

... teach primary, middle or intermediate, and secondary school students with learning difficulties, hearing impairment and sight impairment, and promote students' social, emotional, intellectual and physical development.

Indicative Skill Level

Most occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. In some instances relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1).

Skilled Occupation Criteria

Long-lead time

Special Education Teachers meet the criteria for long lead time, as entry to this occupation requires a substantial training commitment.

- ▶ Employment as a Special Education Teacher requires the completion of a three year undergraduate degree plus a teacher education course (such as a Graduate Diploma in Education); a four or five year double-degree program such as a Bachelor of Education (Special Education); or an integrated program which includes subject content studies as well as Teacher Education. Each of these options requires a minimum commitment of four years from enrolment to completion (full-time equivalent).

High use

Special Education Teachers meet the criteria for high use, showing that the skills which people have acquired through education and training are being deployed for the uses intended.

- ▶ Based on advice from Universities Australia, university courses in teaching have a strong degree of match with eventual employment in teaching occupations.
- ▶ Of new graduates employed as Special Education Teachers, 85% had studied in a related field, such as teacher education, curriculum and education studies or other education areas (*Australian Graduate Survey, 2009*).
- ▶ As professionals, Special Education Teachers are expected to have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. Of those employed as Special Education Teachers, 87% were found to possess this level of skill (*ABS Survey of Education and Work, 2010*).¹

High risk

Special Education Teachers also meet the criteria for high risk/high disruption. This indicates that the occupation is important for the effective operation of an enterprise and/or the broader economy.

- ▶ Special Education Teachers are required to be registered before they can teach. In some states and territories, a police check may also be needed prior to employment. Teachers are also required to provide proof of Australian citizenship or permanent residency.
- ▶ Special Education Teachers are important to meet government policy priorities at both the Commonwealth and state level. These include improving the teaching of students with

¹ Analysis for the Skilled Occupations List (SOL) was conducted using the latest available data, including the 2010 ABS Survey of Education and Work (SEW). Percentages may therefore differ from those cited in the 'Occupation Trends' analysis (over the page), which uses alternative sources in some instances (e.g. the 2008 ABS Survey of Education and Work). Small sample sizes for some occupations may also result in fluctuations in the SEW data between 2008 and 2010. The specific data sources used for the Occupation Trends analysis can be found on the Skills Australia website: <http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/SOLsummarysheets.shtml>.

special needs, improving foundational skills in literacy and numeracy and implementing innovative strategies for small and remote schools.

Occupation trends

ANZSCO: 2415

Special Education Teachers

Employment level	18,100 More than half of workers (56.8%) are employed full-time.
6 digit employment (2006 Census)	241511 Special Needs Teacher 11,810 241512 Teacher of the Hearing Impaired 880 241513 Teacher of the Sight Impaired 220 241599 Special Education Teachers, nec 740
Employment growth	Over the five years to August 2010, employment increased by 29.5% (compared with growth of 12.1% for all occupations). Employment is expected to rise by 22.3% over the next five years (compared with projected growth of 9.5% for all occupations).
Unemployment rate	Average (around 3.4%) compared with all occupations.
Educational profile	Around 85.8% have a Bachelor degree or higher qualification.
Vacancies	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) rose by 100.0% over the 12 months to September 2010 to 136.9 (March 2006=100). Vacancies for all occupations increased by 19.4%.
Gender	Around 81.3% of workers are female (compared with 45.4% for all occupations).
Labour turnover	Around 8.9% of workers leave this occupation in a year compared with 13.1% for all occupations.
Age profile	The median age is 44.8 years and 50.7% are aged 45 years and over (compared with 38.5% for all occupations).
Earnings	Median full-time weekly earnings (before tax) are above average (\$1306).
Graduate outcomes	Graduate Careers Australia data show that in the field of education (not disaggregated into early childhood, primary and secondary), 89% of initial graduates were working full-time four months after graduating, 86% of whom were employed as Education Professionals.
Skill shortages	This occupation was assessed as being in national shortage in 2009 but shortages were not evident in 2010. However, some employers experienced difficulty recruiting teachers with qualifications in special needs teaching who had particular experience, for example working with students with autism.

Labour market

241511 Special Needs Teacher: Shortages were not evident in 2010 but the recruitment experience of employers seeking Special Needs Teachers continued to vary markedly. Most employers filled their vacancies relatively easily and, overall, 83% of surveyed vacancies were filled. Some employers attracted multiple suitable applicants but others did not receive any applications. On average, nationally, there were 1.9 suitable applicants per vacancy. Recruitment was more difficult for regional employers than it was for those in metropolitan locations.

Employers who were unable to recruit suitable candidates generally required formal qualifications in special needs teaching and, in addition, sought experience teaching particular special needs students, such as those with autism or behaviour problems. The range of particular experience being sought varied across states and territories.

Employer contacts indicated a lack of qualifications in special needs teaching was a major reason applicants for advertised vacancies were considered to be unsuitable.

241512 Teacher of the Hearing Impaired: Not assessed.

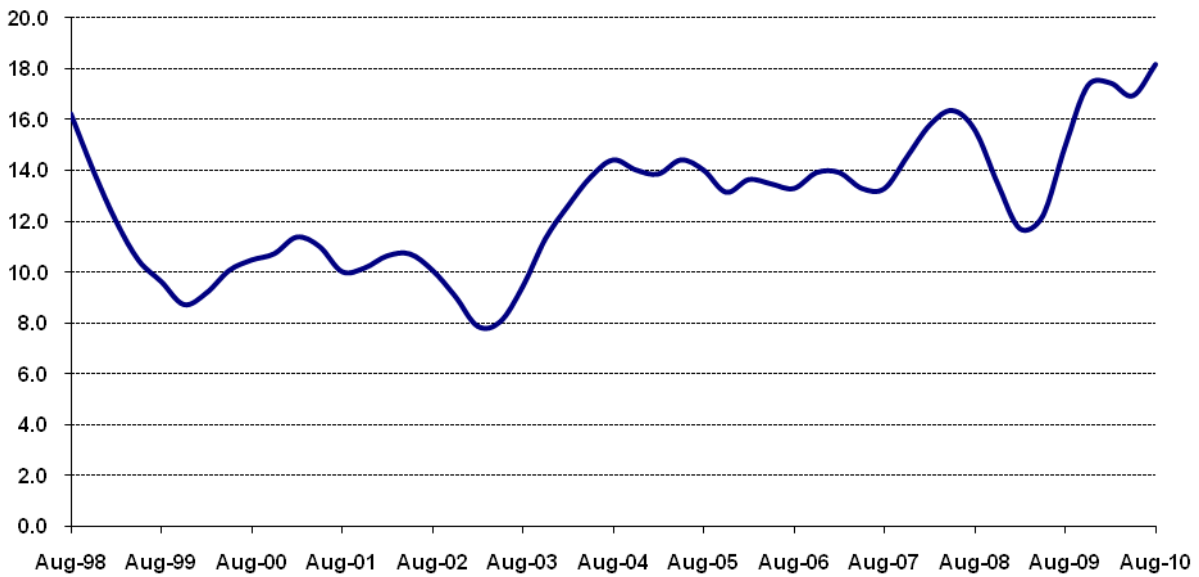
241513 Teacher of the Sight Impaired: Not assessed.

241599 Special Education Teachers, nec: Not assessed.

Summary

Recruitment difficulties are evident for a small number of positions which require particular experience in addition to formal special needs teaching qualifications, but shortages are not widespread. Employment growth over the past five years has been strong and further strong growth is expected over the next five years. A significant proportion of the workforce is employed part-time and the unemployment rate is about average, but half the workforce is aged 45 years or older. The strong projected employment growth and relatively old age profile of the special needs teacher workforce suggest there will be significant demand to meet the needs of new jobs and for replacement of teachers who retire over the next few years. Advertised vacancy levels are rising.

Special Education Teachers
Employed Persons ('000s) Aug 1998 to Aug 2010



Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) - 3 Monthly Average - Nov 2006 - Sept 2010
Special Education Teachers (March 2006 = 100)

