & Bachelor of Secondary Teaching, Bachelor of Education Secondary Mathematics). Some of these offer elective units from higher professional degrees such as a Graduate Diploma or Master of Education.

Online lexical content analysis was used to explore the *Good Universities Guide* course descriptions and the individual course and unit overviews available on university websites (Webb, 2017; Burles & Bally, 2018). In this approach, we read through the website text to identify the presence of 'rural' or related synonyms such as 'remote', or 'regional' and considered this as evidence of engagement with rural issues in a course or unit (Webb, 2017; Burles & Bally, 2018). Some webpages contained both images and text; however, the lexical content of images was not analysed if it did not interpret the course content or the inclusion of rural content. This analysis allowed us to make "replicable and valid inferences" from the website about the inclusion of rural content (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18); and is both easily verifiable and methodologically conventional, as it relies almost exclusively on traditional qualitative techniques (Webb, 2017).

The search for and analysis of individual ITE courses began with the course overviews, followed by attention to core units, and then elective units. First, the course overviews and descriptions were analysed to identify if they had any rural-focused content.

Descriptions of all *compulsory* units, including the *practicum*, were carefully read to identify any rural focus in their content. All education-specific *electives* within courses (excluding university-wide open electives) were then identified and analysed. Finally, we searched the descriptions of all compulsory and elective units that might have a focus on *contextual diversity* such as educational diversity, inclusion or sociology units. In this final search, further common lexical associations with 'rural' (such as 'place', 'geography', 'location') were added to our inclusion criteria. In this last search, attention was also given to how the rural was described and considered, through attention to latent content in qualifying (adjectival) description, and whether it was presented in a positive or negative manner (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

Because the information we analysed was available online, we used conventional screen-capture sampling techniques to identify text that could be included in the analysis (Kim & Kuljis, 2010). This process involved capturing all information available on the specific webpage that was being viewed, and on linked webpages that could be clicked on to find content related to the course. In sampling from the internet and websites, we were mindful of what Kim and Kuljis (2010, p. 372) call the "trouble of sampling" due to the sheer size and "chaotic design structure" of the internet. To minimise such issues, we limited the depth of the online searching to six clicks per Faculty/ School/ Office /course/ unit description in our search for any of the search terms. For example, if a course page provided a general overview, then a new page was opened to view the course structure and names of individual units, then a new page to view an individual unit overview, then this was three clicks that were required in the search.

Two ethical considerations of this approach are important to note. We followed Burles and Bally's (2018, p.4) advice that online content can be used in research "without obtaining informed consent from the author *if it is overtly public or focused at a general audience*" (emphasis added). Collection of "non-intrusive web-based" research data (Warrell & Jacobsen, 2014) though, leads to one of the limitations of such a snapshot approach: the absence of individual institutional consultation. Although we sought to confirm our findings by selecting only evidence still in place online at the present time, we do note this 'consumer viewpoint' as a possible limitation to our design. In addition:

> the absence of individual consent from academic authors [illustrates] another ethical dilemma inherent in this method – the fact that any evidentiary data we present would be easily searchable on the internet, [makes] our data sources easily identifiable (Warrell & Jacobsen, 2014, p. 30).

For these reasons, prior to obtaining ethics approval, we considered, and then rejected, what Burles and Bally (2018, p. 7) advocate as a 'fabrication' approach to data representation and reporting that would anonymise institutions. That approach involves the creation of "composite accounts", and it *is* what we have used in our 'composition' of the story of Nicole to explain the warrant and need for our study. Instead, our analytic method is informed by Warrell and Jacobsen's (2014 p. 24) argument that "[b]ecause the goal of educational research is to improve teaching and learning, gaining a true understanding and accurate picture of the participants' naturally occurring online behaviour is vital".

For this reason, we provide direct quotations where appropriate credit can be given. This also allows us to show that our data is drawn from universities across all states, not just the focus-state of our policy analysis, New South Wales. Further, as we outline in the next section, because our findings indicate that so *few* institutions provide students with any preparation for rural teaching, we are glad of the opportunity to positively identify those who do. Finally, while university websites are part of their online marketing, potentially concealing information deeper behind institutional firewalls, the fact that rural teaching is overwhelmingly omitted from career pathway and course marketing is itself significant.

Findings

In spite of explicit policy direction that government should "work with initial teacher education providers to support them to include specific content relating to teaching in rural and remote schools in teacher education courses" (NSWDEC 2013, p. 12) in order to "supply students in rural and remote communities with more high-quality educators who are aware of localised needs" (NSWDoE, 2021a), it remains the case that very few teachers enter the profession having been prepared for teaching in a rural community. Table 1 provides a summary overview of our findings, which we go on to discuss and elaborate with examples from the data that demonstrate the nature of course level, compulsory, and elective focus on teaching in rural schools. We then discuss the rural practicum in ITE.

Only seven Australian institutions advertise an interest in rurality within the well-esteemed *Good Universities Guide,* noting this in up to three different course offerings in some cases. It is not surprising that these institutions are located in the states with the largest numbers of rural schools, although it is noteworthy that not one regional institution sees fit to promote its regional location as an asset in this way.

Course Level Concern for Rurality

For students moving beyond the *Good Universities Guide* to seek course information from the market facing sites of individual institutions, there is little to be found that would suggest teaching in a rural school is even considered a possible outcome of their study. Four of the seven institutions which identify an institution-level rural interest in the *Guide* do not carry the promise of a rural focus through to the Faculty level. Only one rural institution explicitly promotes the development of "valuable specialist skills needed for teaching in rural and remote areas and improve Indigenous education outcomes"[4] in both its primary and secondary courses, as although rural teaching is noted in the other two at course level, it is presented as part of a smorgasbord of choices available for the market.

STATE	No. of institutions offering Initial Teacher Ed.#	No. of institutions advertising rural focus in *Good Universities Guide5*#	No. advertising rural teaching in top level Faculty or Course Overview#	No. advertising compulsory rural teaching units in academic curriculum #	No. of institutions offering compulsory units on social difference where rurality is named as an equity issue##	No. of institutions offering rural focus in elective academic unit (no. of units offered) #	No. of institutions advertising rural placement option for professional experience#
		Institutions (Courses)	U'grad and/or P'grad	U'grad and/or P'grad	Institutions (Units)	Institutions (Units)	U' grad and/ or P'grad
ACT	1	-	-	-	1	1 (2)	1
NSW	14*	2 (4)	1	-	1	-	5
NT	1**	-	-	-	-	-	1
QLD	8	2 (5)	1	-	-	-	7
SA	4	-	1	-	1	1(1)	2
TAS	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

---

[4] https://www.jcu.edu.au/courses/bachelor-of-education-primary
5 https://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/course-provider

VIC	11	1 (1)	-	-	-	2(3)	5
WA	6***	2 (5)	-	-	-	-	4
TOTAL	46	7 (15)	3	0	3	4(6)	26

*Australian Catholic University, with campuses in Qld and Victoria, is included under NSW.
**Batchelor College is included with CDU as its education degrees are offered from there.
*** University of Notre Dame, with a campus in NSW, is included under WA.
# This includes undergrad and postgrad teacher education courses for Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary sectors.
This refers to discrete subjects, see discussion below related to limits of subject availability offering across EC, Primary and Secondary, undergrad and postgrad *courses*.

Table 1. Tally of Australian Higher Education institutions promoting rural teaching in Initial Teacher Education

Compulsory Curriculum Demonstrating a Concern for the Rural

We could not find *any* teacher education course in Australia with a *compulsory academic unit* dedicated to preparing teachers for rural or remote communities. When all states and significant numbers of institutions are promoting a 'rural practicum' and teaching placements in rural areas, this remains a significant omission. Without a regulatory environment that acknowledges rural and remote students, we argue, and because the AITSL standards for teachers (2011/2021) and programs (2015) ignore rurality, it is not surprising that institutions seek only to minimally meet these standards in this regard.

Every Australian institution does (must) offer at least one compulsory unit on social difference and equity. However, as Table 1 indicates, only three of the 46 universities explicitly reference 'rural', or 'location', in the course description of these subjects across their various programs.   In one, exemplary, institution, every Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary education course includes an introductory, foundational subject that includes location in discussion of how:

> *education is differentiated across race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, class and location. As the influences on educational contexts change across time, then so do teaching and learning contexts. The changing face of these contexts is explained through the process of globalisation.*[6]

Another institution offers a subject in its Early Childhood program that considers: "Issues specifically related to social class, gender, power, Indigeneity, ethnicity, rurality and community'[7], although this subject is not offered in any other of its courses.[8]   In each case, rurality is positioned in terms of 'contexts', 'diversity', and alongside other 'problems' or 'issues' in education. As foundational, 'theoretical' subjects, though, these units can be seen as building the professional knowledge that pre-service teachers bring to their practice, and even though none is explicitly linked to a practicum in its online description, at least students who choose to take a rural practicum option later should have some professional background to build on.

---

[6] https://www.flinders.edu.au/webapps/stusys/index.cfm/topic/main?numb=1120&subj=EDUC&year=2021&fees=Y
[7] https://www.csu.edu.au/handbook/handbook19/subjects/EEP101.html
[8] Since the renewal of programs to meet the AITSL standards after 2013, subjects such as 'Teaching in Rural Secondary Schools' http://www.csu.edu.au/handbook/handbook16/subjects/ESR401.html have been unavailable since 2016.

Elective Curriculum Demonstrating a Concern for the Rural

With regard to *elective* units of study on offer to Australian pre-service teachers – and noting that graduate-level ITE courses (commonly offered as a Master of Teaching) are more likely to offer electives than undergraduate courses – we found only four institutions currently advertising optional units that specifically mention rural education. These all appear to be focused upon preparing teachers to work in rural settings. Post-graduate Master of Education electives designed for practising teachers are often available to pre-service teachers, and we found these four institutions offering such units.

Students in one institution, for instance, can elect to take a postgraduate elective focussed on 'teaching in rural and remote locations', where they can:

> *further develop their knowledge of the pressure faced by rural schools to attract and retain quality teachers [...] re-examine the teacher education curriculum and focus on ways to prepare teachers more effectively for rural and regional communities. Students will also develop further understanding of rural teacher identity, rural students' lives and the impact this has on their learning. Students will obtain the skills to be school ready by taking a whole school focus: understanding rural teacher identity and teachers' work.*[9]

Another offers an elective unit that sees the rural as "a unique professional context"[10], while a third offers a context-focussed elective unit, claiming to be "well suited to teachers, principals, community and other educational workers." Here, students:

> *... examine notions of place including 'rurality', at both the local and global level as it relates to education policy development, reform and community resourcing. [...] Students apply ideas around leadership to identify the opportunities and challenges of living and working in local, rural and regional contexts and strategies.*[11]

Finally, students in the fourth institution are offered a focussed *Place-Based Elective* unit fully directed towards rural teaching. Importantly, this unit is offered alongside another, *Place-Based Elective (Indigenous),* whose academic component provides "students interested in teaching in either regional or remote areas of Australia with an opportunity to develop expertise in working with Indigenous students and community".[12] This subject includes both a rural practicum and an on-campus component "provid[ing] students with opportunities to explore and reflect upon the unique challenges and opportunities for teaching and learning in rural/remote settings[13].

The Rural Practicum: Professional Experience in Rural Locations

The importance of practical experience in rural places has been well established in our literature review, above, and as we go on to argue, the development of policy frameworks in this area has led to a dramatic increase in the opportunities for students to experience rural teaching in recent years. We make the point here, though, that none of the institutions where we were able to find elective options for ITE students to access some sort of preparation for rural contexts are located in the states with the largest number of rural/remote schools and students.

---

[9] https://study.unisa.edu.au/courses/150250
[10] https://www3.monash.edu/pubs/2019handbooks/units/EDF5662.html
[11] https://www3.monash.edu/pubs/2019handbooks/units/EDF5662.html
[12] https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/2021/subjects/educ90919
[13] https://www.uts.edu.au/about/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences/life-fass-lane/our-students/student-articles/rural-placement

We found evidence of a range of strategies across states and institutions that are aimed at increasing students' potential interest in rural teaching, although information about the role of professional experience in preparing teachers for rural communities was somewhat opaque. One institution promotes rural teaching in an 'advertorial' at course level, for instance, although the story suggests this was a serendipitous result of student agency rather than course promotion:

> *I loved the idea of teaching in the country [but] was terrified of the prospect of ending up being placed at a school in the country with no prior experience. That is why I asked the Placement office if I could do one of my Professional Experience blocks at a small school.*[14]

Table 1 clearly notes an increasing tendency to offer a rural practicum placement for pre-service teachers, with around 66% advertising this on their placement sites. In addition, several regional institutions also promote opportunities for a rural practicum placement on their course sites.

In the absence of a rural-focused curriculum, though, this might be seen as a process of 'ticking the rural box' to meet state education policy demands that are not in line with any demands in state teacher education policy – and without real consideration of, or commitment to, rural teacher education. Universities find the school practicum placement itself 'hard to staff' in terms of finding schools for students to practise in (Le Cornu, 2016), and as it is itself a compulsory requirement for all current teacher education course and graduate accreditation, a rural placement can be seen by universities as an 'easy solution' to reducing the number of students needing to be placed in city schools, while conveniently addressing the policy need to address the rural teacher shortage. This is particularly the case while state departments are willing to contribute significantly to the costs of such opportunities. We found only one (regional) institution forthright in its advice to potential students in this regard, indicating from the start that *All UNE teacher education students will be expected to travel for placement.*[15] Even here, though, the language used leaves room for ambiguity relating to whether that travel must be to a rural location.

All pre-service teachers must experience a diversity of teaching placements during their preparation (AITSL 2021), and some states specify that this must be in at least two schools (NESA, 2017). We found two institutions which recommended that placements in rural settings were available, and should be taken if possible, although this was not compulsory. Another three institutions offered optional placement units specifically focused on rural locations, and one had a mandatory 'diversity' placement

> *intended to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to cope in an environment different to the one they experienced on their first placement. Third year placements should be outside the local region but within NSW, or alternatively can be Interstate or International.*[16]

We are aware from the literature that many universities will allow a rural placement, often in students' later years or for specific projects (Cuervo & Acquaro, 2018), with some of these supported by State or Territory department scholarships, such as in Victoria,[17] and WA.[18] Similarly, some state jurisdictions offer experiential 'tours', which are well subsidised, although, like the generous scholarships offered for full programs to pre-service teachers willing to teach in rural areas, we generally did not find them

---

[14] https://www.uts.edu.au/about/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences/life-fass-lane/our-students/student-articles/rural-placement
[15] https://www.une.edu.au/about-une/faculty-of-humanities-arts-social-sciences-and-education/school-of-
[16] https://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/professional-experience-and-wil/education/before-the-placement/more-information/diversity-placements
[17] https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/intteached.aspx
[18] https://www.education.wa.edu.au/country-practicum-program

highlighted in course documentation. One institution, however, advertises a program run in another state for its students. [19]

The issue here is that such opportunities are not promoted or positioned in official unit material and, as such, rely on students actively seeking this information. At base, rural practicum placements remain optional activities for already-interested students to self-nominate for, and even so they are often portrayed from a metronormative perspective – as particularly challenging.

Discussion: Negating the complexity of the rural and playing fair with rural students.

In framing this discussion, we return to the introductory story of Nicole, to highlight our argument that pre-service curriculum that helps new teachers to meet these challenges should not be an optional extra. Our analysis identified a stark absence of subjects that would help prepare Nicole for her teaching practice, in contrast to persistent calls for such units in Australian pre-service teacher education (Halsey, 2018; NSW DET 2013; Paul 2022, p. 41). One notable finding is that any attention to 'rurality' arises in the context of units related to 'social diversity'. As noted above, within the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL, 2011/2021), with which all ITE programs must align, there is no reference to 'rural', only to students with 'diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds'. Rural teaching is absent from, and ignored by, mainstream education. Reinforcing the metro-centric understanding of education that dominates Australian education (Roberts & Green, 2013), this sets up a pre-condition where, even if they are discussed by teacher educators, rural schools and students are represented in relation to this assumed norm. In all bar three of the units we examined, 'rural' was simply a listed difference or an educational challenge. Outcomes for one unit on "addressing challenges in educational environments" included the goal that "pre-service teachers demonstrate […] their knowledge and skills when planning teaching and learning for a diverse range of students including Indigenous students, students with disability, rural and remote students, students from an EAL/D background and gifted and talented students"[20].

This reflects a deficit orientation, highlighting the 'challenges' and ignoring the complexity and affordances of rural places (Reid et al., 2010), and instead effectively opting to reinforce often outdated and inaccurate views. Ultimately, such positioning of the rural means that even if Nicole had been fortunate enough to have encountered an ITE unit preparing her to teach in a rural school, it would have been in the context of overcoming some form of disadvantage. With due acknowledgement of the few exceptions we have noted here, our analysis shows that the educational needs of a significant number of primary and secondary teachers around the country are being ignored. This is a result of the overwhelmingly metro-centric focus of ITE and the teaching standards it aims to satisfy – and the resulting narrowness of existing practice within teacher education curriculum.

As Australia's first national teacher workforce data report (AITSL 2022a) has shown, one third of Australia's teachers are currently working in rural, regional and remote schools. Like Nicole, they have not been well prepared – having experienced the rural presented in policy, and in their preparation, as just another of the listed challenges for beginning teachers. We argue that this is a category mistake. Students living in regional, rural or remote locations are not analogous to the "Indigenous students, students with disability, […] students

---

[19] https://www.utas.edu.au/education/professional-experience/alternative-placements
[20] https://www.canberra.edu.au/coursesandunits/unit?unit_cd=9857

from an EAL/D background and gifted and talented students" covered in ITE diversity units. As individuals, they may have more than one of these policy 'labels', and as class and school groups, they may have all of them together. Rural teachers are far more likely than metropolitan teachers to experience the need to prepare for and teach all these students together. Like Nicole and her colleagues in Utopia Plains, they are far more likely to be teaching 'out of field', needing to prepare and teach in areas where they have little background knowledge of content, while catering for the particular additional physical, linguistic, emotional, cognitive, or behavioural needs of their students. Without a confident understanding of the effects of the history and relationships of their particular rural location (Green and Reid, 2020), they are destined to reproduce a metronormative curriculum that overlooks the affordances of place and the social and knowledge assets that their students can bring to their learning if their teachers can tap into them respectfully and appropriately.

In NSW, there are approximately 24,000 students with confirmed additional needs (NSWDET, 2019). Each of these students warrants and deserves teachers who have been prepared for meeting their needs. Demonstrated capacity to be able to do this is a Standard that must be met by all Graduate Teachers (AITSL, 2011/21). Yet in NSW there are around 126,000 students in rural government schools like Utopia Plains (NSWDET, 2020), and as we have noted above, nearly one-third of school-aged children across Australia live in regional, rural or remote locations (AITSL 2021a). We ask why there is not a mandatory focus on their needs, and an ITE preparation for their teachers that will prepare them for living and working in their schools.

Conclusion

This review and analysis has highlighted the continued lack of engagement with rural and remote schooling in Australian pre-service teacher education, and demonstrates the inadequacy of teacher education standards and curricula that do not attend to the situation of rural and remote schools in this country. Because all teachers, and all teacher education courses, must be accredited against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011/2021), and all graduates must be assessed according to these Standards, commonalities across courses can be assumed. In the economy of the Higher Education market, too, ITE courses are comparable in length, with few producing graduates who have more than the minimum ITE curriculum content and school placement/practicum requirements outlined in the AITSL Program Standards (AITSL, 2015). Distinction is therefore bestowed on the basis of university ranking rather than particular course content. Although market attractors such as online study, multiple ('double' or 'combined' degree) credentialling, overseas study opportunities or flexible scheduling provide some other forms of differentiation between universities, the existence of compulsory course accreditation, and compulsory national testing of basic English literacy and numeracy skills among teaching candidates, aims to ensure consistency of course offering and addresses historical concerns about the 'quality' of teachers.

Such homogeneity and standardisation, we argue, centres on the needs of the majority metropolitan schooling population, idealised as the 'norm' within both the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011/2021) and AITSL's (2015) ITE Program Standards. The virtual absence of preparation for these contexts illustrates the dominance of one understanding of schooling rooted in metro-centric understandings of education. This fails to include the diversity of environments that rural teachers work in and actively serves to produce and maintain rural students as subjects of disadvantage.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2016). 1270.0.55.005 - Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 5 – Remoteness Structure, July 2016. Retrieved from: https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.005

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019). 3218.0 - Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2017-18. Retrieved from: https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3218.02017-18?OpenDocument

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2011/2021). *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Retrieved from: https://www.aitsl.edu.au/standards

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) (2015). *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia.* Retrieved from: https://www.aitsl.edu.au/deliver-ite-programs/standards-and-procedures

Azano, A. P., Brenner, D., Downey, L., Eppley, K., & Schulte, A. K. (2021). *Teaching in Rural Places: Thriving in Classrooms, Schools, and Communities*. New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003106357

Beutel, D., Adie, L., & Hudson, S. (2011). Promoting rural and remote teacher education in Australia through the Over the Hill project. *International Journal of Learning*, *18*(2), 377-388. https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v18i02/47484

Boylan, C. (2004). *Putting rural into pre-service teacher education*. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference. Brisbane.

Boylan, C. (2008). Rural Teacher Education: A Literature Review. In B. Green (Ed.), *Spaces & Places: The NSW Rural (Teacher) Education Projec*t. (pp. 23-46). Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University.

Boylan, C. (2010). *Preparing teachers to teach in rural schools: An Australian perspective*. Paper presented at the British Education Research Association Conference. Retrieved from https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/9699090/PID24446manuscript.pdf

Burles, M. C., & Bally, J. M. (2018). Ethical, practical, and methodological considerations for unobtrusive qualitative research about personal narratives shared on the internet. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918788203

Burke, P. F., & Buchanan, J. (2022). "What Attracts Teachers to Rural and Remote Schools? Incentivizing Teachers' Employment Choices in New South Wales", *Australian Journal of Education*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00049441211066357

Carter, B. (2012). Facilitating preservice teacher induction through learning in partnership. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *37*(2), 7. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2012v37n2.1

Commonwealth Schools Commission (1988). *Schooling in Rural Australia*. Curriculum Development Centre.

Craven, G., Beswick, K., Fleming, J., Fletcher, T., Green, M., Jensen, B., ... & Rickards, F. (2014). *Action now: Classroom ready teachers—Report of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group* (TEMAG). Department of Education and Training.

Cuervo, H., & Acquaro, D. (2018). Exploring metropolitan university pre-service teacher motivations and barriers to teaching in rural schools. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 46(4), 384-398. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2018.1438586

Downes, N., & Roberts, P. (2018). Revisiting the schoolhouse: A literature review on staffing rural, remote and isolated schools in Australia 2004-2016. *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education,* 28(1), 31-54.

Gibson, I.W., & King, S. (1998). Preparing for rural teaching: A national survey of Australia's efforts in providing appropriately trained teachers for rural and isolated communities [Conference paper].14th SPERA conference, Alice Springs.

Green, B. (Ed.) (2008). *Places and Spaces: The NSW Rural [Teacher] Education Project*. Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University.

Green, B. (2013). Literacy, rurality, education: A partial mapping. In M. Corbett [Ed.], *Rethinking Rural Literacies* (pp. 17-34). Palgrave Macmillan, New York. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137275493_2

Green, B., & Letts, W. (2007). Space, equity, and rural education: A 'trialectical' account. In K. N. Gulson & C. Symes (Eds), *Spatial Theories of Education: Policy and geography matters* (pp. 57-76). New York: Routledge.

Green, B., & Reid, J. (2004). Teacher education for rural–regional sustainability: changing agendas, challenging futures, chasing chimeras?. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *32*(3), 255-273. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866042000295415

Green, B., & Reid, J. (2012). A new teacher for a new nation? Teacher education, 'English', and schooling in early twentieth-century Australia, *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 44(4), 361-379. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2012.713927

Halsey, J. (2005). Pre-service country teaching in Australia: What's happening—what needs to happen? [Conference paper]. 21st SPERA Conference. Darwin.

Halsey, J. (2018). *Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education – Final Report.* Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from: https://docs.education.gov.au/node/50281

Hudson, P., & Hudson, S. (2008). Changing preservice teachers' attitudes for teaching in rural schools. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(4), 67-77. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2008v33n4.6

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) (2000). *Recommendations: National Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education.* HREOC.

Le Cornu, R. (2015). *Key components of effective professional experience in initial teacher education in Australia.* Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, Melbourne. https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/aitsl_key-components-of-effective-professional-experience.pdf

McConaghy, C., & Bloomfield, D. (2004). Beyond the line/beyond the self: Flirting with rural teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Theorising [JCT]*, *20*(3), 93.

NESA [NSW Education Standards Authority] (2017). Professional Experience in Initial Teacher Education Policy. https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/ nesa/teacher-accreditation/resources/policies-procedures/professional-experience-in-initial-teacher-education

NESA [NSW Education Standards Authority] (2021). *Initial Teacher Education: Providers*. https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/teacher-accreditation/teaching-qualifications/initial-teacher-education-providers

NSW Department of Education and Training (2013). *Rural and Remote Education – a Blueprint for Action.* https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/media/documents/Rural-and-Remote-Education-Blueprint-accessible.pdf.

NSW Department of Education (2019). *Progress Report: Improving Outcomes for students with disability 2019*, NSW Government, https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/our-disability-strategy/disability-progress-report

NSW Department of Education (2019a). *Annual Report to Parliament.* https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/en/home/about-us/strategies-and-reports/annual-reports/2019-annual-report.pdf

NSW Department of Education (2020). *Rural and Remote NSW Public Schools*. teach.NSW. https://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/exploreteaching/high-demand-rural-locations/rural-and-remote-school-list.

NSW Department of Education (2021a) *Rural and Remote Education Strategy 2021-24*. https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/rural-and-remote-education-strategy-2021-24

NSW Department of Education (2021b) *Review of Rural and Remote Incentives Report.* https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/review-of-rural-remote-incentives-report

Paul, L. [Expert Panel Chair] (2022). *Next Steps: Report of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review.* Final report of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review, conducted in 2021 by an Expert Panel. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-initial-teacher-education-review/resources/next-steps-report-quality-initial-teacher-education-review

Rawlinson, R.W. (1984). *Listening and Responding: A Review of Education in Rural New South Wales.* Education Commission of New South Wales.

Reid, J. White, S., Lock, G., Cooper, M., and Hastings, W. (2012). *TERRAnova: Renewing Rural teacher Education for Rural and Regional Australia. Volume – Project Report*. Charles Sturt University Press.

Reid, J., Green, B., Cooper, M., Hastings, W., Lock, G., & White, S. (2010). Regenerating rural social space? Teacher education for rural-regional sustainability. *Australian Journal of Education*, 54(3), 262-267. https://doi.org/10.1177/000494411005400304

Roberts, P. (2004). *Staffing an Empty Schoolhouse: Attracting and Retaining Teachers in Rural, Remote and Isolated Communities*. Sydney: NSW Teachers Federation.

Roberts, P., & Green, B. (2013). Researching rural place: On social justice and rural education, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 19(10), 765-774. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413503795

Roberts, P., & Downes, N. (2020). *Incentivising the Profession: A national mapping of incentives to attract and retain staff in Australian non-metropolitan communities*. Centre for Sustainable Communities.

Warrell, J.G., & Jacobsen, M. (2014). Internet Research Ethics and the Policy Gap for Ethical Practice in Online Research Settings. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 44(1), 22-37. https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v44i1.2594

Watson, A. (1988). Professional development in rural schools: A case study of teacher satisfaction and interests. In D. Reeves (Ed.), *Rural Communities: Determining their future.* 4th Annual SPERA Conference. Toowoomba: SPERA.

White, S. (2019). Recruiting, retaining and supporting early career teachers for rural schools. In A. Sullivan, B. Johnson, & M. Simons [Eds], *Attracting and keeping the best teachers* (pp. 143-159). Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-8621-3_8

White, S., Kline, J., Hastings, W., & Lock, G. (2011). *Renewing rural and regional teacher education curriculum*. Australian Teaching and Learning Council. http://www.rrrtec.net.au

White, S., Reid, J., Lock, G., Hastings, W., & Green, W. (2008). Teacher education for rural communities: A focus on 'incentives'. In T. Aspland (Ed.), *ATEA 2008: Teacher Educators at Work: What works and where is the evidence?* Proceedings of the 2008 Australian Teacher Education Association Conference, Melbourne: Australian Teacher Education Association. https://dro.deakin.edu.au/view/DU:30018117.