Teacher career trajectories and aspirations in context: A mixed methods study of second-stage teachers in New South Wales

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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2016
Author's Declaration

This is to certify that:

I. this thesis comprises only my original work towards the Doctor of Philosophy Degree
II. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used
III. the thesis does not exceed the word length for this degree.
IV. no part of this work has been used for the award of another degree.
V. this thesis meets the University of Sydney’s Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) requirements for the conduct of research.

Signature(s): ____________________________

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Date: March 2016
Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to describe, interpret and explain the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in New South Wales and to identify the key contextual factors influencing their careers. Successive government reforms targeting teacher quality and professionalism have significantly shifted the work landscape for teachers. The concept of ‘career’ provides a useful conceptual lens through which to analyse teachers’ work patterns and goals. Recent studies suggest that some teachers are redefining what it means to have a teaching career and seeking alternative trajectories that may expand their job roles (Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, & Kardos, 2001; Rinke, 2009, 2011; Rippon, 2005; Smethem, 2007). Whilst levels of teacher attrition are described as having “reached epidemic proportions” in Australia, the U.S and U.K (Gallant & Riley, 2014, p. 562), current research has given insufficient attention to the within-career issues that shape teacher career decision-making (Buchanan, 2009b; Clandinin et al., 2015; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016). Whereas beginning teachers have had considerable research attention, this thesis examined ‘second-stage teachers’ in their fourth to tenth year of teaching (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). Having overcome their early survival concerns, second-stage teachers shift focus to the future and contemplate how, if at all, they might develop a teaching career.

This study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design, wherein both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in parallel, analysed separately and finally integrated. This study had three data sets: policy documents, workforce statistics and semi-structured interviews with twenty-four second-stage teachers representing a range of ages and school levels, sectors and locations. This cohort of teachers is the first generation for whom compulsory Standards and accreditation has applied under the New Scheme system.

This thesis offers two original contributions to the knowledge base. Firstly, this thesis identifies six specific career trajectories that second-stage teachers aspire to, recognising these as different roles that teachers may shift between rather than pre-determined pathways. The model presented here offers a more nuanced understanding of teacher retention/attrition that extends beyond classifying teachers as stayers/leavers. Secondly, this thesis brings to light three key contextual factors that influence second-stage teachers’ careers: professional cultures amongst teachers, the current status of teaching and the practical implementation and enactment of policy agendas. The thesis concludes by highlighting points of convergence and divergence within the data to show how the current policy context is not well aligned with second-stage teachers’ lived career experiences.
Acknowledgements

Whilst this thesis bears my name alone, there are of course many others whose contributions helped to shape my doctoral adventure.

My thanks are first due to my wonderful supervisors, Dr Susan Colmar and Associate Professor Dianne Bloomfield. Thank you both for the many hours of your time spent listening as I slowly developed my ideas, for your astute guidance and for having faith in my project from the beginning. Thank you also for your generous help with editing and proofreading the final text. Your wisdom, ongoing support and encouragement made the supervisory part of my doctoral apprenticeship an absolute pleasure.

The Faculty of Education and Social Work was vital in helping me to complete this study. I am grateful for the provision of a quiet office space in which to work (something I know many doctoral students do not have) and I cherish the hours spent alone there analysing my data and pondering each sentence. In particular, the early guidance of Professor Gabrielle Meagher in her writing workshops really helped me to see the ‘big picture’ of research and take on the identity of being a writer and scholar. Through Dr Rachel Wilson’s coursework subjects I developed my knowledge of research methods and data analytic skills that were invaluable in translating my research proposal into action. Thank you both for being generous with your time and helping me to shape the early little ideas that grew into a big thesis. Thanks also to Associate Professor Jennifer Way, Professor Janette Bobis and Ms Kate Smyth, who employed me as a tutor and sessional lecturer during my doctoral candidacy.

Several institutional supporters also made this thesis possible. Firstly, I received an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) Scholarship from 2012-2015, funded by the Commonwealth Government, and this was fundamental in enabling me to undertake the study. Further, I would like to thank the former NSW Institute of Teachers (now part of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards) for providing access to secondary data through the Government Information (Public Access) Act. I would like to thank the NSW division of TeachMeet for graciously allowing me to recruit interview participants through their teacher database. My deep thanks to the twenty-four teachers who generously shared their career stories with me and generated invaluable data for this thesis.
Next, to the ‘doctors’ in my life who were my role models and encouragers. In particular, Dr Phil Lambert and Dr Warren Marks were incredibly important in helping me to see the doors that could open through having a PhD. Both trusted in my research abilities long before I did, and this had a profound impact upon my confidence. Dr Kate Pearcy and Dr Lisa Ford, both of whose children I had the privilege to teach at Australia Street Infants School, were kind enough to share their personal doctoral stories with me and encourage me to take the leap of faith into the PhD program.

Early on in my candidature, I joined a PhD student support group, initiated by fellow PhD colleagues Kate Bokan-Smith and Carrie Hayter. I can honestly say if I hadn’t gone along to that group my doctoral experience would have been very different indeed. In particular, the writing companionship of Pamela Joseph, Kristy O’Neill and Janet Rangou was invaluable in the final year as we met for our weekly ‘shut up and write’ sessions. I doubt this thesis would have been completed without so many Saturdays spent in study room 205 of Fisher Library, where we engaged in silent parallel writing, punctuated with spirited discussions about all aspects of PhD life. Every PhD student should be part of a writing group as caring (and productive!) as this.

In learning to become a scholarly writer, I am indebted to the following authors and their texts: ‘Helping doctoral students write’ (Barbara Kamler and Pat Thomson), ‘Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day’ (Joan Bolker), ‘How to write a lot’ (Paul Silvia) and ‘How to write a better thesis’ (David Evans, Paul Gruba and Justin Zobel). These books were my constant writing companions and the source of invaluable insights.

Finally, this thesis is tangible proof of the love of my family and friends. My thanks go to my parents, who taught me the value of education and working hard, and that it was ok to prefer to spend my weekends in the library rather than at the beach or cinema! My wonderful friends Katrina Thomlinson, Jennifer Dunnet and Jacqueline Charles listened to me babble on about my thesis and put up with my frequent absences. Lastly, my ever-patient and long-suffering husband, Jara, who didn’t flinch when I said I wanted to return to study (yet again!), with only a vague plan of how to make it work. Your unwavering support, love and reassurance made all the difference at critical points in my doctoral journey. I can’t wait to see what our next adventure together will be in post-PhD life. I promise to try to bring fewer books (but not fewer shoes).
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Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis seeks to capture the complexity and diversity of second-stage teachers’ careers. The expression ‘teacher career trajectory’ evokes many stereotypical images and ideas that a closer examination of contemporary career patterns calls into question. The policy and organisational landscape of the New South Wales (NSW) education system creates significant challenges for the career goals and ideals held by second-stage teachers. This context profoundly impacts the extent to which career aspirations are either enabled or disabled for many thousands of teachers.

Context

Concerns about teachers’ careers have long been framed around the central issue of teacher retention and attrition. In fact, levels of teacher attrition are described as having “reached epidemic proportions” (Gallant & Riley, 2014, p. 562). In Australia, it is estimated that approximately twenty-five percent of teachers leave within their first year and up to forty percent leave within their first five years (Riley & Gallant, 2010). These figures are consistent with numbers in both the US (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013, p. 22) and the UK (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006, p. 1), although there exists greater variability in other countries (OECD, 2005, p. 171). At the same time, the total number of Australian school students is expected to increase by one-quarter in the next decade (Productivity Commission, 2012, p. 58). The teaching workforce is ageing and doing so far more rapidly than the wider workforce (p. 55). Moreover, there are persistent imbalances in the demand and supply of teachers across different school levels, subject areas and geographic locations.

However, recent research suggests the need to broaden this debate to include teacher career decision-making and professional trajectories. Teaching differs from other comparable professions in that it lacks sufficient and clearly defined career paths (Dinham, 2011; Skilbeck & Connell, 2004). Global changes to work and career habits mean that teaching must compete against many other professions to attract and retain quality staff (Mayer, 2006) and to offer teachers ample diversity of workplace opportunities (Peske et al., 2001; Rinke, 2011; Smethem, 2007). Beyond established patterns of retention and attrition, there is emerging evidence that today’s teaching careers are less linear and more likely to include a variety of roles beyond classroom
The notion of teaching as a ‘career’ is a relatively recent phenomenon. Historically, teaching was considered to be “career-less” because it appeared to lack the scope for upwards advancement and promotion that defined the very “essence of career” (Lortie, 1975, p. 84). Women have long been and continue to comprise the vast majority of teachers, further contributing to the image of teaching as incompatible with career. Historically, the absence of men from the classroom positioned teaching as low-status work, destined to be “identified in the public mind as a ‘woman’s profession’” (M. Lieberman, 1956, p. 253). Even as teacher education became embedded in universities and teacher salaries and conditions gradually improved, teaching was still considered to be a “second-rate profession” (Morrish, 1978, p. 234) or a “would-be profession” (Geer, 1966, p. 31). Teachers were viewed as lacking the commitment necessary to make teaching a “real profession” because so few of them approached it as “an uninterrupted, lifelong career” (p. 32). Classroom teaching as a profession was thus limited by discontinuous work patterns for both women (typically through childrearing) and men (typically through advancement).

Successive federal government reports focused on the development of written standards as fundamental in the quest to ‘professionalise’ and improve the status of teaching (Crowley, 1998; Dawkins, 1990; Dow, 2003; Karmel, 1973). In NSW, this argument was reiterated by Ramsey (2000), who emphasised that teaching was “not yet” a profession because there were no formal standards to articulate teacher practice and teachers lacked any accountability beyond basic competency (p. 31). Professional Standards, registration and certification processes were introduced and applied in NSW to a select group of teachers in 2004 (NSWIT, 2004), with a shift towards national standards in 2011 (AITSL, 2011). This is linked to a broader discourse around the relationship between student outcomes and teacher ‘quality’ (AITSL, 2012b; COAG, 2008; MCEETYA, 2008). The development of Standards frameworks for teachers has been echoed across the globe, including in the US, UK, Chile, Mexico and New Zealand (OECD, 2013).

**Statement of the problem**

The study of teachers’ work lives is a well-established niche within the field of educational research (S. J. Ball, 2003; Connell, 1985, 2009b; Goodson, 1994; Lingard,
The ‘career’ is one important conceptual lens through which to analyse teachers’ work patterns and goals. The ‘teacher career cycle’ model (Huberman, 1989) and the ‘teacher professional life phase’ model (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007) are two existing comprehensive career stage models that offer useful conceptual frameworks for thinking about teachers’ careers. Classic studies typically concentrate on either the “horizontal” or sideways career moves that teachers take (Becker, 1952; McLaughlin & Yee, 1988) or the “vertical” moves towards promotion that a relatively small proportion of teachers take (Lortie, 1975; MacLean, 1992). Responding to significant shifts in the work landscape, recent research into teachers’ careers has sought to capture the ways in which today’s teachers make career decisions and determine their professional priorities by developing new career trajectories – ones that do not necessarily fit either distinctive horizontal or vertical pathways. Influencing these more complex conceptualisations, a cluster of recent studies (Margolis, 2008; Peske et al., 2001; Rinke, 2009; Rippon, 2005; Smethem, 2007) suggest that teaching needs to evolve beyond its current classroom-bound definition. Many of the teachers in these studies are seeking neither traditional horizontal roles, nor vertical pathways towards the Principalship. Rather, these teachers are seeking alternative trajectories that might enable them to remain connected to the classroom whilst expanding their teaching roles.

There is already an extensive body of research into the challenges faced by pre-service and early career teachers. However, mid-career teachers have received comparatively little research attention. The limited literature suggests that mid-career teachers have unique concerns that differ from their beginner colleagues. Within the mid-career group is a particular cohort of teachers known in the literature as “second-stage teachers”. As part of the Harvard ‘Project on the Next Generation of Teachers’, Susan Moore Johnson has led a team of researchers to investigate second-stage teachers, defined as having 4-10 years’ experience and as having usually secured tenure (S. M. Johnson, 2009). Second-stage teachers are distinguished from their early career counterparts in two main ways. Firstly, they recognise their daily experience of teaching as being markedly different from their beginning years and are aware of their emerging sense of competence and confidence in the classroom (Charner-laird, 2007). Secondly, because they are no longer concentrating on ‘surviving’ the present, second-stage teachers start to take a broader view of their work as they “consider the future and wonder whether they can develop a career in teaching” (Donaldson et al., 2008, p. 4).
To date, there have been no recorded studies of second-stage teachers conducted within an Australian context. Furthermore, in their recent examination of the literature on teachers’ career trajectories, Rolls and Plauborg (2009) contend that existing frameworks for conceptualising teachers’ careers are not sufficient to capture the diversity and complexity of teachers’ career patterns in the twenty-first century. They argue that further research into teachers is needed to “re-conceptualise the term career trajectories in such a way that it reflects the complexity of contemporary career patterns” (p. 26). The present study was undertaken in an effort to contribute to that challenge, with an emphasis on the experiences and aspirations of Australian second-stage teachers within the state of NSW.

At the same time, the policy and organisational context for teachers has undergone significant changes in recent years. Since 2004, the ‘New Scheme’ system has introduced Standards, registration and certification processes that have applied to certain teachers in NSW. All second-stage teachers are a part of the New Scheme system. Additionally, the Standards and associated measures are increasingly being tied with salary progression and, from 2018, will be expanded to apply to all teachers (NSWDEC, 2013, 2014b). Having recently reached the tenth anniversary of the New Scheme system, this study is a timely opportunity to consider the views of the first generation of teachers whose careers have taken place under this system.

**Aim and objectives**

The aim of this study is to describe, interpret and explain the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in NSW after the first decade of the New Scheme system. Through this in-depth investigation, the goal is to create a conceptual framework that better captures the complexity and diversity of career patterns for these teachers. This includes an exploration of the diversity of ways in which teachers’ careers are constructed and made sense of, both by individual teachers and by the organisational contexts within which they work. A convergent parallel mixed methods design was used, wherein both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from three sources, analysed separately and then merged. The study includes data in the form of policy documents, workforce statistics and semi-structured interviews with second-stage teachers. The results from the three strands converge to bring greater insights to the problem than would be obtained by any strand alone. In order to achieve this aim, the objectives of this study are to:
1. Analyse how teachers’ careers are conceptualised in current policy documents;
2. Construct a demographic picture of the NSW second-stage teacher population;
3. Gain an understanding of how second-stage teachers perceive their careers; and
4. Connect the above three lines of inquiry by looking for patterns of convergence and divergence between how teachers’ careers are constructed within policy documents and how teachers understand and make sense of their careers.

Research questions

The study is driven by the research question: *What are the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers?*

To answer the research question, several sub-questions are initially addressed:

1. How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?
2. What is the demographic context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?
3. How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?
4. How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’?
5. How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other?

The final sub-question brings together the findings from all three strands in a mixed methods interpretation. This provides the foundation for answering the main research question driving this study.

Defining key terms

The key terms in this study are defined as follows:

**Career** is defined according to Sullivan and Baruch (2009), who assert that the career is “an individual’s work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organisations, that form a unique pattern over the individual’s life span” (p. 1543).
Teachers refers to school teachers, both primary (K-6) and secondary (7-12), across all school sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent).

Standards refers to the framework of written teaching standards applied to certain teachers in NSW. These were originally known as the ‘Professional Teaching Standards’ (NSWIT, 2004) and later revised as the ‘Professional Standards for Teachers’ (NSWIT, 2012a). The Standards were first designed and administered by the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) in 2004. Their revision incorporated the development of a national framework of teaching standards from the newly established Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) (AITSL, 2011). The Board of Studies, Teaching and Education Standards (BOSTES) superseded the NSWIT in 2014. The Standards framework comprises four key stages, with each one describing, “what teachers need to know, understand and be able to do as well as providing direction and structure to support the preparation and development of teachers” (NSWIT, 2004, p. 1). The second stage, termed originally ‘Professional Competence’ and known since 2012 as ‘Proficient Teacher’, entails compulsory accreditation through the preparation and assessment of a portfolio of evidence and classroom observations. Since 2004, these Standards have been applied to all new teachers, those returning to teaching after an absence of five or more years, and all overseas- and interstate-trained teachers seeking to work in NSW. From 2018, these Standards will be expanded to apply to all teachers in NSW.

Second-stage teachers are defined as those with 4-10 years of teaching experience (S. M. Johnson, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). In the US literature, this is also accompanied by tenure. Considering the Australian context, this study will define second-stage teachers as those who are in their fourth to tenth year of teaching and have achieved the second compulsory level of accreditation within the NSW Standards framework (‘Professional Competence’ / ‘Proficient Teacher’).

New Scheme Teachers refers to all teachers to whom the Standards and accreditation system has been applied to since 2004. This is at present only a small proportion of the NSW teaching population. Currently, all second-stage teachers in NSW are also New Scheme teachers; however not all New Scheme teachers are in the second-stage of their careers.
Significance of the study

There are four intended outcomes of this study. Firstly, this study seeks to advance knowledge in the field about second-stage teachers’ careers. Relatively little is known about this population, outside of the collection of U.S. studies undertaken by Susan Moore Johnson and her team at Harvard. The conceptual framework developed from this study’s data is an attempt to expand the current knowledge base about second-stage teacher career trajectories. Secondly, this study aims to advance knowledge in the field about the New Scheme teacher workforce. The demographic data presented in this study is the first time such data has been collected or displayed. This study is timely as the New Scheme system reached its tenth anniversary in 2014 and will be expanded to all teachers in 2018. Despite being well established, relatively little is known about New Scheme teachers or their experiences. Thirdly, this study seeks to advance knowledge in the field about the content of key teacher policy documents. Teacher policy evolves at a rapid pace in Australia and this study contributes to efforts to keep up to date with an understanding of these policies. Finally, this study aspires to contribute to solving the practical problem of how best to support second-stage teachers in their career development. Given the “epidemic” problem of teacher attrition, this study is an attempt to sustain teachers in the profession through appropriate and well-targeted career support.

Scope and delimitations

The scope of this study extends to all second-stage teachers in NSW. This includes male and female teachers of all ages, teaching full-time, part-time or casually, in both permanent and temporary positions. It includes those teachers across all school levels (primary and secondary), school sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent) and diverse geographical locations (metropolitan, rural, regional and remote NSW). This study focuses on teachers who started or returned to teaching in NSW after 2004. This time point captures teachers who are part of the ‘New Scheme’ system. The claims in this study are based on the views of 24 informants who represent this diverse population. This study includes policy documents that were produced by both the NSW state government and the Australian federal government.

An important delimitation of this study is that it excludes teachers from other Australian states and territories. Whilst Australia now has a framework of national teaching standards, different states and territories have taken a variety of approaches as to how
the standards are used in practice and it is beyond the scope of this study to include this. This study is not an evaluation of the New Scheme system, nor is it a study of all New Scheme teachers. Many New Scheme teachers are early career teachers in their first three years, and these teachers are excluded from the study.

This study excludes other mid-career teachers beyond those in their “second-stage” of teaching. Many mid-career teachers persist beyond their tenth year in the classroom; however, the second-stage was chosen as a focus both because there is a lack of research and because it fits comfortably within the New Scheme parameters. This study does not seek to re-develop the comprehensive career models developed by, for example, Huberman (1993) and Day et al. (2007). The model of career developed in this study applies specifically to second-stage teachers only. Further, this is not a large study seeking to capture the opinions and experiences of a large sample of the teaching population, for example through the use of a survey instrument. Instead this study focuses on policy documents, workforce data and interviews as the main sources of data. Finally, this is not a study of teacher life history or teacher identity. Whilst elements of these concepts emerged during data collection, this study focuses solely on the concept of ‘career’.

**Role of the researcher**

This study was motivated, in part, by my own experience as a second-stage teacher. Having made it through the ‘survival phase’ of teaching, I continued within the profession, only to find the range of roles and opportunities on offer was uncertain and uneven between different schools and school systems. I was curious to explore the range of different pathways available for teachers, yet found this information was hidden, unknown or unspoken. I noticed that some of my teaching colleagues were content with their classroom life, whilst others were keen to work beyond the classroom boundaries to explore the range of possible options that teaching might lead to. I also observed that many had or were planning to exit from teaching altogether.

This study was also motivated by my experiences under the New Scheme system in NSW. I observed a sense of camaraderie amongst New Scheme teachers in staff rooms, online forums and professional development workshops, united by the shared experience of being ‘other’ to the majority of our colleagues by virtue of our ‘New Scheme’ status. I also perceived a growing unease amongst older colleagues, as many appeared to be either apprehensive or resentful at the thought of being included with
the New Scheme system. Growing talk of an impact on salary and career progression fuelled their sense of uncertainty and discomfort.

My own experience of undergoing accreditation to achieve ‘Professional Competence’ was altogether underwhelming. The process of putting together a portfolio, having lessons observed and writing a report for the NSW Institute left me searching without answers or guidance. Anecdotal evidence suggested that my experience was not unique, but at the same time that different schools and systems were handling this process very differently. The long wait to discover whether or not I had been successful in my quest was eventually met with a perfunctory letter and a certificate declaring me to be ‘competent’. The process of how to maintain this new-found competence through continuing professional learning, online monitoring and report writing was never made explicit, and again no one seemed to know what to do or, even more infuriatingly, why to do it.

During data collection, I approached my interview participants as an ‘insider’ being a fellow second-stage New Scheme teacher. I believe that this connection enabled me to gain different insights to someone coming from outside of the system. I also approached the policy documents that I analysed not just as someone observing them externally, but as someone who had seen how some of those documents had been used (or ignored) in the daily practice of school life. Whilst undertaking this study, I continued to teach in a variety of part-time roles in both school and tertiary education. I juggled wearing different hats as a school teacher, teacher educator and doctoral candidate. There were times when teaching was respite from the thesis, and conversely at times the thesis was respite from teaching. These different roles continued to challenge my imagination and shaped how I approached the interpretation and analysis of my findings.

**Thesis overview**

This thesis consists of eight chapters, most containing several smaller sub-sections. Chapter two brings together the literature on teachers’ careers across three levels: micro (teacher as individual career actor), meso (school structures, systems and policies) and macro (historical, social and demographic contexts). This analysis culminates in the development of an initial, emergent conceptual framework of the factors influencing second-stage teachers’ careers, based on existing literature and theory. Chapter three addresses methodological issues, including the study’s
philosophical foundations and mixed methods research design. It explains the specific methods and procedures used in each of the three strands, and identifies how these were combined in a mixed methods interpretation.

Chapters four, five and six contain the presentation of and an integrated discussion of both the findings and interpretation from each of the three data sets. Chapter four considers the findings into the organisational and policy context of careers, chapter five addresses career trajectories and chapter six addresses career cultures. Chapter seven draws the three data sets together to consider how the findings that emerged from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other. This chapter also revisits and extends the conceptual framework in the light of the new data and findings of the thesis. Finally, chapter eight concludes the study and suggests further agendas for research, policy and practice.

Chapter summary

This chapter has established the aim and objectives underpinning the study, and has introduced the main research question: What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers? The study has been clearly situated within the context of school teachers in NSW and the study’s scope and parameters have been set. This chapter has demonstrated a warrant for doing the study, based on evidence of both a real problem in the work lives of teachers and a ‘gap’ in the extant literature.

In the next chapter, the current literature and theory on teachers’ careers will be addressed in three parts. Chapter two begins with a consideration of teachers’ careers at the micro level, including career as both a series of stages and as a trajectory. The chapter then turns to consider teachers’ careers at the meso level, including how school systems and governments seek to both sustain and develop teachers’ careers. The chapter proceeds to consider teachers’ careers at the macro level, providing key elements of the historical, social and demographic conditions that contextualise teachers’ careers. Finally, the chapter concludes with an initial, emergent conceptual framework of the contextual factors influencing second-stage teachers’ careers, based on current literature and theory.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

The previous chapter comprised a broad outline of this study and the context from which it emerged. The research questions presented focused specifically on second-stage teachers in NSW since 2004 and their career experiences, perceptions and aspirations. In this chapter, an overview of the scholarly literature that underpins the study will be developed. This review locates these teachers within their context, both local and global, and further clarifies the key terms and concepts used throughout the thesis. The review also makes explicit the ‘gap’ in the literature and helps justify a timely need for this study.

Structurally, this chapter consists of four sections, each providing a different level of analysis of the literature:

- Part One: Teachers’ careers at the micro level (teacher as individual career actor)
- Part Two: Teachers' careers at the meso level (school structures and policies surrounding teachers)
- Part Three: Teachers' careers at the macro level (historical, social and demographic forces shaping teachers’ careers)
- Part Four: An initial, emergent conceptual framework

This chapter will draw some conclusions about how teachers’ careers have been analysed in the empirical literature to date and the major policy challenges that exist in the current NSW context.

Part One: Careers at the micro level – Teacher as individual career actor

Part one of the review addresses the literature relating to teachers’ careers at the micro level. Here the teacher is viewed as an individual “career actor” and an “active accumulator of experiences that compose a career” (Baruch & Bozionelos, 2011, p. 67). Within this literature, teachers’ careers are conceptualised in two broad ways: as a series of stages and as progressing along a trajectory.

Career as a series of stages

To understand the research into teacher career stages, seven key aspects will be addressed. Firstly, the review will look at career theory and definitions of career,
leading to a description of the main phase models developed to conceptualise teachers’ careers. The review will then turn to consider the research into each of the different career ‘stages’, identifying key studies within each stage (pre-service, early career, mid career and veteran). The section will conclude with an examination of the literature on second-stage teachers and highlight this as a key focus for the study.

**Career theory and definitions.**

The word ‘career’ derives from the French carrière meaning racecourse, based on the late Latin carrâria, meaning carriage-road (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Although examples of the word career being used to describe “a person's course or progress through life” can be found in nineteenth century literary texts, a more modern notion of the term career arose in the early twentieth century, defined as “a course of professional life or employment, which affords opportunity for progress or advancement in the world” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1933). At the same time, the study of careers and career theory emerged as an interdisciplinary area of study encompassing three broad perspectives: sociological, vocational and developmental (Moore, Gunz, & Hall, 2007).

The sociological perspective incorporated the broadest levels of analysis, focusing on the social structures, cultural norms and institutional boundaries that directed people’s career choices and behaviours (Becker, Strauss, & Hughes, 1961; Becker, 1952; Goffman, 1959; Hughes, 1928, 1937; Schein, 1971). The vocational perspective was concerned with more normative questions of what career path a person ought to take. Scholars focused on developing scales and models to predict an individual's ‘fit’ for a given occupation and on helping people make the most suitable occupational choice (Holland, 1966, 1973; Parsons, 1909). In contrast, the developmental perspective saw careers as dynamic processes that evolved over time. Scholars developed stage-based models of careers showing how people progressed through a series of phases dependent upon different variables (Driver, 1982; Schein, 1978; Super, 1990). These developmental career models were heavily influenced by adult development theories, particularly Levinson’s life stage model (1978), which was in turn built on earlier general human development theories (Erikson, 1950, 1959; Maslow, 1954).

Across all of these perspectives, researchers tended to focus on individual employees progressing through a workplace hierarchy based on stable and predictable organisational structures. Such notions conceptualised careers in terms of the
employer-employee relationship and presented careers as steady, linear and progressive. Since the early 1990s, however, contemporary scholars have tended to define careers much more broadly, in response to decreasing stability and certainty in the workplace. Hall’s concept of the ‘protean career’ (1996, 2002) has been very influential in describing a trend towards the individual taking responsibility for actively managing his or her own career, including through continual development of knowledge and skills in order to remain employable. Another significant concept has been the ‘boundaryless career’ (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), which emphasises independence from traditional organisational structures, mobility across many employers and rejection of the emphasis on hierarchy and linear advancement. Some scholars have sought to integrate aspects of both the protean and boundaryless careers (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Peiperl & Baruch, 1997), whilst others have moved away from these approaches altogether, for example, the ‘kaleidoscope career model’ describes how individuals arrange different aspects of their lives to form different career patterns based on their particular situation at different points in time (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006).

The diverse and interdisciplinary nature of career theory has meant that there is no agreement among scholars on a common definition of career (Collin, 2007). Across all definitions of career, the common threads are that, (a) careers involve successive employment-related activities, and (b) careers move through time and across space. Based on a recent review of the literature on career studies and career theory, Sullivan and Baruch (2009) define career as, “an individual’s work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organisations, that form a unique pattern over the individual’s life span” (p. 1543). This study will adopt this particular explanation as the working definition of career.

Developmental career theories formed the foundation for early attempts to develop a ‘career stage’ model for teachers. Rolls and Plauborg (2009) recently reviewed the key studies that articulated phase models for teaching careers and identified four key researchers: Patricia Sikes (UK), Michael Huberman (Switzerland), Ralph Fessler (US) and Christopher Day (UK). They concluded that, “these four studies constitute the most comprehensive investigations of the career paths of teachers” (p. 9). Whilst noting the limitation of career ‘stages’ as giving the impression that teachers’ careers always move in a unified, linear and forward direction, Rolls and Plauborg argue that these four studies have merit because they identified broadly similar career stages in
different contexts and times. The generality of these models is both a strength and a weakness. A summary of all four of these models is presented in Table 2.1.

Sikes (1985) used the life history method to interview 48 secondary school teachers representing a range of ages, subjects and years of experience. Referencing the social-psychological adult development work of Levinson (1978), Sikes outlined five phases in a teacher’s career cycle that corresponded with the a life cycle, based on chronological age. These are outlined in Table 2.1. Whilst this was a pioneering work in the field, the major limitation of Sikes’ work today is that many Australian teachers enter the profession at a range of different ages across the lifespan. McKenzie et al. (2014) note that the trend in Australia towards postgraduate entry to teaching is growing, with 30% of primary and 50% of secondary teachers entering teaching via a postgraduate teaching qualification (p. 33).

Based upon an extensive empirical data collection process of workplace observations, 160 teacher interviews, case studies and literature reviews conducted during the 1980s, Fessler and Christensen (1992) developed their ‘Teacher Career Cycle’ model with eight stages (see table 2.1). One strength of this model is that these stages are not presented as a straightforward linear development; rather, movement through the stages is influenced by external environmental factors, both personal and organisational (Fessler, 1995). Teachers move around the cycle’s stages at different times and may re-visit certain stages multiple times throughout their careers.

Around the same time, Huberman (1989) conducted extensive interviews with a sample of 160 secondary teachers, each over five hours long. Drawing on broader developmental career studies (Levinson, 1978; Super, 1957), these interviews formed the basis of Huberman’s highly influential work *The Lives of Teachers* (1993), wherein he identified seven career phases (see Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1). Rather than age, this model emphasises years of teaching experience as a key determinant for how teachers’ careers develop. Perhaps more than any other to date, Huberman’s model has been very influential and is still regularly cited as a conceptual framework for studies of teachers’ careers (e.g., Choi & Tang, 2009; Margolis, 2008; Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke, & Baumert, 2011).
Table 2.1. *Summary of the four main teacher career phase models*

<table>
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<th>Teacher career cycle model</th>
<th>Teacher career cycle model</th>
<th>Teacher career cycle model</th>
<th>Professional life phase model</th>
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| 1. 'Entering the adult world' (age 21 to 28): 'reality shock' upon entry. |
| 2. 'Age thirty transition' (age 28-33): either fully commit to teaching or change careers. |
| 3. 'Settling down' (age 30-40): energy and self-confidence peak. Men typically seek promotion, whilst women may start a family. |
| 4. 'Successful' (age 40-50/55): most teachers are in senior management positions with less student contact. |

| 1. 'Pre-service': preparation at university or college. |
| 2. 'Induction': re-entered with each new school or role. |
| 3. 'Competency building': seeking new skills. |
| 4. 'Enthusiastic and growing': experienced teachers are competent, yet striving to improve. |
| 5. 'Career frustration': disillusionment, stuck and unsatisfied. |
| 6. 'Career stability': Plateaued, stagnant & gradually disengaging. |
| 7. 'Career wind-down': teachers prepare to retire. |
| 8. 'Career exit'. |

| 1. 'Career entry' phase (1-3 years): survival and discovery. |
| 2. 'Stabilisation' phase (4-6 years): commit to teaching and achieve greater pedagogical skill |
| 3. Experimentation/'Activism' or Reassessment/'Self-doubts' (7-18 years) |
| 4. Serenity/distance or Conservatism (19-30 years): teachers feel self-sufficient and confident or they may go through a period of conservatism and complaints |
| 5. 'Disengagement': (34-40 years): teachers withdraw from the profession, either with a sense of serenity or bitterness as they approach the end of their working lives. |

| 1. 0-3 years: teachers seek support and challenge. |
| 2. 4-7 years: develop identity & confidence. |
| 3. 8-15 years: Teachers enter a crossroads and may dedicate themselves to the classroom, seek promotion or exit. |
| 4. 16-23 years: work-life tensions challenge motivation/commitment. |
| 5. 24-30 years: external changes may challenge motivation. |
| 6. 31+ years: relationships with students and their achievement may sustain motivation, or teachers may lose motivation and seek to retire. |
Most recently, the Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effects on Pupils (VITAE) project (Day et al., 2007) has sought to update the work of Huberman. Over four years, this large longitudinal study examined the lives and careers of 300 teachers from 100 schools representing a broad cross-section of society. Using interviews, questionnaires and student assessments, the study identified six 'professional life phases', considering teachers' careers in combination with their 'effectiveness' over the course their career (see table 2.1). This model and the work developed in the VITAE project has generated a large body of research into different aspects of teacher careers (Day & Gu, 2009, 2010; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Day, 2008). It has also been used as a framework for other studies, for example, into teacher identity (Leitch, 2010) and teacher commitment (Cameron & Lovett, 2014).

In relation to the present study, the teachers in this study's sample (with 4-10 years experience) incorporate the second two phases of both Huberman’s model (4-6 years...
‘stabilisation’; 7-18 years ‘experimentation/reassessment’) and Day et al.’s model (professional life phase 4-7; professional life phase 8-15). Moving on from these broad, general phase models, the review will now turn to the literature addressing teachers’ careers at very specific points in the career cycle.

Pre-service teachers.
The past two decades have seen strong research interest into what attracts and motivates people to choose teaching, driven largely by the fluctuating issues of teacher attrition and perceived quality (OECD, 2005). These studies span a diverse range of countries and suggest that there are three broad motivations for choosing teaching as a career: altruistic (helping children, making a contribution to society); intrinsic (passion for subject matter, enjoyment of working with children); and extrinsic (conditions and status) (Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). One recent study has noted the link between a pre-service teacher’s experience of school as a student with their motivations to enter teaching (Rinke, Mawhinney, & Park, 2014). The motivation to teach also appears to vary across sociocultural contexts, influenced by issues such as the socioeconomic status of teaching and cultural attitudes towards teachers (Bastick, 2000; M. M. Thomson, Turner, & Nietfeld, 2012).

Studies conducted with pre-service teachers in Western, developed countries have found that intrinsic and altruistic reasons were the most frequently nominated motivations for choosing teaching, particularly love of working with children and making a social contribution. This includes studies conducted with pre-service teachers in Australia (Manuel & Hughes, 2006), Northern Ireland (Moran, Kilpatrick, Abbott, Dallat, & McClune, 2001), England (Reid & Caudwell, 1997), the United States (Pop & Turner, 2009), Norway (Kyriacou, Hultgren, & Stephens, 1999) and the Netherlands (Fokkens-Bruisma & Canrinus, 2011). On the other hand, studies conducted with teachers in developing countries suggest that extrinsic motivations (particularly salary, job security, and status) were more frequently nominated as reasons for choosing teaching. This includes studies conducted with pre-service teachers in the Caribbean (Brown, 1992). Zimbabwe (Chivore, 1988), South Africa (Chuene, Lubben, & Newson, 1999) Malaysia (Azman, 2013), Brunei (Yong, 1995) and Taiwan (Wang, 2004).

Whilst these studies are numerous and represent a great geographical diversity, they are typically characterised by small sample sizes, the use of untested questionnaire tools and a focus on small sub-groups of teachers. In response to these limitations,
Australian researchers Helen Watt and Paul Richardson developed the “FIT-Choice” (Factors Influencing Teaching Choice) Scale as a tool to measure and compare motivations of those choosing a career in teaching. Starting with a large sample (N=1,653) of first-year pre-service cohorts from three Australian universities, Richardson and Watt (2006) showed that Australian pre-service teachers are typically female, young, from lower-SES backgrounds, English-speaking and with parents born in Australia (p. 50). The motivation to choose teaching typically came from beliefs about their ability to teach, the intrinsic, social and personal values in teaching, and positive prior experiences of school (p. 51). This motivation was held was despite the fact that many reported experiences of being strongly dissuaded from choosing teaching as a career. Watt and Richardson (2007) then tracked the pre-service teachers longitudinally over the course of their pre-service education, showing a positive correlation between reasons for entering a pre-service program and professional aspirations on completing a teaching qualification.

Finally, another body of literature has examined the career motivations of those making a mid-career switch into teaching. In Australia, about one third of graduate-entry pre-service teachers have had a different prior career (Richardson & Watt, 2006, p. 44). Whilst altruistic and intrinsic reasons dominate the motivations for many aspiring teachers, (Chambers, 2002; Williams & Forgasz, 2009), income reliability and job security are also a key appeal (Richardson & Watt, 2005). Males and females may have different motivations for starting a teaching career later in life (Serow & Forrest, 1994). Other key trends in the literature include:

- career switchers’ previous experiences being insufficiently acknowledged or valued by teacher educators and school systems (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990; Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003);
- career switchers having a unique perspective as “expert novices” (Williams, 2010), and thus requiring different forms of support and guidance (Mayotte, 2003); and
- casual and temporary roles for career switchers being particularly demotivating and having negative impacts on long-term career intentions (Anthony & Ord, 2008).

**Early career teachers.**

Extensive research has documented the challenges faced by early career teachers, variously defined as those in their first two (McCormack & Thomas, 2003), three
(Fenwick, 2011) or five (Manuel, 2003) years of teaching. This phase is often characterised not only as a time of excitement and growth, but also a challenging time of “survival” (Cameron, Baker, & Lovett, 2006), with teachers in the “trenches” (Bezzina, 2006) having to “sink or swim” (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Much literature has been devoted to documenting the challenges and dilemmas for those making the transition from pre-service to in-service teacher (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Schuck, Aubusson, & Buchanan, 2012). Key themes emerging from the literature on early career teachers (ECTs) include:

- beginning teachers are isolated and lack access to integrated professional support networks (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Kardos & Johnson, 2007);
- negative early experiences impact on longer-term retention and development (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; McCormack & Thomas, 2003);
- employment conditions, particularly insecure and fragmented casual teaching roles, impact on teachers’ job satisfaction and capacity to develop key competencies (McCormack & Thomas, 2005; Pletsch & Williamson, 2010);
- formal induction and mentoring have a positive impact on job satisfaction and wellbeing (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Howe, 2006), yet many teachers still lack access to quality programs (Algozzine, Gretes, Queen, & Cowan-Hathcock, 2007). Informal, collaborative guidance from colleagues is also highly valuable (McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006); and
- strong relationships with their principals influence ECTs feelings of personal and professional wellbeing (Peters & Pearce, 2012), although many principals report a lack of time or capacity to offer effective support (Andrews, Gilbert, & Martin, 2007; Quinn & Andrews, 2004). Principals also play a critical role in enabling ECTs to interpret and enact complex educational policies rather than being passive policy receivers (A. Sullivan & Morrison, 2014).

One limitation of some of this research is the tendency to portray ECTs as deficient in the skills or knowledge necessary for this phase of their careers, minimising the impact of complex contextual factors. To counteract the tradition of researching “transition traumas”, a large team of Australian researchers has taken an alternative approach, focusing on a social theory of teacher resilience (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, & Hunter 2014; 2010a; 2010b). Based on interviews with 60 first-year teachers, this important research identified five key aspects and eighteen related conditions to develop a ‘Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher Resilience’. Johnson et al. argue that their Framework can now be used to offer practical advice to better nurture ECTs and end the narrative of early career ‘survival’.
Veteran teachers.
At the other end of the spectrum, veteran teachers have also received some research attention. This is particularly important given that more than 30 percent of the Australian teaching workforce has been teaching for over 20 years (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 79). This research typically focuses on understanding what motivates these teachers to persist, and is often in the form of small, in-depth qualitative studies (Cohen, 2009; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Thorburn, 2011), with a notable exception being the Experienced Teacher Survey (Brunetti, 2001, 2006; Marston, Courtney, & Brunetti, 2006). Other studies focus on the benefits on retaining veteran teachers as mentors and ‘voices of wisdom’ within schools (Alvy, 2005; Zuckerman, 2001).

There is some disagreement regarding what constitutes a ‘veteran’ teacher, with the relationship between experience and expertise contested (Day et al., 2007). Based on case studies of four Hong Kong teachers, Tsui (2009) suggests that expert teachers have distinct qualities and abilities, regardless of their years of experience. Using data from the VITAE project, Day and Gu (2009) argue that, although veteran teachers may have amassed many years of experience and be proficient in their classroom routines, this alone does not mean they will have become expert teachers. More than a third of the veteran teachers in their study (defined as having taught for 24 or more years) reported that bureaucratic policies, difficult student behaviour and heavy workloads had a strong negative affect, leading to fatigue, disillusionment and demotivation (p. 448). Day and Gu argue for an emphasis on ‘quality retention’, with school leaders playing a key role in sustaining veteran teachers’ professional identities and a commitment to improving their practice.

Mid-career teachers.
Whilst the above career stages have all received sizable research attention, mid-career teachers have been somewhat overlooked in the literature to date. As with the above stages, there remains little consensus amongst scholars on how to define a ‘mid-career’ teacher. Based upon teaching experience, definitions include 6-15 years (Levine, 2013), 6-20 years (Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005) and 10-20 years (Coulter & Lester, 2011). Common amongst these definitions is a recognition that mid-career teachers are unique – they are no longer beginners facing daily ‘survival’ concerns, but nor are they highly experienced veterans or those necessarily in formal positions of leadership or administration. Almost one-third (32%) of all Australian teachers are mid-career with between six and fifteen years experience (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 79).
Several recent US Doctoral theses have addressed mid-career teachers, with a focus on retaining them in the profession (DiVito, 2009; Levine, 2011; Moreland, 2011), the impact of structural reforms on their career decisions (Stone-Johnson, 2009a) and the influence of learning communities on their professional growth (Pelletier, 2013). One current Australian doctoral work has focused on mid-career primary teachers in NSW public schools (Lusty, 2013). This Delphi study drew on a panel of fifteen teachers, six principals and two education directors to investigate broad themes about their work motivations and concerns. Lusty’s work shows that mid-career teachers’ motivation to remain in teaching comes largely from altruistic reasons, whilst their concerns with teaching arose from both intrinsic and external issues. She notes that there was considerable variation in how the participants ranked the relative importance of the motivations and concerns and concluded that, “the individual context is the differentiating factor” (p. 100).

The limited scholarly literature into mid-career teachers has focused on the factors that support them to persist with teaching. In their grounded theory study of eight mid-career English teachers, Coulter and Lester (2011) described this persistence as getting “over the hump”. Their model of mid-career teacher identity emphasised that teachers who persisted in teaching were only able to do so when they could “differentiate the important aspects of their professional and personal lives” (p. 21). In a similar vein, Levine (2013) used Q methodology and the key concept of ‘hope’ to explore what helped sustain teachers in the profession. From a different methodological perspective, Pillay, Goddard and Wilss (2005) surveyed 157 Queensland mid-career teachers to measure the relationships between burnout, workload and self-perceived classroom competence. They unexpectedly found a negative relationship between competence and ‘depersonalisation’. They note that, whilst many mid-career teachers believe they are working to ‘satisfactory’ levels, “many are doing their job in a way that distances themselves from those around them” (p. 28). Also in an Australian context, Watson and Hatton (2002) prepared a survey report for the NSW Teachers Federation into the work satisfaction and commitment of 1322 mid-career teachers. Whilst the teachers’ overall level of commitment to teaching was high, the level of satisfaction was only moderate and for many teachers this satisfaction was declining (p. 72). Their data highlighted excessive teacher workload and growing stress levels, flowing from increased demands of the job without corresponding support, as major concerns for mid-career teachers.
Second-stage teachers.

Within these teachers at mid-career is a particular cohort identified in the literature as “second-stage teachers”. As part of the Harvard ‘Project on the Next Generation of Teachers’, Susan Moore Johnson has led a team of researchers to investigate US second-stage teachers, defined as having 4-10 years experience and having usually secured tenure (Johnson, 2009, p. 3). Second-stage teachers are distinguished from their early career counterparts in two main ways. Firstly, they recognise their daily experience of teaching as being markedly different from their beginning years and are aware of their emerging sense of competence and confidence in the classroom (Charner-Laird, 2007, p. 12). Secondly, because they are no longer concentrating on ‘surviving’ the present, second-stage teachers start to take a broader view of their work as they “consider the future and wonder whether they can develop a career in teaching” (Donaldson et al., 2008, p. 4). Whilst they may have received some targeted support and professional development opportunities as beginning teachers, second-stage teachers simply become “part of the ‘rest’ of teachers”, and are thus at risk of becoming isolated in schools that focus all their efforts on supporting new teachers (Charner-Laird, 2007, p. 6).

The Harvard team has published a significant body of work into different aspects of second-stage teachers’ careers. At the start of the 2000s, many US school districts introduced new teaching roles, such as instructional coaches, curriculum writers, professional developers and data analysts, in response to a heavy focus on standards and accountability. These roles represent a major shift away from the traditional view that all teachers are equal and autonomous (Donaldson et al., 2008). Whilst these roles were often created with the goal of improving student test scores, they had the additional effect of expanding teacher career opportunities. In interviews with 20 second-stage teachers who held formal, ongoing differentiated roles, Donaldson et al. found that their success depended upon whether teachers were placed in a ‘reform role’ to change their colleagues’ practices, or a support-based role (p. 1092). The former encountered resistance that the latter did not as they challenged the norms of equity, seniority and autonomy. In their interviews with second-stage teachers, Berg et al. (2005) found that the success of these differentiated roles depended largely upon how supportive the Principal was, in terms of structural changes and school culture. They concluded that:
Differentiated roles for teachers have cracked the traditional mould of a flat teaching career long reinforced by egalitarian norms in the profession . . . the Principal can shape the organisational context in which such roles are carried out, and thus increase the likelihood that the roles will strengthen the teaching career. (p. 28)

In a more recent study addressing the role of ‘instructional coaches’ as a differentiated pathway for teachers, Johnson (2009) interviewed 85 second-stage teachers and found that they were both keen to work with coaches and to be given the opportunity to become coaches themselves. Instructional coaches were increasingly seen as both a purposeful and acceptable part of the teaching landscape. In another study, Fiarman (2007) followed ten second-stage teachers over their three years working in the ‘Consulting Teacher’ role. When commencing their role, several of these teachers were questioning whether or not to remain in teaching. However, after their leadership experience as Consulting Teachers, all of them were committed to remaining in education. The challenge came when they had to return to the classroom at the end of the three years. None of the participants wanted to return to traditional classroom teaching roles. A few sought leadership positions, but the majority were seeking something in between these two extremes. Fiarman notes that the teachers “seemed to experience something akin to culture shock upon re-entering school sites where traditional norms dominated” (p. 32). Such studies suggest that traditional classroom life may not provide enough opportunities to keep the second-stage teachers satisfied in their work.

Another aspect of second-stage teachers’ careers comes through studies of their work engagement. Kirkpatrick (2009) interviewed 85 second-stage teachers about their work engagement, defined as the “enthusiasm and the level of investment a teacher brings to his or her work” (p. 2). Second-stage teachers felt greater confidence and competence compared to their novice years, giving them more flexibility in their decision-making and work style. Importantly, the professional culture of the school was the key factor that either encouraged or discouraged work engagement. In their most recent study, Kirkpatrick and Johnson (2014) found that second-stage teachers were largely free to determine for themselves the degree to which they would engage with their work (p. 237). They identified three patterns of engagement: (a) modified engagement, where teachers reduced their focus on teaching to concentrate on other important responsibilities in their lives; (b) focused engagement, where teachers sought professional learning and other avenues to deepen and improve their
classroom practice; and (c) diversified engagement, where teachers took on tasks to extend themselves beyond the classroom. The common thread here is that teachers could choose for themselves the timing and manner in which they chose to engage, or not, with their teaching.

The strength of this body of research comes from it being conducted by a research team, with group reliability examined when checking interview transcripts. All of the samples were purposefully selected to form representative groups of teachers with different ethnicities, genders and school locations. The studies of Berg et al. (2005) and Fiarman (2007) are particularly strong because of their longitudinal perspective. Beyond the research from this team at Harvard, second-stage teachers have been studied in the context of US music teachers’ career development (Eros, 2011, 2012) and their experience of differentiation through the ‘Specialist Classroom Teacher’ role in New Zealand (Lovett & Cameron, 2011). To date, there is no evidence of studies of second-stage teachers within the Australian context.

**Career as a trajectory**

Having considered the career as a series of stages, this review will now turn to consider key studies that have conceptualised teachers’ careers as ‘trajectories’, that is, linear journeys that progress along a particular route or track. Career studies of this nature have long been considered of sociological importance, with Everett Hughes arguing that they “may be expected to reveal the nature and ‘working constitution’ of a society” (Hughes, 1937, p. 413). A pioneer in the field of sociological career studies, Hughes identified that there were two key ways in which careers could be considered. On the one hand, career trajectories are externally defined, with a focus on vertical progress through a hierarchy. From this perspective, the career is "a series of status and clearly defined offices" (p. 409). On the other hand, careers are also internally defined by an individual person’s subjective interpretation of their career experiences. From this viewpoint, the career is, “the moving perspective in which the person sees his [sic] life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happen to him" (pp. 409-410). This review will now address research into literatures on both externally and internally defined career trajectories. It will then conclude the most recent research addressing new trajectories and teacher career decision-making.
Externally defined: Vertical and horizontal career trajectories.

Early examples of sociological studies of teachers’ work exist (Waller, 1932; Zeleny, 1932); however, it was not until Howard Becker’s landmark study, ‘The career of the Chicago public school teacher’, that teachers careers were explicitly studied. Whilst existing career research at the time focused on vertical career trajectories that progressed upwards through a hierarchy (e.g. O. Hall, 1948), Becker (1952) focused instead on teachers’ horizontal trajectories because, although it was possible for any teacher to progress upwards to the principalship, very few actually did. In interviews with sixty Chicago school teachers, Becker found that the vast majority saw their careers solely in terms of classroom teaching and moving between different schools within the system. Most teachers began their career in the least desirable “slum” schools and either attempted to transfer to a better school or stayed by adjusting their expectations (p. 472). Becker argued that these “horizontal moves” between different roles at the same level within the career hierarchy were just as significant as “vertical moves” and were a unique feature of teachers’ working lives.

These movements between schools were seen by many as not sufficiently substantial to constitute a career. Teaching has thus been vulnerable to the proposition that those in the classroom have no career at all. Slocum (1966) defined a career as requiring progression from the bottom to the top. To have a career within an organisation, one typically starts “at the lowest rung on the occupational ladder” and then works towards “a sequence of promotions into high-level positions”, leading ultimately to some “pinnacle” position before retirement (p. 5). From this perspective, Dan Lortie in his landmark US study ‘Schoolteacher’ (1975) came to the conclusion teaching was “career-less” because there was “less opportunity for the movement upward which is the essence of career” (p. 84). Lortie interviewed 94 teachers from thirteen diverse schools, and surveyed a further 5818 teachers from one county. His data revealed that the majority of beginning teachers considered that their classroom careers would be relatively short and interrupted, for women through marriage and family, and for men through promotion. He captures this in his gendered observation:

The steps upwards are too small to satisfy the ambitions of most male entrants; they want the greater rewards associated with administrative positions. But the gentle incline of teaching fits the aspirations most women bring with them; it facilitates their “in and out” plans. (p. 88)
Teaching, Lortie argued, had three problems that prevented it from offering a career. Firstly, teachers suffered from "presentism" and the pursuit of short-term outcomes, with no investment in "searching for general principles to inform their work" (p. 212). Secondly, teachers were generally conservative in their outlook and resistant to changing their work patterns. Thirdly, teachers were predominantly individualistic and not interested in "working together to build a stronger technical culture" (p. 147). Teachers were isolated in their classrooms, received little feedback and had no incentive for collaborative approaches. Viewed in this way, teachers’ work could not fit the mould of a hierarchical career structure.

Not all teachers aspire to remain in the classroom for life and more recent research has focused on teachers’ promotional patterns. Draper, Fraser and Taylor (1998) surveyed 169 Scottish teachers (43% primary and 57% secondary) about their past promotional moves and future career plans. Their results led them to create a four-fold typology of career trajectories dependent upon whether or not teachers had sought a promotion in the past and whether or not they were seeking a promotion in the next five years (p. 375). Seventy percent of teachers were intending to seek a promotion, with secondary teachers and male teachers more inclined than their primary or female counterparts to do so. Of the remaining thirty percent, only one third indicated that they were staying because they were happy and settled within their schools. The rest reported being unhappy, either because they were unable to gain a permanent job or because they wanted to leave teaching but did not feel that there were any alternative job opportunities. These results led Draper et al. to conclude that the majority of teacher career decisions were based on reducing their time in the classroom, whilst those who planned a horizontal career trajectory in the classroom "were influenced by accident and circumstance rather than by design" (p. 383).

Working in the Australian context, MacLean (1992) conducted a large study into teachers’ promotional patterns within the state school system in Tasmania. His study used a broad selection of data, including government records, questionnaires (n=717), interviews (n=40) and focus groups, and drew several strong conclusions. Firstly, teachers perceived that teaching did in fact offer a ‘career’, defined as “a commitment on the part of a person to obtaining promotion through the status hierarchy that exists according to some time schedule” (p. 188). From this vertical perspective, males were more committed to their teaching careers than females. His data also showed that teachers’ career movements were neither random nor spontaneous, but often carefully planned. Teachers had “highly structured and orderly career patterns” because schools
are organisational bureaucracies that provide a clear vertical trajectory. A further extension of this was that teachers saw their careers as being predominantly shaped by their employer organisation. These teachers thus saw themselves “as being primarily ‘Education Department’ teachers rather than as members of the teaching profession” (p. 188). Similar to Becker, MacLean found that many teachers sought to move into schools with ‘easier’ student populations to work with, even if this meant seeking a demotion to work in a more ‘desirable’ location (p. 197). MacLean also acknowledged that the degree of emphasis on external versus internal aspects of career was determined by the extent to which a teacher was “promotion minded” (p. 209). Such studies of promotional patterns provide a structured and logical way of understanding teachers’ careers.

**Internally defined: Subjective views and life history studies.**

In the 1980s there began to be a shift towards addressing not just the organisational aspects of career, but to also consider more personal notions of what it means to have a teaching career. In the UK, Nias (1989b) produced a strong piece of longitudinal research, interviewing 99 primary teachers (30 men and 69 women) in their third year of teaching about their experiences of being primary teachers. Ten years later, she conducted follow-up interviews, this time focusing on how they understood and made sense of their careers. One third of the original cohort “had stepped, voluntarily or otherwise, off the direct career ladder”, either to work in other educational settings (e.g., secondary or tertiary education), to have their own children or to leave teaching altogether (p. 395). For those teachers who were not making vertical moves through the hierarchy, Nias argued that these (predominantly female) teachers were redefining the term career to mean “progressive opportunities for personal learning and extension” (p. 398). Some had made horizontal moves, for example, part-time teaching, casual teaching or specialisation. Others had returned to full-time posts after raising children, only to find they were they were disadvantaged in seeking promotions by a system that privileged continuous service. Another group of teachers created ‘parallel careers’ to offset their boredom or frustration with teaching, engaging in additional work (paid or unpaid) outside of teaching. These teachers remained in teaching only because of their family commitments outside of work and found more satisfaction and self-esteem in their non-school work. Nias concluded that, for many, teaching careers were not linear but rather fluctuated over time, dependent upon satisfaction both with teaching and with other life commitments.
In the US, McLaughlin and Yee (1988) have also argued that many teachers do not define their careers in structural, vertical terms, but rather according to their own personal classroom goals. In their interviews with 85 teachers, they found very few (six percent) intending to apply for the Principalship. The majority saw their future career path as belonging in the classroom and continuing to be directly involved with student learning.

McLaughlin and Yee concluded that teachers “conceive of career and define career satisfaction largely in subjective terms, such as making a difference and sharing a discipline they love. Through these attitudes, teachers generate an expertise-based, individually determined notion of career” [original emphasis] (p. 26). Differing levels of opportunity and power within the workplace were the keys to teacher job satisfaction, over and above opportunities for promotion. Similarly, Biklen’s (1986) qualitative study using observations and interviews with teachers in one elementary school led her to conclude that teachers defined career success internally in terms of becoming a "great teacher" and helping their students achieve (p. 508). The female teachers in this study had largely fractured teaching careers, interrupted by having children and/or part-time work. These teachers valued their classroom success beyond their vertical career mobility, and “quality of performance overrode career value in their minds” (p. 508). Biklen concluded that the concept of a ‘career’ was based on male work patterns and thus inherently disadvantages the female teachers who were also parents.

Whilst these studies present a view of teachers as passionate classroom devotees, a more complex picture emerged from the research of Connell in her seminal text ‘Teachers’ Work’ (1985). Drawing on interview data from 128 teachers in a larger study into social differences in secondary schooling (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett, 1982), Connell’s work provides in-depth portraits of six teachers and a wide-ranging account of the working lives and identities of Australian teachers. After surviving the beginning three years, Connell suggests that teachers make a crucial decision about “the choice between a career-structured approach and a non-career approach” to teaching (p. 162). Those taking the former approach typically seek further qualifications, take on additional roles, seek administrative experience, teach overseas, develop a specialty and/or seek a promotion. Those taking the latter approach either see teaching as a short-term job or reject any additional responsibilities in favour of remaining in the classroom. Teachers thus take a more externally or internally defined view of their career depending upon their personal circumstances.
With a similar desire to capture the complexity of teachers’ careers, Ivor Goodson pioneered a movement that aimed to capture teachers’ life histories. Goodson (1980) was motivated by his frustration with interactionist and ethnomethodological approaches, which he believed portrayed teachers as “interchangeable” and “timeless” so that a teacher was essentially the same in any context. Goodson’s work helped to overcome a dominance of either purely external or internal views of career. For Goodson, "life history and career history methods and longitudinal studies of entrants to teaching provide different ways of eliciting both these objective and subjective aspects of careers in teaching" (Ball & Goodson, 1985, p. 12). This approach led to a body of work addressing the factors that influence teachers’ careers, including major structural reforms (Goodson & Numan, 2002), changes in the nature of schooling (Goodson, 2006) and developing an understanding of teacher professionalism (Goodson & Choi, 2008).

More recently, Smith (2010) conducted a life history study of the factors affecting the career decisions of 40 female secondary school teachers in England. She developed a typology of careers based on whether teachers viewed their career paths as self-defined or externally defined. Three broad types of teachers viewed their careers as self-defined. ‘Planners' took a strategic approach to their career progression and sought promotions. ‘Pupil-centred’ teachers proactively chose the classroom over leadership. ‘Politicised leaders’ sought leadership positions in order to influence change. On the other hand, a different three clusters of teachers viewed their career paths as externally defined. ‘Protégés’ avoided making deliberate career plans and needed the encouragement of a respected senior colleague to even consider taking on roles. ‘Pragmatists' took the view that other responsibilities (usually, but not always, motherhood) were the central factor around which career decisions were made. Finally, ‘protestors’ felt that their careers were limited by factors external to themselves (e.g., discrimination, lack of support). Smith’s work provides an excellent example of the need to understand how teachers determine for themselves the relative importance of the internal and external dimensions of their careers.

**New career trajectories: 21st century professional priorities.**

The most recent research into teachers’ careers has sought to capture the ways in which today’s teachers make career decisions and determine their professional priorities by seeking new career trajectories – ones that do not necessarily fit distinctive
horizontal or vertical pathways. Whilst this research draws on a range of different methodologies and sub-populations of teachers, the broad consensus is that there is a need to redefine what it means to have a teaching career in the twenty-first century.

In their influential and frequently cited article, Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman and Kardos (2001) interviewed fifty first- and second-year US teachers to determine what conceptions of career these new teachers held. More than two-thirds of their sample identified that teaching would be a short-term career. These teachers held either an “exploring orientation” to see if teaching fitted their needs, or a “contributing orientation” where teaching was a way to make a short-term contribution to society (p. 307). The remaining third of the teachers in this study, who planned to stay, did not typically see themselves as remaining in traditional classroom roles: “when respondents talked about a life-long career in teaching, what they often meant was a lifelong career in education . . . They anticipated wanting variety, new challenges, and different roles and responsibilities as their careers progressed” (p. 306). Peske et al. proposed a “mixed model” for the teaching career, with a combination of dedicated and accomplished teachers to lead and mentor, whilst also having a variety of entry pathways to allow others to make short-term, but crucially valuable contributions. A comparable conclusion was drawn by Rinke (2011) in a small longitudinal study examining how eight teachers conceived of their career moves. She conducted multiple interviews with each teacher over two years. Her analysis suggests that their career moves could be situated along a continuum from those who want to ‘participate’ in teaching for a limited period of time to those who wanted to ‘integrate’ fully into the education system.

In a similar vein, Smethem (2007) has also questioned the linear career trajectory typically proposed for teachers. Her research focused on teachers’ conceptions of career, using data (attitudinal survey, written journals and interviews) collected for three cohorts of six beginning secondary teachers over three years (N=18). She identified a threefold typology of teachers: “career teachers”, who committed to teaching as a long-term career with ambitions for promotion; “classroom teachers”, who preferred to remain in the classroom, although not necessarily in a full-time or permanent capacity; and “portfolio teachers”, for whom teaching was a temporary career and one of many within their work portfolio (p. 470). Having a family and excessive workloads were the two key reasons teachers planned to leave the classroom. Smethem notes that ‘portfolio teachers’ present a challenge for school administrators, firstly because school structures are still dominated by a linear career
conception, and secondly because a lack of continuity may affect student-teacher relationships.

Taking a broader view, Rippon’s (2005) research focused on the cultural dimensions of career trajectories, beyond both the visible structural conditions and individual teachers’ subjective experiences. Rippon collected twenty life histories from Scottish teachers and, using a grounded theory approach, identified two dominant career cultures. The “secure culture” considered teaching as either a “vocation” that was dependent upon long service to classroom teaching, or as a “public service job”, with a focus on organisational structures and incremental rewards (p. 282). The second, less predominant culture was the “investment culture” built on a desire to work in the education sector more broadly and seeking out job opportunities characterised by challenge and change (p. 284). Rippon argues that the prevailing discourse must change from talking about the ‘teaching profession’ to the ‘education profession’:

The term ‘teaching profession’ portrays a career that begins and ends with teaching and this makes it less attractive to those seeking a varied career. The investment culture provides a catalyst for teachers to embrace the image of the ‘educationalist’ and their career to be located ‘in education’ as a more accurate depiction of the range of work experiences they can expect. (p. 287)

Rippon argues that teachers make career decisions based on the dominant career culture in their school and that these two cultures are starting to function awkwardly side-by-side as a new generation of teachers enters the workforce. Rippon sees this as a positive (although potentially uncomfortable) opportunity to help re-define the modern teaching career.

Two further US studies highlight the challenging fact that many teachers plan to minimise their time in the classroom. Margolis (2008) focused on teachers with 4-6 years experience (in Huberman’s “stabilisation” phase) and how they conceived of their career path. Using a combination of field notes, online discussions and interviews, he followed a group of seven second-stage teachers who were recruited as teacher mentors over a year. Margolis argues that “there is evidence that a new career cycle is indeed emerging in the teaching profession” as six of the seven teachers in this study were actively seeking skills and experiences to take them out of the classroom (p. 183). These teachers sought roles that were both “regenerative” (keeping them enthused about their teaching) and also “generative” (widening their scope of professional influence) (p. 174). He concludes that the mentor role may be part of the process towards developing innovative ways to restructure teachers’ work. Similarly,
Rinke (2009) conducted a case study of eight secondary science teachers working in challenging urban schools and followed their career decisions over a two-year period. She focused on the teachers’ thought processes as they evaluated their professional direction and made career choices. Rinke found that the teachers were in an active process of exploring their career options and seeking out a professional path. Like Margolis, the teachers in Rinke’s study all planned to leave the classroom: “all of the case study teachers envisioned their own unique professional directions, including support roles, administration, graduate school, and even new careers outside of education. However, none of them saw themselves in the classroom for a long-term” (p. 1105). Both studies conclude that career pathways within schools that keep teachers connected to the classroom, but not in purely teaching roles, will be necessary to retain these teachers beyond the short term.

Taken together, the studies of Peske et al. (2001), Smethem (2007), Rippon (2005), Margolis (2008) and Rinke (2009) suggest that teaching needs to evolve beyond its current classroom-bound definition. Many of the teachers in these studies are seeking neither traditional horizontal roles nor vertical pathways towards the Principalship. Rather, they hope for alternative trajectories that may enable them to remain connected to the classroom whilst expanding their teaching role. The difference amongst the teachers in these studies is the extent to which their educational jurisdictions and administrators were willing or able to provide them with these newer trajectories. The present study seeks to make a contribution to this small but cohesive body of literature, providing an Australian perspective on the different trajectories envisioned by second-stage teachers.

**Summary.**

Part one of the literature review has explored the micro level conceptions of a teacher’s career, considering each teacher as an individual ‘career actor’ determining his or her own professional priorities and career decisions. The two main approaches to this have been to either focus on specific career stages or to focus on the career as a trajectory. The former included an examination of existing teacher career cycle models used to make sense of teachers’ careers, including the literature base into second-stage teachers. The latter included the main distinctions between external and internal conceptions of career and studies into newer, alternative trajectories. In relation to the present study, the literature presented here provides the underpinning for exploring how teachers in this study conceive of their career trajectories. Whilst Part One has
considered the personal dimensions of the career, Part Two will expand to consider broader structural and policy factors that impact upon the individual teacher’s career experiences.

**Part Two: Careers at the meso level – School structures and policies surrounding teachers**

The next part of this review will expand to consider teachers' work at the meso level, where teachers careers are located within the context of the broader school structures and systems within which they work. There are two main themes within this literature: firstly, the need to ‘sustain’ teachers’ careers, with a focus on the factors that support teacher retention and minimise teacher attrition; and secondly, the desire to ‘develop’ teachers careers’, with an emphasis on teacher professionalism and the introduction of teaching Standards and certification processes. Whilst these two aspects of the literature approach teachers' work in different ways, together they encapsulate the organisational and policy framework within which teachers' careers take place.

**Sustaining Careers**

Once qualified to make the transition from pre-service to in-service teacher, many different variables will then influence the duration of a teacher’s career. At some point in his or her career trajectory, each teacher must decide when to exit the profession, and for many this decision-making process comes well before their permanent retirement from the workforce. This section of the review will first consider the key empirical studies into teacher retention and attrition, and will then examine factors specific to both teachers and schools that the data suggests impact upon attrition rates. This literature helps to frame the organisational context for the second-stage teachers in this study and offers important insights into those planning to exit teaching in the short term.

**Retention and attrition.**

A focus on teacher retention and attrition has been highly influential in conceptualising teachers’ careers. Early career teacher attrition is regularly framed within a rhetoric of crisis, and has recently been characterised as having “reached epidemic proportions” in Australia (Gallant & Riley, 2014, p. 562). The lack of a cohesive system for collecting teacher workforce data across the different states and school sectors creates a
disparity between the reported teacher retention figures and actual numbers. In its recent *Schools Workforce* report (2012), the Productivity Commission noted the need to collect more comprehensive and systematic data on the teaching workforce (p. 160). However, an understanding of Australian teacher attrition can be pieced together by looking across several large data sets.

The National Teaching Workforce Dataset (NTWD) reported that in 2013, on average 5.7% of teachers allowed their registration to lapse (Willett, Segal, & Walford, 2014, p. 81). There was wide variation here, with rates as low as 2.15% in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and as high as 15.94% in the Northern Territory (NT). However, the requirement for all teachers to be registered varies between the states, with NSW teachers only currently required to be registered if they commenced teaching after 2004. Furthermore, many teachers keep up their registration as an ‘insurance policy’, making this an inaccurate retention measure (Haesler, 2012). In NSW government schools, on average 3.3% of teachers in their first year and 10.5% of teachers in their first five years officially resign from a teaching position (NSW Government, 2012, p. 19). This figure, however, excludes teachers without permanent work. About 22% of primary and 15% of secondary teachers are working on a fixed term or casual basis, and less than half of all teachers aged 25 or under are employed in a permanent position (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). Thus the official figures only capture part of the population.

A recent report estimated that up to 25% of beginning teachers leave within their first five years (Australian Government, 2007c, p. 87). Noting that it was a “somewhat conservative” rate, the Productivity Commission also used 25% attrition in their recent calculations (Productivity Commission, 2012, p. 100). Riley and Gallant (2010) place their estimate higher, suggesting that approximately 40% of Australian teachers leave within their first five years. These figures are consistent with numbers in both the US (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013, p. 22) and the UK (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006, p. 1), although there exists much greater variability for other countries (OECD, 2005, p. 171). In the most recent *Staff in Australia’s Schools (SiAS)* survey, only around half of all teachers stated that they intended to make teaching their lifelong career, and two in five early career teachers reported that they “have not yet committed to teaching as a career” (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 107). Approximately 30% of Australian qualified teachers are employed in occupations outside of teaching (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003, p. 23). There is also data to suggest that some teachers who leave teaching will return to it later in

The US literature in this field defines teachers as ‘stayers’, ‘leavers’ or ‘movers’ (those who transfer schools) and this framework has shaped the research into teacher retention (Bobbitt, Leich, Whitener, & Lynch, 1994). Ingersoll (2001) was amongst the first scholars to challenge the dominant view that the teacher shortage problem in the US was due to a supply-side issue with recruiting teachers, arguing instead that it was caused by a “revolving door” of teachers exiting the profession early. Whilst this has obvious fiscal costs, beginning teachers are also, on average, less effective in improving student achievement than their more experienced colleagues (Rockoff, 2004). High teacher turnover can also affect school climate and make it difficult for schools to build capacity or implement long-term changes (Guin, 2004). High teacher turnover may negatively affect teacher collegiality and trust and lead to a loss of the ‘institutional knowledge’ that helps schools operate effectively (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). The literature focuses on identifying trends within the data to illuminate reasons behind the attrition figures. This research falls into three broad categories: teacher factors, student factors and school factors.

**Teacher factors.**
Several teacher demographic factors have been shown to correlate positively with the likelihood of attrition. These studies have all taken place in the US, where the annual *Schools and Staffing Survey* and *Teacher Follow-up Survey* facilitate data collection. There is a relationship between a teacher’s age and attrition; as a proportion of all “leavers”, teachers aged under 30 or over 50 make up the greatest proportion of leavers (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014, p. 7). The age at which a teacher enters the profession also has an effect, with teachers who started their careers in their thirties or older more likely to remain in teaching than those who started under thirty (Borman & Dowling, 2008, p. 385). Gender is another factor, with women having significantly higher rates of attrition than men (Addi-Raccah, 2005; Goldring et al., 2014). Ethnicity is also relevant, with white teachers 1.36 times more likely to leave teaching than their non-white colleagues (Borman & Dowling, 2008, p. 385). One small study by Su (1997) suggests that there are differences between white and minority (African American, Hispanic and Asian American) teachers’ reasons for leaving teaching.
Teacher education levels and qualifications have also been shown to relate to attrition. In a meta-analytic review, Borman and Dowling (2008) found that teachers with postgraduate degrees were slightly more likely to leave than those with only undergraduate degrees. Podgursky, Monroe and Watson’s (2004) longitudinal study of Missouri teachers also found that teachers with higher university entry scores were more likely to exit the profession than their lower-achieving colleagues. Similarly, a study of more than 11,000 US teachers found that teachers with university entrance exam scores in the top quartile were twice as likely to have left within four years as those with scores in the bottom quartile (Henke, Chen, Geis, & Knepper, 2000). These data confirm the concern that the ‘best and brightest’ are more likely to leave teaching. Finally, the data suggests that specialisation is also a factor. Secondary teachers have higher rates of attrition than their primary colleagues, with maths and science teachers exiting the profession at higher rates than all other subjects (Henke, Zahn, & Carroll, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001). These studies illustrate broad attrition and retention trends from the perspective of individual teacher characteristics.

**Student factors.**

There are features within the student population that also contribute to teaching’s “revolving door”. A substantial body of US research demonstrates that schools with large populations of disadvantaged, minority and/or low-achieving students have greater difficulty in both attracting and retaining teachers (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, & Wyckoff, 2011; Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005a; Scafidi, Sjoquist, & Stinebrickner, 2007). Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin (2004) have shown that teacher transfers are strongly related to student characteristics. Teachers leave schools with students in the bottom achievement quartile at a much higher rate than those in the top quartile (p. 341). Students with some of the highest needs (those from low SES backgrounds, minority backgrounds and those with lower levels of academic achievement) are more likely to be taught by teachers with both lower qualifications and less classroom experience (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).

There is a longstanding tendency for teachers to seek positions geographically close to where they grew up and, to a lesser extent, went to university (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005b). Beyond the school gate, neighbourhood characteristics, such as socio-economic status and the availability of local amenities, also affect a teacher’s decision about where to teach (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, & Wyckoff, 2010). In Australia, schools in rural and remote locations are typically hardest to staff (Handal,
Watson, Petocz, & Maher, 2013; Roberts, 2004). Data from McKenzie et al. (2014) show that teachers working in rural and remote schools are less experienced than their metropolitan colleagues (p. 80) and report higher rates of intention to leave teaching early (p. 102). Schools in certain outer metropolitan areas, particularly those with large populations of students from low-SES and non-English speaking backgrounds, are also more likely to be ‘hard to staff’ and to experience higher teacher turnover (MCEETYA, 2003b). However, these data can be interpreted very differently. Large quantitative studies by Ladd (2011) and Loeb, Darling-Hammond and Luczak (2005) have found that the key reason underlying this finding has less to do with the students and more to do with the environment and working conditions. Similarly, Johnson, Kraft and Papay (2012) surveyed more than 25,000 public school teachers in Massachusetts about their working conditions, job satisfaction and career intentions, and combined these findings with student demographic and achievement data. Their results suggest that teachers who leave disadvantaged schools do so because they “reject the dysfunctional contexts in which they work, rather than the students they teach . . . Measures of the school environment explain away much of the apparent relationship between teacher satisfaction and student demographic characteristics” (p. 4). In discussing the school environment, teachers were predominantly concerned with the school’s culture, leadership and staff relationships rather than more tangible issues such as clean facilities or access to ICT.

**School factors.**

The most readily quantifiable of the school factors, increasing teacher salaries, has been shown to decrease attrition rates (Imazeki, 2005; Krieg, 2006). In several US studies, poor salary is the most frequent reason teachers cite for why they left (Ingersoll, 2003; Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007). Connell (2010) describes Australian teachers’ salaries as “around the average for all professionals . . . [but] certainly not in the same bracket as an experienced doctor, accountant, stockbroker or corporate executive” (p. 345). In a survey of more than 1500 beginning teachers, salary was the third-most common workplace concern, after workload and student behaviour (Australian Education Union, 2009). Adding depth through qualitative research, Buchanan (Buchanan, 2009a, 2009b, 2010) interviewed twenty-two Australian teachers who left the profession. Whilst some teachers in his study achieved substantial pay increases in their new careers, this was not their primary motivation for leaving. Many teachers were in fact happy to take a pay cut after teaching in return for better conditions and a more manageable workload. Whilst relatively low salaries are a
symptom of the low societal regard for teaching, Buchanan (2010) notes that "a substantial proportion of teachers choose their profession neither because of nor despite salary levels, but regardless of them" (p. 207). At the individual school level, lack of support, excessive workloads and the burden of working outside of school hours emerged as the key factors that drove these teachers from the classroom. Also using this data, Buchanan (2011) identified the ‘shock’ transition from pre-service to in-service, a poorly managed recruitment process and the unsatisfying, insecure nature of casual teaching as key structural factors in teacher attrition.

Other less tangible factors are also critical. Ingersoll (2003) found that, after salary, school climate has the most significant effect on US teacher attrition. Similarly, Wynn, Carboni and Patall (2007) found that six of the top eight reasons why first- and second-year teachers considered leaving related to school climate. Teachers who transferred were often seeking work environments in which “they could feel like professionals—sharing ideas and resources with colleagues and receiving respect and guidance from the principal” (p. 212). In a large longitudinal survey (n = 1,964) focused on the influence of school leaders on teacher attrition, Boyd et al. (2011) found that teachers’ perceptions of lack of support from administrators was by far the most significant influence on their decision to stay or leave. Whilst some evidence suggests that first-year teachers are more strongly influenced to leave or move schools by workplace conditions compared to more experienced teachers (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009), it appears that school leaders play a critical role in retaining teachers.

Induction and mentoring programs for early career teachers are frequently cited as a cost effective and practicable means of increasing teacher retention (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). The research strongly shows that induction programs, and especially those that include mentoring, improve a beginning teacher’s instructional practice (Stanulis & Floden, 2009), increases their likelihood of retention within their school (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) and have a positive impact on student outcomes (Rockoff, 2008). However, the literature also reveals some inconsistencies. Ingersoll and Kralik’s (2004) data analysis suggests that having a mentor in the same field or subject area is important, whilst Rockoff (2008) found that having a mentor who matched a teacher’s subject area has no impact on retention. Rockoff also found that having a mentor who previously worked in the same school was particularly beneficial, suggesting that new teachers need “school specific knowledge” along with classroom support (p. 4).
A recent large scale, longitudinal study of early career teachers (ECTs) notes that ECTs valued collaborating with a more experienced teacher to co-program and co-teach more highly than the feedback and advice of formal mentoring, suggesting the need to “reshape the type of assistance provided and re-conceptualise the role of mentor” (Schuck et al., 2011, p. 12). ECTs report that their ability to improve student engagement, their access to high quality collegial support, peer collaboration and professional learning are the key factors that support them to remain in the profession (Buchanan, Prescott, Schuck, Aubusson, & Burke, 2013; Burke et al., 2013). Burke et al. (2015) also report that the extent to which ECTs value these different types of support is associated with their intention to stay or leave teaching beyond the short term.

**Stayers, leavers, movers and shifters: understanding career decision-making.**

Whilst the studies cited above provide a broad perspective on the complexity of teacher attrition, they need to be understood within the context of teacher career decision-making and the research presented earlier in this review. Buchanan (2009b) has convincingly argued that “the question of teacher attrition has been under-problematised” (p. 2). A sole focus on the number of teacher exits ignores the important within-career issues that shape teacher career decisions. Given the prevailing discourse on twenty-first century employees having multiple different careers across their working lives, Buchanan (2009a) suggests that “teacher attrition is a fact of life” and therefore that “movement out of the teaching profession will become the norm rather than the exception” (p. 45). The latest research argues for the need to shift away from a focus on retaining early career teachers and towards being able to “sustain” them through the complex, imperfect processes of career “identity shifting and shaping” (Clandinin et al., 2015; Long et al., 2012; Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012; Schaefer, 2013). This places the focus on understanding teachers’ decisions to stay, leave or move within the broader perspective of career decision-making and identity development.

In her book *Careers in the Classroom*, Yee (1990) argues that retention and attrition need to be understood within the broader perspective of teachers’ careers, rather than as isolated decisions. Yee conducted a case study of teachers in three secondary schools, including interviews with former and current teachers, field notes, observations and a questionnaire. She first classified teachers’ reasons for entering teaching as either “good-fit” (they entered with positive attitudes) or as “weak-fit” (they
entered because there were no alternative jobs or teaching was their fallback) (p. 9).
She then compared this with their later decision to stay or leave teaching. Yee argues that these personal motivations need to be considered in conjunction with career choices and that, “situating the problem of attrition and retention within the larger frame of internally defined careers provides a richer, more complete way of approaching the problem” (p. 6).

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) conducted a crucial piece of research to understand the trends identified by Ingersoll (2003) and Wynn, Carboni and Patall (2007) above. They interviewed 50 first-year teachers as they commenced teaching in 1999 and again three years later. Their sample were categorised as settled stayers (n=13), unsettled stayers (n=15), movers (n=11) and leavers (n=11). Across all categories, the one factor that teachers considered more highly than any other was their perceived ability to be effective in the classroom. These teachers highlighted “the many ways in which the working conditions of their schools – teaching assignments, collegial interaction, curriculum, administration, discipline – either supported or stymied them in that search for success” (p. 583). Their retention or attrition patterns were thus a reflection of their need for school environments that aligned with their professional aspirations. These findings were echoed by Hammerness (2008) in her longitudinal case study. She described this search for success as a “teacher’s vision”, his or her “images of ideal practice” (p. 3). When analysing teachers’ decisions to move schools, Hammerness noted that their choices were predominantly influenced by their “vision” and the hope that their new school would be a better “fit”. These studies offer a finer, more intimate perspective on attrition figures.

Beyond stayers, leavers and movers, US researchers have recently added the further category “shifters”, those who leave the classroom to take on another role in education (Olsen & Anderson, 2007). These teachers remained committed to many of their original reasons for becoming teachers, but felt that these goals were not being met in the classroom. This included working within school systems (e.g., Administration, staff development, teacher support) and outside of them (e.g., Tertiary education, curriculum development, educational software production). Olsen and Anderson acknowledge that “shifting” outside of the classroom leaves classroom vacancies, disrupts school cohesion and “carries with it the potential to further degrade the teaching profession and reinforce notions of teaching as a “stepping stone” to more “elite” careers in education” (p. 25). Nonetheless, “shifting” is another important facet of attrition.
In a related longitudinal study of more than 1,000 teachers, Quartz, Thomas, Anderson, Masyn, Lyons and Olsen (2008) found that 70% of attrition from their sample was due to role changing, rather than leaving education entirely. They argue that the existence of other roles often “pulls” teachers out of classrooms as a perhaps unintended consequence of moves to ‘professionalise’ teachers. The critical window appears to be teachers in their fourth to sixth year; whilst 95% of the sample was still full-time classroom teachers in their third year, only 68% were by their seventh year (p. 232). Men were less likely to leave education entirely but more likely than women to shift roles. They conclude that role changing “is a form of sanctioned attrition that should be added to the landscape of teacher retention research” (p. 245). This opens the question of whether the benefits of having these additional roles (creating new career pathways and keeping people within the education system) out-weigh the costs of losing these teachers from direct student contact.

Most recently, Lindqvist, Nordanger and Carlsson (2014) followed a cohort of 87 Swedish teachers through annual semi-structured questionnaires and follow-up interviews. They tracked these teachers over nineteen years, noting each year as the teachers stayed, left, moved or shifted roles. Just over half of the cohort had careers with “straight-line trajectories”, working consistently as teachers for the duration. Fifteen teachers left altogether, six of whom left within the first five years. The remaining quarter of the cohort had more unpredictable paths, leaving and re-entering teaching at multiple points in time. The authors concluded that there are two main career approaches, divided between “those who view and live teaching as a long-term profession and those who see and live it in a more exploratory manner” (p. 102). Reflecting on this cohort of teachers, Lindqvist and Nordanger (2016) have recently noted the relationship between personal identity and professional identity, arguing that “career decisions are deeply embedded in the identity-making processes of individuals” (p. 94). Individual frames of reference, backgrounds and life histories are thus inseparable from teacher career decisions. The present study seeks to contribute to the teacher attrition literature through two important second-stage teacher sub-groups: those seeking alternative roles and those planning to leave education altogether. Both trajectories offer insights into the diversity of second-stage teacher career plans.
Developing Careers

The previous section of the review considered research into the factors that ‘push’ or ‘pull’ teachers out of the classroom. Beyond the immediate concern over teacher retention, researchers have also considered how teachers’ careers can best be developed and the degree to which both school systems and individual teachers are responsible for this. The literature review will now turn to consider the policy and reform efforts aimed at developing teachers’ careers as another meso level element. The literature on teacher identity and professional development is vast and beyond the scope of this review. The intention here is to focus on the literature on teaching as a ‘profession’ and how this intersects with the notion of teaching as a ‘career’. This section will begin by outlining the evolution of school and teacher reform policies over the past four decades. The review will then turn to consider the key contested concepts of teacher ‘professionalism’ and teacher ‘quality’, leading to the development of teaching Standards. This section will conclude by discussing how recent performative measures have changed the nature of teaching as work.

School reform and global movements.

Current reform efforts in Australian schools can be traced back to the Whitlam government’s ‘Schools in Australia’ report (Karmel, 1973). This report advocated for significantly increased school funding and focused on the importance of school quality. Whilst historically schools had a responsibility for giving students “equality of opportunity” and “equal access to schools of roughly equal standards” (p. 16), Karmel argued that it was time to extend this to “equality of outcomes” so that schools “enable all groups of children to reach an equal average level of educational attainment” [original emphasis] (p. 22). In practice, this meant that teachers had a larger role to play in the enormous social changes taking place. Karmel recast the relationship between schools and their communities and argued that some students would require additional support to acquire the basic skills necessary to participate in society. In the wake of this landmark report, both liberal and conservative governments have pursued school reforms more or less continuously for the past forty years.

School reform intensified from the 1990s, as international test comparisons highlighted the relative success of countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea and Japan. Western policy makers responded anxiously with increased standardisation and micro-management of teaching and learning (Hargreaves, 2003). The increased collection of student data also highlighted the large achievement gaps between more and less
advantaged students and escalated the fear that many were not developing basic literacy and numeracy skills (Darling-Hammond, 2010; S. Thomson, 2011). Education was considered not in terms of its value as a social process to “nurture and develop capacities for practice”, but instead through a neoliberal paradigm of human capital formation and building a productive workforce (Connell, 2013, p. 104). Teachers were thus positioned as “the core profession” and “the midwives of the knowledge society”, helping students to continually learn, innovate and adapt to survive in the globalised, information-dense world (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 160). School performance, now judged on a global scale, was explicitly tied to recruiting, developing and retaining “high-performing” teachers (Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010).

Under the Australian Constitution, school education is a state responsibility, and a high degree of inter-governmental cooperation is necessary to implement reforms. These have been documented in the ‘Hobart Declaration on Schooling’ (MCEETYA, 1989), superseded by the ‘Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century’ (MCEETYA, 1999) and most recently by the ‘Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians’ (MCEETYA, 2008). The Melbourne Declaration led to a rare degree of momentum and bipartisan support for school reform. Key developments include the establishment (and partial implementation) of an Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012), the expansion of technology in schools (COAG, 2009), the collection and reporting of student achievement data through the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test, the publication of comparative school data through the ‘MySchool’ website and a move towards increasing autonomy for public schools (NSWDEC, 2011). These developments have been criticised for imposing a neoliberal, market-based view of schooling that emphasises competitive testing and choice ahead of the social and cultural purposes of education (Connell, 2013).

As school reform discourses have become increasingly globalised, many of Australia’s policies have been “borrowed” from the US and UK (Lingard, 2010, 2011). Australian reforms have often paralleled similar initiatives with a lag of around ten years, and various authors have written extensively on the effects of similar reforms in the US (Fullan, 2007b) and UK (S. J. Ball, 2013). Levin (1998) described how countries uncritically imitate rather than learn from each other’s policy experiences, likening this to a “policy epidemic” (p. 138). Education policies are now typically cast in economic terms that emphasise workforce competitiveness. They suggest that ‘failed’ schools can be rescued through market commodification, positioning standards, accountability
and testing as the key outputs of reform (Levin, 2010).

**Policy development.**

In parallel with schooling reforms, successive Australian governments have also debated reforms into teacher professionalism and teacher quality. The initial Karmel report (1973) focused on the quality of schools and education overall, and a second report (Karmel, 1985) argued that raising educational quality was a whole school endeavour, rather than the responsibility of individual teachers. Although Australia’s deteriorating fiscal situation led to a shift away from the provision of more resources towards an emphasis on more efficient use of existing resources, these policies maintained the twin goals of “quality of education for all and equality of education through access and outcomes” [original emphasis] (Boomer, 1985, p. 13).

In the late 1980s, a shift in the rhetoric away from ‘quality education’ towards ‘quality teaching’ and ‘quality teachers’ emerged. The federal minister for education, John Dawkins, invited the states to participate in a national reform program that marked a turning point in how teachers were positioned within policy:

> The quality of teaching is central to the quality of our schools . . . We must examine means of improving the initial and on-going training of teachers to meet the demands of a changing educational, economic and social environment. (Dawkins, 1988, p. 5)

Policy makers also took greater notice of the international context, with the OECD emphasising a causal connection between the wellbeing of a country, and the quality of its teachers: “a healthy society and economy means a well-functioning education system which means an active, motivated and highly competent teaching force” (OECD, 1989, p. 4). An Australian government report into ‘Teacher Quality’ released at the same time argued that, “even greater emphasis needs to be placed on the role of teachers in achieving quality education and that the issues of the quality of teachers and of teaching are of prime and national importance” (R. Smith, 1989, p. 4). In defining teacher quality, the report argued that the professional development of teachers should be “viewed as a continuum, commencing at pre-service, moving through entry and induction and continuing with regular inservicing throughout the teacher’s career” (p. 2). This tied teacher quality to career development across the span of a teacher’s working life.
Teachers’ careers continued to be part of the policy discussion in Dawkins’ landmark statement, ‘Quality of Teaching’ (1990). This report acknowledged the impact on teachers’ careers of both structural inefficiencies (good teachers being promoted out of the classroom, unsystematic teacher skill development) and structural rigidities (teachers tied to one employer, no portability of benefits and no cross-state recognition of qualifications). Dawkins argued that low teacher morale was affecting the quality of teaching, citing inadequate career structures and poor training opportunities as key problems. The fear was that good teachers would leave the classroom and that teaching would become “the career path of least resistance into which one enters as a last resort and leaves at the earliest opportunity” (p. 3). In response, Dawkins introduced the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) category to expand the career structures available to teachers. ASTs were described as “super teachers” who would remain in the classroom if their higher skill sets were recognised with higher salaries (p. 5).

Extending on the AST concept, Ramsey (1990) outlined a plan to create an “integrated career structure” for teachers that would also improve teacher quality. This included a series of structured short- and long-term goals, integrated professional development, entitlements and opportunities for leave. This detailed, prescriptive approach to teachers’ careers sought to counter the prevailing view that “teachers’ career futures extend out across a featureless plain with very little on the horizon. The challenge is not so much to restructure teachers’ careers as to create a career structure” (p. 104). The AST program ultimately failed because the salary increases were too small, teachers were often burdened with extra administrative work which took them out of the classroom, and problems of stress, over-work and burnout were common (Dinham & Scott, 1997; Ingvarson & Chadbourne, 1997; Watkins, 1994). This policy failure, along with sustained industrial unrest over pay and conditions, led to an even greater concern about the status and strength of the teaching profession. In a Commonwealth inquiry, Crowley (1998) noted a “widespread crisis of morale amongst teachers” and a fear that “the status of the profession is disturbingly low” (p. 1). To reverse this trend, the report advocated for teachers to become a self-regulating, autonomous professional group through the provision of responsibility for setting their own professional standards (p. 29). Not only would this support teachers’ work, it would help to reverse perceptions that teaching was a low status job not worthy of the term ‘profession’.
In New South Wales, this argument was re-iterated by Ramsey (2000), who emphasised that teaching was “not yet” a profession because “there are no standards to describe teacher practice in New South Wales, and teachers have no accountability other than to meet minimum competency requirements” (p. 31). Ramsey argued that self-regulation was a defining feature of any profession and teachers must be given the responsibility to set and maintain their standards of practice. Ramsey identified a sense of frustration amongst parents when it came to teacher quality, quoting one parent as saying: “I know more about the contents of a can of tomatoes than I do about the quality of my children’s teachers” (p. 119). The federal government also expressed concern that teaching was no longer a “career of choice”, attributing this to both low public esteem of teaching and the lack of a cohesive national teaching profession to drive the importance of high standards (Dow, 2003, p. 104).

Most recently, the ‘Melbourne Declaration’ articulated the aim to “attract, develop, support and retain a high-quality teaching and school leadership workforce” (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 11). The Council of Australian Government’s (COAG) recent National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality has sought to “deliver system-wide reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders” (COAG, 2008, p. 4). Measured as ten specific “outputs”, this policy articulated the development of teaching Standards, rewards for quality teaching, a professional learning framework, and national consistency of teacher registration and accreditation (p. 7). Each of these will be discussed further below. A recent government focus on Australia’s complex, opaque and inequitable school funding system has sought to shift the focus of this debate back towards a broader education quality agenda (Gonski, 2011). Ken Boston (2014) summed this up in a recent public address:

We do not talk of doctor quality or dentistry quality: we talk of the quality of health care or the quality of oral health . . . It is the same with teaching. We should not talk about teacher quality, but about the quality of education . . . There is great variation in the quality of education from school to school. (p. 23)

Reforming teacher professionalism.

Over the past century teacher professionalism (quality and standards of practice) and professionalisation (status and standing) have undergone several transformations. When mass public education expanded in the early twentieth century, teaching was learnt through a practical apprenticeship that focused on classroom control.
Hargreaves (2000) has called this the “pre-professional age”, where teaching was considered to be “managerially demanding, but technically simple” and the “good teacher” was one who “devoted herself [sic] to her craft” (p. 156). During the 1960s, teacher education became embedded in universities and the salaries and conditions of teachers gradually improved. This was the age of the “autonomous professional” with teachers given a greater degree of trust, job security and status. However, teaching was still considered to be only “partially professionalised” (Lortie, 1975, p. 22) and ranked as a “semi-professional occupation” (Connell, 1985, p. 161). Geer (1966) argued that teaching was a “would-be profession” and that teachers lacked the commitment necessary to make teaching a “real profession” because too few approached it as “an uninterrupted, lifelong career” (p. 31). Such commitment was the defining element of any profession. She also highlighted the gendered nature of this distinction, noting the broad generalisation that “women do not want to teach continuously and men want advancement beyond the classroom” (p.32).

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) articulated six discourses that have defined and redefined teacher professionalism. A ‘classical’ view of professionalism emphasised the need for a defined body of knowledge and self-regulated standards of practice. This was evident in efforts to codify teachers’ expertise through concepts such as ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ (Shulman, 1987) and ‘technological pedagogical content knowledge’ (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). A ‘flexible’ view of teacher professionalism instead emphasised collaboration and collegiality amongst local teacher communities. This developed into ‘practical’ professionalism, which emphasised the importance of teacher judgement and the notion of the teacher as a “reflective practitioner” (Schon, 1983). Later, ‘extended’ professionalism took teachers’ work beyond the boundaries of the classroom to include peer coaching, mentoring, and extended professional learning.

As reform agendas have continued to expand, the twenty-first century teacher is considered by Hargreaves (2000) to be in a “post-professional” age, struggling to keep up with ever-changing curricula, external testing, greater scrutiny, and marketisation. The policy reforms outlined above seek to define the aspects of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility that constitute professionalism and have been characterised as a battle between stakeholders to define and shape these contested ideas (Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting, & Whitty, 2000; Whitty, 2000). Reforms to teacher professionalism have changed the nature of teaching as work, requiring teachers to be simultaneously flexible in coping with change and rigid in complying with external
requirements (Lawn, 1996; Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid, & Shacklock, 2000).

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) argue that these reforms have created paradoxical tensions, as teaching is simultaneously *reprofessionalised* in certain areas and *deprofessionalised* in others (p. 3). They suggest that professionalism is now used as a “rhetorical ruse” so that teachers will “misrecognise their own exploitation and then comply willingly with increased intensification of their labour in the workforce” (p. 20).

More recently, in the UK, Day and Smethem (2009) have argued that current school reforms challenge both the individual and collective professional identities of teachers, and ultimately change what it means to be a professional teacher. Brennan (1996, 2009) has labelled the new model of teacher professionalism as “managerial professionalism”, with an emphasis on efficiently meeting external, standardised criteria and documenting work for public accountability. Sachs (2001) has further argued that this mode requires teachers to adopt an “entrepreneurial identity” to compete for scarce resources and become more individualistic and controlling in their work (p. 157). As an alternative, Sachs (2003b) advocates for teachers to take on the mantle of the “activist professional”, emphasising a democratic focus on equity, social justice and collaborative teaching in the service of students, parents and their communities.

**Teacher quality and quality teaching.**

Intertwined with the public discussion teacher professionalism, there has been a parallel focus on teacher quality, often connected with a discourse of ‘failing’ schools in ‘crisis’ (Scott & Dinham, 2002). In an oft-cited international report, the OECD (2005) named “teacher quality” as “the single most important school variable influencing student achievement” (p. 26). This assertion focuses on a teacher’s ‘effect’ or ‘value-add’ as a measure of their “ability to increase students’ stock of human capital” (Jackson, Rockoff, & Staiger, 2014, p. 802). A large body of research, conducted largely by economists, has shown that higher quality teachers have more positive impacts on students’ test scores (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Leigh, 2010; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Rockoff, 2004), and even their success beyond school (Hanushek, 2011). John Hattie’s (2009) meta-analysis found that teachers have the largest *in school* influence on student outcomes, but that students themselves (including their home environment) have the largest overall influence. A recent Australian research synthesis into school effectiveness concluded that “family background and characteristics are more important than schools in determining
academic outcomes” (Emerson, Fear, Fox, & Sanders, 2012, p. 22). Despite these caveats, the revelation that high quality teaching can make a difference has been a rallying point for teachers and policy makers.

The focus on teacher quality has contributed to two related policy focuses. Firstly, there has been a renewed interest into pre-service teacher education. A longitudinal analysis by Leigh and Ryan (2008) showed a decline in the academic aptitude of entrants to pre-service degrees as measured by university entry scores: “between 1983 and 2003, the average percentile rank of those entering teacher education fell from 74 to 61, while the average rank of new teachers fell from 70 to 62” (p. 155). They attribute this decline to both falling average pay for teachers and rising average pay for other comparable occupations. Recent analysis by Ingvarson, Reid, Buckley, Kleinhenz and Masters (2014) also showed that less than half of the applicants for undergraduate teacher education courses had university admission scores above 70 and that “initial teacher education programs have the highest percentage of students entering with low ATAR scores” (p. 65). Other researchers have noted that education systems in ‘high performing’ countries typically make teacher education courses difficult to enter and focus on recruiting high-achieving school graduates into teaching (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann, & Burns, 2012).

A second policy response relates to the issue of quality teaching. Ingvarson and Rowe (2008) noted that Rivkin, Rockoff and Hanushek’s work is limited because it does not address teacher quality in terms of a teacher’s actual subject matter knowledge or pedagogical skill. Stemming from the ‘Authentic Pedagogies’ work in the US (Newmann & Marks, 1996) and the ‘Productive Pedagogies’ work in Queensland (Lingard, Hayes, & Mills, 2003), the NSW ‘Quality Teaching Model’ was developed to promote teacher self-reflection and improve practices (NSWDET, 2003). More recently, the model has been combined with the concept of ‘instructional rounds’ (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009) to guide professional development (Gore et al., 2012). The focus on quality has also been connected with the aim for equity. Dinham (2013) has argued that “the biggest equity issue in Australian education is a quality teacher in every classroom” (p. 94), highlighting the competing pressures on teachers to focus both on the ‘basics’ of literacy and numeracy whilst simultaneously addressing the ‘extras’ that society has delegated to schools. There are also frequent calls to attract high quality teachers to work in the most disadvantaged schools (Lampert, Burnett, & Davie, 2012; Rice, 2010).
Professional Standards for Teachers.

The most tangible outcome of the above discourses has been the production of written teaching Standards. The need for teachers to have standards similar to other professions was noted as far back as the Karmel Report (1973):

A mark of a highly skilled occupation is that those entering it should have reached a level of preparation in accordance with standards set by the practitioners themselves, and that the continuing development of members should largely be the responsibility of the profession . . . In Australia teachers as an occupational group have had relatively few opportunities to participate in decision-making. (p. 123)

Successive government reports identified the development of written standards as fundamental to improving both the professionalism and quality of the teaching workforce (Crowley, 1998; Dawkins, 1990; Ramsey, 2000; R. Smith, 1989). Elmore (1996) argued that standards create an important “external norm” that challenges teachers to look beyond themselves to improve their practice. Australia’s most vocal advocate for standards, Lawrence Ingvarson, has argued that teaching cannot claim to be a true profession without them because “standards give warrant to the claim that teaching is a profession with the capacity to evaluate its own practice and implement professional models of accountability” (Ingvarson, 2002a, p. 3).

Along with a ‘National Competency Framework for Beginning Teachers’ from the Australian Teacher Council, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia each developed their own standards during the late 1990s (Louden, 2000, p. 119). These efforts were all criticised for producing expansive lists of teacher duties, using opaque language and emphasising generic skills that decontextualised teachers’ work (p. 123). In recognition of the need for a shorter, more transparent set of standards, the federal government produced the ‘National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching’ (MCEETYA, 2003a). This document articulated four “career dimensions” for teachers: graduate, competence, accomplishment and leadership. The authors emphasised that these dimensions “do not signify levels of experience”, but rather describe “a broad continuum of professional development” (p. 9). This document laid the foundation for current standards frameworks in Australia.

However, two critical aspects of the original MCEETYA framework have been either ignored or distorted. Firstly, MCEETYA emphasised that its was producing a national framework to create national uniformity for teachers to “take up the challenge of
producing, educating and training a truly ‘Australian teacher’” (MCEETYA, 2003a, p. 4). However, in 2003 the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) was formed, and it used the MCEETYA framework to produce a set of generic standards for K-12 teachers in NSW (NSWIT, 2004). These Standards were only applied to teachers who commenced teaching from 2004 onwards, those who returned to teaching after an absence of five or more years, and those who came to NSW from interstate or overseas. These teachers were labelled as ‘New Scheme’ teachers. In 2010, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was formed as a national body and it developed a set of standards that were, again, intended to be national (AITSL, 2011). In 2012, the NSWIT amended their Standard to incorporate aspects of the AITSL Standards into their own separate set of Standards for NSW (NSWIT, 2012a)

Secondly, MCEETYA emphasised the need for multiple sets of national standards to achieve multiple purposes, with their framework providing “an architecture within which generic, specialist and subject-area specific professional standards can be developed” (MCEETYA, 2003a, p. 2). Ingvarson (2002a) articulated nine specific types of standards necessary at different points across the teacher career cycle. Whilst generic standards help determine what constitutes teachers’ work, they cannot articulate teachers’ skills and knowledge in specific curriculum areas or schooling levels (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007). Gannon (2012) argues that generic standards are typically only used in Australia to bureaucratise and regulate the profession and their over-use obscures the detailed aspects of quality teaching. Generic standards provide very limited guidance for professional learning because they exclude the “domain specific” aspects of teaching expertise (Ingvarson, 2010, p. 64). In response, many professional teaching associations developed content- and pedagogy-specific Standards, including for teachers of mathematics (AAMT, 2006), English (AATE/ALEA, 2002), science (ASTA, 2002) and librarians (ASLA, 2004). The key conflict here was between whether standards should be a developmental tool for professional learning or a regulatory tool for evaluation (T. Hayes, 2006).

Other countries including the US, UK, Chile, Mexico and New Zealand have also recently developed standards (OECD, 2013). In the UK, Standards implemented as part of the ‘threshold reforms’ have been criticised for emphasising teacher performance management and excluding teachers from their development (Ingvarson, 2002b). Goepel (2012, 2014) argues that the UK standards have been implemented without a strong professional body to advocate for teachers and have thus resulted in
“tick-box professionalism” and accountability measure. Evans (2008) argues that the UK standards have over-emphasised teachers’ behaviours, rather than their attitudes or intellectuality, and created a new professionalism based on accountability rather than autonomy. She notes, however, that the professionalism ‘prescribed’ by the standards may not reflect the professionalism that is enacted by teachers in practice (Evans, 2011). By contrast, the US ‘National Board for Professional Teaching Standards’ (NBPTS) system was introduced in a slower and more consultative way, and has gradually gained credibility amongst teachers. These standards were seen as a key tool for “mobilising reforms of the teaching career and helping to structure learning opportunities that reflect the complex, reciprocal nature of teaching work” (Darling-Hammond, 2008, p. 49). Certifying teachers through the NBPTS was also aimed at redesigning and differentiating the career structures for US teachers, through both creating new roles for certified teachers and by making the certification portable across states (S. M. Johnson, 2008). NBPTS certification can also create important career milestones for second-stage teachers (J. H. Berg, 2005).

**Teacher performance management.**

The process of meeting the Standards at the second compulsory levels (‘competent’ or ‘proficient’) is termed as ‘registration’ by AITSL, but as ‘accreditation’ in NSW. To achieve this, New Scheme teachers must collect evidence, present a portfolio for external assessment and have lessons observed by a mentor (NSWIT, 2012b). This must be completed within three years from graduation for full-time teachers and five years for casual or part-time teachers. Accreditation lasts for five years and must be maintained through 100 hours of continuing professional learning over that period (NSWIT, 2012c). This scheme will be expanded to apply to all teachers by 2018 (NSWDEC, 2013, p. 16). Failure to meet the Standards will result in a teacher being “removed from the profession” (p. 17). The Independent school sector has also developed its own standards and requires many of its teachers to gain additional accreditation through the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA, 2009).

There are also moves towards advanced certification for ‘accomplished’ and ‘lead’ teachers. Mayer (2009) outlined the need for a voluntary system of certification for highly accomplished teachers, arguing that it would “recognise, promote and reward quality teaching” and also “align with career paths and related remuneration” (p. 13). Advanced certification requires standards to articulate the specific skills and knowledge
held by accomplished teachers within particular teaching areas, e.g., early childhood, primary, secondary mathematics etc. (Ingvarson & Kleinhenz, 2006; Ingvarson, 2010). However moves in Australia towards certification have thus far been based upon generic standards, creating concern over quality and rigour (Ingvarson, 2013, p. 13).

The OECD’s most recent ‘Teaching and Learning International Survey’ (TALIS) found that more than 85% of Australian teachers reported receiving no recognition or reward for more effective teaching and that formal teacher appraisals have no impact on salary (OECD, 2009, p. 156). Dinham (2011) argues that Australia’s lock-step, annual incremental salary structures mean teachers must leave the classroom to earn more after eight years, creating a “hidden resignation spike” amongst teachers at this point in their careers (p. 3). It is also argued that salary levels influence the “academic quality” of those likely to enter teaching when compared to the salaries available in other professions (Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, & Wilkinson, 2007, p. 117). In a recent report for the Business Council of Australia, Dinham, Ingvarson and Kleinhenz argued that teachers’ pay should be tied to the different levels of accreditation and certification (BCA, 2008). Starting from a base level salary for graduate teachers, proficient teachers could be paid at 1.25 times, accomplished teachers 2 times and lead teachers 2.5 times the starting salary of a graduate teacher (p. 35). The NSW government has recently indicated that it will introduce a Standards-based salary framework to pay teachers according to their level of accreditation (NSWDEC, 2014b), with a similar system proposed for NSW Catholic systemic schools (Foundations for Excellence, 2014, p. 2).

In 2012, the federal government tasked AITSL with producing a ‘Performance and Development Framework’ to help establish a “performance and development culture” in Australian schools (AITSL, 2012b). The framework outlines a cycle of teacher reflection, goal setting, learning, feedback and review. AITSL argues that their framework will “support the career progression of teachers” whilst also providing “a more coherent and visible path through the career stages outlined in the Standards” (p. 8). Ingvarson (2013) suggests that this framework is deeply flawed. He argues that AITSL is not a truly independent body and “bears little resemblance to certification agencies in other professions” (p. 10). AITSL has also been asked to develop a “nationally consistent” rather than “national” system of certification, leading to multiple certifying bodies. In practice, state Ministers of Education have remained in charge of the Standards and been unwilling to trust the teaching profession with the responsibility for its own certification system.
Continuing professional learning.

Contemporary views of teacher professional learning emphasise its importance as a daily, continual and ongoing process (Fullan, 2007b, p. 35). Whilst the conventional ‘one-shot’ workshops still exist, there is a growing increase in professional learning that is integrated within a broader school improvement agenda that sees teachers working in collaborative networks over a sustained period (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Feiman-Nemser (2001) was among the first to articulate a professional learning “continuum” that spanned teachers’ careers from the pre-service and beginning phases right across the career lifecycle. This approach also reflects research showing that it takes approximately three to four years to develop competence as a new teacher, and approximately seven years to develop more advanced levels of proficiency (Berliner, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

In a report for the OECD, Coolahan (2002) positioned teachers as “lifelong learners”, and teacher professional learning as the essential element in “re-energising the career of teaching, opening up new career pathways” (p. 8). Owen (2005a) has used Huberman’s (1989) career cycle model and the ‘career continuum’ of the Standards (graduate, proficient, accomplished, lead) to connect career stages with differing professional learning needs. She argues that beginning teachers benefit most from induction and mentoring, experienced teachers are better served by being part of a professional learning community and advanced skills certification, and leaders benefit most from study groups and coaching. All of these approaches to professional development require supportive school leaders, highly collegial teacher teams and systematic workforce planning to ensure teachers have access to the ideal forms of learning at each career stage (Owen, 2005b, 2006). In an evaluation study of an initiative for experienced secondary teachers, Taylor, Yates, Meyer and Kinsella (2011) found that combining professional learning with the opportunity to take on new leadership roles created appealing new career pathways for teachers. These studies demonstrate that ongoing learning is integral to understanding teachers’ careers.

Government policies have taken a different approach. In 2012, AITSL released the ‘Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders’, which emphasised “the importance of professional learning in changing teacher and school leader behaviour in order to improve student outcomes” (AITSL, 2012a, p. 2). This is based on the premise that ongoing professional learning is essential to “bridge the gap” between written standards and raising student achievement through quality teaching (Elmore, 2002). In developing AITSL’s Charter, Timperley (2011) advocated
strongly for making professional learning “core school business” and emphasised that “improving outcomes for students forms the reason to engage in professional learning opportunities and the basis for evaluating its effectiveness” (p. 15). Professional learning is considered important largely in so far as it can be tied to measurable improvements in student outcomes (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2008).

Whilst there are of course great potential benefits to students from effective teacher professional learning, by focusing solely on this dimension authors such as Timperley (2011), Elmore (2002) and AITSL (2012) risk ignoring or minimising the important transformative role that professional learning can play throughout a teacher’s career. Dall’Alba and Sandberg (2006) have criticised linear standards and stage-based approaches to professional learning because they result in decontextualised learning. Hardy (2008) has highlighted the clash between managerial professional development and the collaborative, inquiry-oriented and long-term teacher ‘professional learning communities’ (PLCs) which are typically favoured by teachers. PLCs have been shown to be highly effective in transforming schools; however, they also risk being misused to create “contrived collegiality” (Owen, 2014, p. 54) or becoming “performance training sects” that result in proscribed, narrow teaching programs (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 184). The collaborative nature of PLCs also has the potential to open up new pathways within the teaching career because they “require changes to the traditional teacher role towards operating as co-facilitators and co-learners, and working in teacher teams” (Owen, 2015, p. 57). In its ideal form, teacher professional learning is about more than teachers acquiring new knowledge and skills; it supports the essential ongoing work of teacher professional identity formation (Mockler, 2011a, 2011b). The current focus on measured hours of professional development emphasises those activities that are easily counted as ‘evidence’ (Mockler, 2013) and ignores the relationship between teacher professional learning and career development.

**Performativity and the changing nature of teaching as work.**

In addition to changing the definition of what it means to be a ‘professional’ teacher, it is argued that these reforms have also changed the nature of teaching as work. Ball (2003) has captured the new ways in which teachers work in his descriptions of “performativity”. Ball claims that teachers’ work is regulated and “performed” in ways that can be counted as measures of productivity or displays of “quality” (p. 216). These reforms, he argues, not only change teachers’ work but also “change what it means to be a teacher” (p. 217). The result for teachers is uncertainty and instability, as they are
continually monitored and held accountable but are never sure if they are “doing enough” or “doing the right thing” in the face of continually changing demands (p. 220). There is an inherent tension here, as teachers need to be simultaneously flexible and compliant, and able to manage an intensified workload with diminished autonomy (Lawn, 1996; Smyth et al., 2000).

Day, Elliot and Kington (2005) have argued that current reform agendas have failed to acknowledge the importance of teachers’ individual and collective identities. They argue that the reforms have led to a great degree of confusion amongst teachers about their professional identity and if, how and when “they are now able to use their discretionary judgement — arguably at the heart of their sense of professionalism” (p. 566). Their new performative identities “challenge traditional notions of professionalism and professional purposes and practices” (p. 566). Sachs (2003a) supports standards as a way of helping teachers to reflect on their work and identity, however she argues that the Australian standards have emphasised “bureaucratic rather than professional controls over teaching” (p. 179) because they are controlled by government agencies rather than the teaching profession. In their analysis of both the UK and Australian standards, Ryan and Bourke (2013) found that both sets of standards have largely minimised or excluded teacher reflexivity from the discourse of teacher professionalism.

Furthermore, Connell (2009b) argues that neoliberalism ignores the fact that teaching is a unique form of labour with almost limitless work in seeking to treat it like any other market-oriented occupation. As schools demand ever more of their teachers, Connell asks, “what kind of labour process is it, that to perform very well means burn-out?” (p. 11). Multiple international studies have demonstrated increasing levels of stress and burnout amongst teachers (Kyriacou, 2001; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008) and that stress and attrition are strongly related to teachers’ working conditions (Day et al., 2007; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). In a longitudinal, life history study with twenty teachers, Troman and Woods (2000) described periods of workplace stress as “epiphanies” or “fateful moments”, leading teachers to adapt by either ‘retreating’ out of teaching or ‘downshifting’ into a new role or school (p. 262). In the light of fragmented, disjointed career paths, they argue that teaching as a career needs to be re-thought because, “teaching, for many, is no longer a job for life” (p. 269). They also report a public debate in England, where the government suggested that people should be encouraged to teach for several years of their working life, rather than see teaching as a career-long endeavour, in recognition of “the physically, psychologically and
emotionally demanding nature of teaching in contemporary schooling" (p. 270). They conclude that this divides teachers into those with lifelong or short-term career views.

Connell (2009a) has also presented a highly perceptive analysis of the contemporary discourses of the ‘good teacher’ in current policy reforms. She argues that the Standards now define the ‘good teacher’ as neither an intellectual worker nor a reflective practitioner, but rather as the “competent teacher” who displays “an assemblage of competencies” defined by the Standards (p. 217). Connell suggests that the Australian standards reduction of teachers’ work into “specific, auditable competencies and performances” reflects a fundamental distrust of teachers’ judgement and professionalism (p. 220). The standards also define teaching as a predominantly individualistic task, when good teaching is inherently collective and collaborative. Whilst the OECD (2005) asserts that teacher quality is “open to policy influence” in ways that student social background and abilities are not, Connell (2009) highlights examples that disprove this, such as the expansion of mass secondary education for the working class, changes in education for girls and the spread of mass literacy (p. 225). The socio-economic variables that impact on student outcomes can in fact be substantially impacted by policy, if governments choose to use their resources in this manner. The reform agenda of the last two decades has overwhelmingly focused on teachers whilst disproportionately ignoring students.

Summary.

In summary, this section of the literature review has considered teachers’ work at the meso level and located teachers’ careers within the school structures, systems and policies that shape them. Within this literature, teachers’ careers were both ‘sustained’ through efforts to reduce teacher attrition and ‘developed’ through a focus on teacher quality and professionalism. Standards have been the key reform tool, with far-reaching impactions for teachers’ working conditions, salary and career development. Many of the policy reforms outlined in this chapter (particularly those for New Scheme teachers) have directly influenced the careers of the second-stage teachers in this study. The present study seeks to address the impact of these policies on teachers’ careers. This review will now turn to consider one final dimension of teachers’ careers, namely the influence of the macro historical, social and demographic contexts within which teachers work.
Part 3: Careers at the macro level – The historical, social and demographic forces shaping teachers’ careers

The third part of this literature review will now turn to address teachers’ careers at the macro level, examining the wider range of contextual factors that influence teachers’ careers in subtle and often under-recognised ways. The literature examined thus far has shown that teachers’ careers are the product of individual career decisions and pathways that teachers pursue during their working lives, whilst simultaneously also being shaped by complex school structures and government policies within a wider reform agenda. This section aims to provide a broader context to the micro and meso level issues identified above.

Contextualising Careers

This section of the review will begin with a brief look at the historical context and the changing nature of work and career in the early twenty-first century. It will then consider three aspects of the social context of teaching – gender, class and age/generation. Each of these offers a different perspective on teachers’ career choices and patterns. Finally, this section will conclude with an examination of the demographic context, summarising the main supply and demand issues within the Australian teaching workforce, and how these compare on a global scale.

Historical context: changing nature of work and career.

A different perspective on contemporary teachers’ careers can be gained from considering broader changes to how people approach work. Large-scale developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly industrialisation, modernisation, colonisation and westernisation, dramatically changed the ways in which people engaged with work. Whereas work roles were once determined by social and cultural norms, the industrial revolution and Protestant reformation bought a new attitude, as “work now presented prospects for change and advancement. People began to approach work as a means for achieving growth and personal development, and also for changing their class or position in society. Thus was born the concept of career” (Arulmani, Bakshi, Leong, & Watts, 2014, p. 1).
The need for vocational guidance became apparent, as many more people faced an assortment of occupational possibilities and the freedom to select one's career, within the social constraints around gender, ethnicity and class. The early twentieth century notion of ‘career’ saw men (rarely women) make a long-term commitment to a single employer and work through a series of pre-determined upward moves (D. T. Hall & Mirvis, 1995, p. 323). Workplaces in the post-war era provided relative job security in return for employee loyalty, supported by the male-breadwinner family model. From the 1970s onwards, environmental changes (globalisation, new technology, workforce diversity) and attitudinal changes (family structure, life span, gender roles) have continued to re-shape the workforce.

Changes in the nature of work have also changed the conceptualisation of ‘career’. Modern careers emphasise “the development of a person’s skills, capacities to learn and self-identity”, and movement between several careers over the span of a working life (D. T. Hall & Mirvis, 1995, p. 323). The degree to which different cultures exhibit varying degrees of the concept of career continues to develop as globalisation and Westernisation spread. Whilst career is historically a western concept and the USA, UK and Australia dominate most empirical research, there are recent attempts to recognise the fact that “some of the largest workforces in the world lie in the developing world – a world to which the notion of career is not indigenous” in the sense that people are not expected to ‘climb the corporate ladder’ (Arulmani et al., 2014, p. 3).

Researching within the Australian context, Callus and Lansbury (2002) have documented changes in work and employment relations. Australians are, overall, working longer and harder, as the past decade has seen profound shifts in what counts as the expected ‘working day’. About half of all professionals now work more than the standard 40-hour week (p. 245). At the same time, many jobs have become less secure, and casual, temporary and part-time jobs have increased. With outsourcing and downsizing now commonplace, a permanent teaching position remains one of the few occupations apparently immune to this. During the 1970s, more than half of all Australian workers belonged to a trade union; less than a quarter of all workers were union workers in 2005 (Meagher & Wilson, 2007, p. 195). The education sector has amongst the highest rates of union membership. In 2005, 43% of people working in the education sector were union members (p. 197). Female, younger, part-time and casual workers are less likely to be union members than their male, older, full-time and permanent colleagues (p. 196).
These transformations in work have particular implications for different occupational groups. The implications for teachers were investigated in an extensive Australian federal government study (Skilbeck & Connell, 2004), which included a literature review (Mayer, 2003), a survey of almost 300 teachers in their first ten years, and interviews and focus groups with 550 teachers and 100 principals. In her literature review, Mayer (2003) noted the emergence of flexible or ‘portfolio’ careers, as workers engage with a range of occupations and employers over the span of their working life, and contrasted this with teaching’s “somewhat static conception of career” (p. 14). She argued that the teaching career in its current form has not evolved to recognise this:

With many new teachers leaving to pursue other careers after 5-8 years, mature age career changers entering the teaching profession, and part time and casual teaching appointments being selected by teachers as part of a lifestyle choice, a teaching career must be positioned within the context of a more flexible working life. (p. 15)

Skilbeck and Connell (2004) also suggested that the problem of teacher attrition requires a more individualised approach, and that "attrition rates could be reduced through more personal career guidance in training, more comprehensive and supportive induction and systematic career mapping and counselling" (p. 8). Such an approach would need to recognise and value teachers’ varied career paths, including for those who see teaching as a lifetime career, as within a lifetime career, or as a long-term part-time or contractual arrangement. Their report highlights the relatively flat and often un-structured nature of the teaching career, suggesting that:

Attention is needed to ways in which a greater degree of role specialisation can be achieved for classroom teachers, for example in various kinds of educational as distinct from administrative or managerial leadership functions within the school. Systematic moves are needed towards the development of a professionally (not incrementally) structured concept of a career in teaching, linked with articulated, progressive professional standards and opening up a variety of practitioner avenues. (p. 13) [original emphasis]

Having briefly considered the changing nature of teaching as work, this review will now consider the intersections of teachers’ careers with three fundamental sociological aspects – gender, class and age/generation. These represent three very substantial bodies of work that go far beyond the scope of this review. The intent here is to highlight a few key studies that add a broader sociological context to the teacher’s ‘career’ as the key concept of interest.
Social context: gender.
The disparity between the sexes is distinctive at the different schooling levels in Australia: females make up 80.9% of primary teachers and 58.4% of secondary teachers (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 27). Using OECD and UNESCO figures, Drudy (2008) has shown that female dominance in school teaching exists in most countries of the world, with an economic correlation that, generally, the more developed a country is, the fewer men there are in teaching (p. 310). In the second half of the nineteenth century, as mass education began to spread in western countries, women’s preponderance in teaching was evident from the earliest times (Kelleher, 2011). Social and cultural determinants saw teaching closely aligned with a number of what were assumed to be stereotypically ‘female traits’: maternal nurturing and a vocational calling and dedication to children. In the long-term, the teaching profession has continued to be restricted by the persistence of its connotations of female caregiving (p. 14).

As more women moved into the workforce after World War Two, teaching was considered one of the few ‘suitable’ jobs for women. This shaped many of the foundational attitudes towards teaching as a profession. Lieberman (1956) considered that, for so long as it was women’s work, classroom teaching would forever be a limited occupation: “a higher percentage of male teachers is necessary to raise the professional status of education. Teaching is now identified in the public mind as a ‘woman’s profession’” (p. 253). More than a decade later, Simpson and Simpson (1969) summarised this view as:

A woman’s primary attachment is to the family role; women are therefore less intrinsically committed to work than men and less likely to maintain a high level of specialised knowledge . . . Women are more willing than men to accept the bureaucratic controls imposed upon them in semi-professional organisations, and less likely to seek a genuinely professional status. (pp. 199-200)

Lortie’s (1975) extensive sociological study concluded that young female teachers avoided becoming heavily involved in their careers because they were “hedging their bets” in the hope of marriage and children; a teaching career was thus suitable because it required “less than full commitment” (p. 99).

In the 1980s, researchers began to investigate the impact of gender in how teachers approached their careers. In the UK, Nias’ (1981) interview study of ninety-three teachers identified four different ways in which male and female teachers understood
work “commitment”. The three most common ways were commitment as ‘caring’, as devotion of time and effort and as personal identification as a teacher. Only three of the ninety-three teachers in her sample considered commitment to mean career-continuance. When commitment is used to mean ‘what men do’, female teachers appear to lack commitment. Similarly, Evetts (1986, 1987, 1989) also focused on female primary teachers in the UK and noted that the male-centred concept of the ‘objective career’ disadvantaged female teachers who had ‘discontinuous’ or ‘interrupted’ careers. The unique career patterns of female teachers did not necessarily preclude them from pursuing promotion roles; rather women did this in different ways to their male colleagues. Acker’s (1992) ethnographic study demonstrated further contrasts between male and female teachers. Whereas male teachers were often rationally planning their career moves, women’s career plans were often provisional and changeable to be flexible around different commitments outside of work.

Researchers have long noted the underrepresentation of female teachers in school leadership (Acker, 1983). In Australia, female teachers hold 65.5% of primary and 48.2% of secondary leadership roles (compared to 80.9% and 58.4% of all teaching positions respectively) (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 27). Male teachers are also more likely to teach older children, senior secondary years, in larger schools and teach maths or science than their female colleagues (Thornton & Bricheno, 2009, pp. 170–171). Some of the reasons female teachers most frequently report for eschewing promotion roles are a desire to remain in close contact with students, family commitments, a view that their careers are secondary to their bread-winning partners’, an unmanageable increase in workload and promotion procedures that favour males work patterns (Thornton & Bricheno, 2000). Today’s male teachers are less likely to consider teaching as a lifelong career and more likely to consider leaving within the next five to ten years than their female colleagues (Chapman, Al-Barwani, Maawali, & Jones, 2014, p. 89; McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 117). Whilst dissatisfaction with previous work and redundancy are common reasons for making a career switch into teaching Raggl and Troman’s (2008) research suggests that female career switchers into teaching may be motivated by the perception that teaching is more family friendly than other occupations.

Finally, there are also periodic warnings about the negative social and educational impacts of too many female teachers. For example, Lieberman (1956) cautioned against the “disastrous social consequences” of a lack of male teachers, in particular the fear that “young boys without masculine role models may fail to learn to read,
develop behavioural problems or join gangs in search of male leaders (p. 245). The most recent federal government report into boys’ education recommended more ‘boy-friendly’ curricula and pedagogical practices and that education authorities focus on recruiting more male teachers (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002). The report was dismissed by many as creating an unnecessary ‘moral panic’ around boys’ education and as a form of ‘backlash politics’ in relation to gender equity in girls’ education (Lingard, 2003; Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2007). Teaching and parenting (mothering) have increasingly become conflated, perhaps especially so in the primary school, and this combined with a lack of male colleagues means that primary teaching remains unappealing for many males (Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2004; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008).

**Social context: class.**

Connell (1985) suggests that “understanding class relations is essential in understanding teachers” (p. 191). Teachers can be thought of as having dual class locations, being both members of the working class (organised and managed by educational bureaucracies) and members of the middle class (reproducing dominant middle class norms and values with their students) (Apple, 1983). As reforms have led to the increasing technicisation, intensification and control of teachers’ work, Apple cautions that increasing teachers’ responsibilities has often been misrecognised as increasing their professionalism (p. 60). Carter (1997) suggests that reform efforts not only constrain teachers’ work, but serve to create new class structures within schools, with “a base of classroom teachers (in working-class places) and a managerial hierarchy which combined the roles of teaching, co-ordination and supervision to varying degrees (a new middle class)” (p. 211). The teaching Standards (AITSL, 2011) highlight the distinction between the work of teachers and managerial school leaders.

In a large-scale Australian study of teacher education students (N=1,653) from three universities, Richardson and Watt (2006) found that the SES backgrounds of Australian pre-service teachers “were generally towards the lower region of the income categories, with few participants coming from affluent family income backgrounds” (p.50). The ‘Top of the Class’ report (Australian Government, 2007c) highlighted the need to diversify the teaching workforce to better reflect the diversity of the broader Australian population. In particular, it emphasised the need to attract more Indigenous people into teaching, as 4% of students are Indigenous compared to just 0.4% of teachers (p. 39). A submission to the report from James Cook University noted that:
In high and middle SES metropolitan schools, for instance, students tended to be more dismissive of teaching as a desirable career. By comparison, in lower SES schools, and in the rural school, more students claimed that they were considering teaching as a likely career. (p. 50)

This also has potential implications for the relationships between teachers and parents, as higher SES parents are more likely to assume the dominant role in the teacher-parent relationship and to directly challenge teacher authority (Van Galen, 2004).

Students’ social class status is also important, as education is now more than ever essential to life outcomes. A recent OECD report (2012) showed that higher levels of education are positively associated with improved chances of employment, higher average earnings, better health and reduced crime (p. 3). Government data from the Australian Institute of Family Studies shows that children from low SES backgrounds, on average, start school with weaker average performance, which both continues and deepens throughout their school years (A. Hayes, 2011). NAPLAN data also shows the influence of parental education levels, with lower levels of parental education strongly associated with lower student performance (McLachlan, Gilfillan, & Gordon, 2013, p. 109). Social geography is also influential, as rural and remote students have lower mean NAPLAN scores than metropolitan students (p. 115).

Class, of course, intersects with a range of influencing factors, as inherited cognitive abilities, differences in home learning environments, parental attitudes and aspirations, location and neighbourhood each shape students’ success (or not) at school. Schooling thus acts to mediate privilege, with some forms of cultural capital valued over others (P. Thomson, 2002). The dominance of “parental choice” in current educational policy is intertwined with the ways in which class inequalities are produced and reproduced within schools (S. J. Ball, Bowe, & Gewirtz, 1996). The comprehensive public school system of previous generations, which drew together students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, has been gradually re-shaped as parents seek to attend ‘more desirable’ schools outside of their locally zoned area (Campbell, Proctor, & Sherington, 2009). Federal subsidies to independent and Catholic schools have grown enormously, supporting the capacity for middle class families to ‘choose’ for their own advantage; “working-class children mostly go to public schools, but the public schools are increasingly residualised” (Connell, 2013, p. 103).

With this in mind, current educational reforms suggest a need to redouble the effort in addressing class effects on educational outcomes. The ‘Melbourne Declaration’ calls
for “equity and excellence” for all students (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 7) and the recent “Review of Funding for Schooling” demands that “demography must not equal destiny” and that Australia must ensure “genuine equality of educational opportunity for every child” (Gonski, 2011, p. 105). These are in many ways radical and ambitious ideals. Similar ambitions can see seen in the US “No Child Left Behind” (2001) policy and the UK’s “Every Child Matters” (2004) initiative. These reforms position teachers as the prime mediators between a child’s educational attainment and their socio-economic background, suggesting that the ‘problem’ of class can be ‘overcome’ with more determined and skilled teachers (Reay, 1998; Van Galen, 2004).

The complexity of such ideas becomes more apparent when one considers the potential ‘gap’ between teacher and student class backgrounds. This has been captured in Van Galen’s (2008) qualitative portraits that contrast two working-class teachers working in upper-middle class schools (“teaching up”) with two upper-middle-class teachers working in low-SES, disadvantaged schools (“teaching down”). Programs such as ‘Teach for Australia’, ‘Teach for America’ and the UK’s ‘Teach First’ have concentrated on placing middle-class tertiary graduates into disadvantaged schools (D. Hall & Jones, 2013). The NSWDEC also seeks to encourage new teachers to consider working in difficult to staff schools, with the ‘Beyond the Bridge’ program encouraging teachers to work in western and south-western Sydney schools, whilst ‘Beyond the Line’ encourages teachers to work in rural and remote locations (NSWDEC, 2014a). Such programs provide an opportunity for pre-service teachers to consider working in environments that may be culturally alien to their own schooling experience and implicitly acknowledge the class dimensions of teachers' work.

Social context: age/generation.
The ageing of the teaching workforce is a common concern across OECD countries, with more than forty percent of secondary teachers aged over fifty in countries such as Germany, Italy and Sweden (Santiago, 2002, p. 16). The Australian teaching workforce is generally older than the rest of the professional workforce, with particular concerns for older mathematics, science and ICT teachers (Weldon, 2015, p. 6).

Generational theory is one useful way of analysing workforce trends to understand the social context of teachers’ careers. Whilst different definitions exist, McCrindle and Wolfinger (2009) define the common generational labels as Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Generation X (born 1965-1979), Generation Y or the Millennials (born 1980-
and the youngest generation just starting to enter the workforce, Generation Z (born 1995-2009) (p. 6). Using data from the ‘Staff in Australia’s Schools’ 2013 survey, currently approximately 34% of Australian teachers are Baby Boomers (aged 51-66+), 37% are Generation X (aged 36-50) and 29% are Gen Y (aged 21-35) (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 21). Each generation presents different challenges for employers. In 1959, average tenure in a job was 15 years, compared with 4 years in 2009; Gen Y workers will have, on average, over five careers and 20 employers in their lifetime (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009, p. 133). The Baby Boomer career approach of organisational loyalty and gradual promotions is being reshaped by Generation Y’s approach of moving across organisations and industries to seek diverse opportunities.

Recent research has focused on the different career motivations and choices between younger and older generations, both in the professional workforce broadly (Dwyer, Smith, Tyler, & Wyn, 2003) and in the teaching workforce specifically (Mayer, 2003). ‘Job-for-life’ and organisational-based careers have given way to flexibility, mobility, and a career mind-set seeking personal fulfilment. The structure of the teaching career, however, has remained relatively static. In an Australian Government report, Dow (2003) eloquently highlighted many of these concerns. He notes that retention issues go far beyond remuneration, with many younger teachers placing more emphasis on quality of life than financial rewards (p. 79). He reiterates that “teaching is not always seen as a lifelong career for all teachers, but part of a broad and diverse career profile” (p. 103). Career structures that assume teachers remain in the classroom from graduation to retirement need to be reconsidered. This includes the opportunity to take on multiple roles within teaching and being able to move into and out of teaching with relative ease over the life span. The lack of mobility between States and of portability of qualifications and entitlements remain major structural impediments (p. 114). Dow concludes that ‘careers in teaching’ should be expanded to encompass ‘careers in education’. Mayer (2006) has noted that the teaching profession will need substantial structural and cultural shifts to address these issues because current structures reward longevity rather than quality.

One important piece of empirical research in this area comes from a mixed methods study into mid-career Gen X teachers (Stone-Johnson, 2009b, 2011). Starting with Huberman’s (1989) teacher career cycle model, Stone-Johnson has identified key differences in teaching careers two decades after Huberman’s work. Her data shows how teachers’ career paths have been sped up, with the experimentation/ activism phase interrupted, serenity, conservatism and disengagement beginning much earlier
and careers rarely taking a linear form (Stone-Johnson, 2009, p. 190). This creates at least two important implications. Firstly, very few of the Gen X teachers in this study were interested in leadership, with many expressing “‘disdain for administrators, who are viewed as out of touch with the students” (p. 198). This creates flow-on effects for succession planning in school leadership. Secondly, “sustainability” is a major problem, with many teachers in this study reporting feeling “worn out” from the intensification of teaching in recent decades.

Research attention has also turned to the rapidly expanding numbers of Gen Y teachers. Investing in recruitment and retention strategies targeting Gen Y is potentially risky, as they may be less oriented towards teaching as a long-term career and are unlikely to stay with employers who don’t help them fulfil their professional goals (Behrstock-Sherrat & Coggshall, 2010). Many Gen Y teachers report being motivated to teach by a desire for social justice and a view of teaching as “the most direct path to changing the world” (Coggins, Zuckerman, & McKelvey, 2010, p. 70). However, the view from the classroom seldom gives teachers the chance to see how their work connects more broadly to education policy. This can create a retention issue, because “when they become disheartened, other professional roles – doctors, lawyers, journalists, artists, politicians and activists – whisper in their ears” (p. 71). Keeping these teachers beyond their first couple of years requires deliberate career planning:

The goal need not be to create a lifetime teacher – that doesn’t fit this generation – but rather to make the promising 2-year teacher into a 5- or 10-year one. Building a second career stage that values teacher effectiveness may motivate promising newcomers to set longer-term goals that involve leading from the classroom. (p. 71)

Recent survey research also show evidence of “generational collide” within Australian schools. First noted as a trend in the business sphere (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003), Lambert, Marks, Elliott and Johnston-Anderson’s (2016) study showed the tensions created as baby boomer, Gen X and Gen Y teachers were simultaneously seeking out the same limited number of promotion roles available in schools. This collide has also been noted as “generation gaps” in Canada (Edge, 2012) and “intergenerational tensions” in the US (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009).

It can thus be seen that a teacher’s gender, class and age/generation all contribute to his or her career experiences in diverse ways that shift over time. This review will now conclude with an outline of the defining trends and challenges for the demand and supply of teachers in Australia, including how these compare on a global scale.
Demographic context: workforce supply and demand.

The Australian teacher workforce is one of the largest groups of workers in Australia, with more than 250,000 full-time equivalent teachers working in almost 10,000 schools (Productivity Commission, 2012, p. 54). Drilling down into information about teachers within this highly diverse workforce between different school sectors and across state and territory boundaries has been limited and inconsistent. In recognition of this, the Australian Government has recently begun compiling the first National Teaching Workforce Dataset (NTWD), with the goal of “improving teacher quality through the provision of nationally consistent data” (Willett et al., 2014, p. 4). Across more than one hundred stakeholder organisations, the NTWD has, for the first time, attempted to collect teacher-level data (rather than pre-summarised information about groups of teachers) and create the first comprehensive portrait of the Australian teaching workforce. The NTWD has identified that Australia has 440,313 teachers, “consisting of 313,791 ‘known employed’ teachers and 126,522 unknown ‘additional registrants’ (p. 5). Data is unknown for between one quarter and one third of the teaching workforce for most of the data items addressed. Several of the largest and most influential trends are summarised below.

The teacher workforce is currently expanding and is projected to continue growing over the next decade. This growth has been created by both smaller class sizes with lower teacher-student ratios and by a growing overall student population (Weldon, 2015, p. 6). Although the Australian student population declined between 2001 and 2008, it has been on a steady upward trajectory since then. In NSW, the primary student population is forecast to rise by more than 92,000 between 2011 and 2020 (p. 1). This will require a substantial increase in the number of teachers. It is estimated that NSW government schools alone will require an additional 3000 teachers each year from 2014, rising to 3500 teachers a year in 2020 (NSWDEC, 2014a, p. 12). Strong student growth is also evident in the US (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013, p. 12) and the UK (UK Department for Education, 2013b, p. 1).

Secondly, the supply and demand of teachers is uneven across school levels and subject specialties, with key pockets of both over- and under-supply. The NSWDEC indicates that it has a “more than adequate” supply of generalist primary and secondary creative arts and PDHPE teachers; an “adequate” supply of secondary English and science teachers (except physics); and a “declining supply” of secondary mathematics, TAS and LOTE teachers (NSWDEC, 2014a, p. 14). Schools, however,
have very little control over teacher supply, particularly since 2012 when the number of undergraduate course places funded by the federal government was 'uncapped' (Weldon, 2015, p. 10). In effect, the government no longer controls the number of places funded for Initial Teacher Education (ITE). In March 2014, there were more than 44,000 teachers seeking employment in NSWDEC schools, of which approximately 57% percent were primary (NSWDEC, 2014a, p. 10). The majority of secondary teachers seeking work taught English, Creative Arts or PDHPD. In these areas, it can be seen that supply is not well matched to current or projected demand.

Thirdly, as the non-government sectors continue to expand, increasingly more teachers teach in 'private' schools, a trend particularly pronounced at the secondary level. The Australian teaching workforce is divided across three schooling sectors. The government sector is the largest, employing approximately 65% of all Australian teachers (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 19). The remaining teachers work in the Catholic sector (18.5%) and the independent sector (16.5%). Looking just at NSW schools, 70% of primary teachers work in government schools, followed by 18% Catholic and 12% independent; just 60% of secondary teachers work in government schools, followed by 22% Catholic and 18% independent (NSWDEC, 2014c, p. 28). These numbers reflect the growing size of both the Catholic and independent school sectors in NSW, particularly at the secondary level. The high levels of non-government schooling in Australia are unusual by global standards (OECD, 2014).

Moreover, the teacher workforce is experiencing two simultaneous age-related trends, with the largest expansion of teachers in both the under-35 and over-50 age groups. Across Australia 32% of primary and 29% of secondary teachers are aged under-35 (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 21). This is reflected in years of experience, as around 42% of primary teachers and 36% of secondary teachers have been teaching for ten years or less (p. 79). At the other end of the spectrum, 32% of primary and 34% of secondary teachers are aged over 50 (p. 21) and more than one third of teachers have been teaching for 21 or more years (p. 79). The SiAS report concludes that, "the current trend suggests that large numbers of teachers will need to be recruited in the next few years to meet projected growth in student enrolments and replace teachers who retire" (p. 22). Similar concerns about an ageing workforce have been noted in other countries (OECD, 2014).

Female teachers currently outnumber male teachers at a rate of almost three to one (74.12% female and 25.88% male) (Willett et al., 2014, p. 19). Similar rates for female
teachers have been noted in the UK (73.5%) (UK Department for Education, 2013a, p. 7) and the US (76.0%) (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013, p. 13). Looking more closely, eight out of every ten Australian primary teachers are female and this trend has not changed in the past ten years (Weldon, 2015, p. 6). However, the secondary teacher workforce has undergone a substantial gender shift: “in 1981 there were more male teachers (55%) than female; 30 years later, just 42% of secondary teachers are men” (p. 6). Looking closer at secondary teacher specialisations, the trend is even more pronounced in areas with declining teacher supply: male teachers make up approximately 75% of teachers in physics, 60% in chemistry and 60% in Computing/IT (p. 7). Looking at different school sectors reveals another trend: Between 1999 and 2013, the proportions of male teachers in each NSW school sector decreased. However, the actual number of male teachers has decreased in the government sector only, and has increased in the independent and Catholic sectors (NSWDEC, 2014c, p. 29). This shift seems to suggest that male teachers increasingly choose the non-government sector to seek employment. Australia follows the OECD trend wherein the older the age of the students, the greater the likelihood of having a male teacher (OECD, 2014, p. 486).

Additionally, the Australian teaching workforce is characterised by a large and growing part-time cohort of teachers. Whilst the NTWD notes that the ‘time fraction employed’ is unknown for 43% of the teaching workforce, it reports that 25% of Australian teachers are employed on a part-time basis (Willett et al., 2014, p. 59). Weldon (2015) notes that part-time teaching is slightly more common amongst Australian primary teachers, with 27% of all primary teachers (31% of female primary teachers) working part-time, compared with 20% of all secondary teachers (27% of female secondary teachers) working part-time (p. 10). Such flexibility can be highly valued by teachers trying to manage a range of outside commitments whilst sustaining a teaching career. Part-time teachers may have access to fewer professional development programs and may require additional support to successfully job-share a teaching role.

Furthermore, the teacher workforce is divided into three groups according to employment type: permanent (ongoing), temporary (fixed-term) and casual (day-to-day). Again, the type of employment is unknown for 43% of teachers in the Australian NTWD. Of known employed teachers, 72% are permanent, 16% are on temporary/fixed-term contracts and 12% are employed as casual teachers (Willett et al., 2014, p. 61). These numbers need to be considered in relation to teacher age, because “most teachers commence their careers as casual teachers” (NSWIT, 2014, p. 10). For
example, the median age of teachers in permanent employment is 46, and only 12% of these teachers are aged 30 and under (Willett et al., 2014, p. 109). The median age of teachers on temporary/fixed-term contracts is just 35, and 39% of these teachers are aged 30 and under. Interestingly, the picture for casual teachers is more mixed, with 23% aged 30 and under and 34% aged 55 and over. This suggests that teachers at both ends of the age spectrum find themselves casually employed. This flexibility may suit their needs to balance work with other commitments, however it may also reflect difficulty in finding more secure employment; further research appears to be needed here.

Finally, almost one in every ten teachers is currently on extended leave, the majority of which is unpaid (Willett et al., 2014, p. 55). The largest group of teachers on unpaid leave is those aged 30-39, of whom 17.4% are currently on leave; almost 93% of these teachers are female (p. 109). Whilst the data cannot provide conclusive evidence, it is likely that this cohort is taking time out of the workforce to start a family. One striking aspect of the literature in this area is the extent to which much of it has only very recently been collected. When this review started for the original written thesis proposal in 2012, much of this data was unavailable. It is also evident that there are still many large gaps in the data collection, with divisions created between accredited and non-accredited teachers, state/territory boundaries and school sector diversity. It is hoped that future iterations of the NTWD will continue to close these gaps and provide a more complete picture of the Australian teacher workforce. In relation to the present study, the demographic variables discussed above will be specifically examined for New Scheme teachers in this study.

**Summary.**

This section of the literature review has attempted to illustrate the macro level historical, social and cultural factors that are shaping teachers’ careers. The review has shown the ways in which work and career are changing for all occupations more broadly, and for teaching specifically. As the class, gender and age composition of the teaching workforce shifts over time, researchers have worked to document and analyse the implications for teachers, students and school systems. Australian governments at both the federal and state levels face the challenging task of meeting the growing demand for teachers with the uneven and unmatched supply of new teachers. The next and final section of the review will present an initial conceptual framework of teachers’ careers based on the literature discussed thus far.
Part 4: An initial, emergent conceptual framework

At this point in the study, an emergent conceptual framework was developed to outline the key constructs being studied and the presumed relationships between them. This provisional framework was developed based on existing literature and theory, and was gradually revised and extended during data analysis. This approach aligns with Miles, Huberman and Saldana’s (2014) view of the utility of conceptual frameworks:

> Conceptual frameworks are simply the current version of the researcher's map of the territory being investigated. As the explorer's knowledge of the terrain improves, the map becomes correspondingly more differentiated and integrated. Thus conceptual frameworks are developed at the beginning of a study and evolve as the study progresses. (p. 20)

The initial framework was useful in helping to decide which events, settings, processes and theoretical constructs were the most important and therefore which data was required to examine them more closely.

The literature on teachers’ careers is a vast, complex and dynamic body of work. The literature review presented in chapter two analysed teachers’ careers from three different perspectives: the micro level (teacher as individual career actor), the meso level (school structures, systems and governments) and the macro level (historical, social and demographic contexts). Within each of these levels, several key concepts emerged that formed the initial, emergent conceptual framework for this study. This framework is presented in Figure 2.2.

This framework uses the micro, meso and macro levels of social analysis as a useful construct for delineating the key elements in second-stage teachers’ careers. The arrows in Figure 2.2 indicate the high degree of interconnectedness within and between the levels. At the micro level, contextual factors include the creation of career stage models and internally defined versus externally defined career trajectories, with some literature identifying new alternatives. At the meso level, this framework positions teacher career development within the school reform and teacher quality agendas. It also incorporates the literature into teacher attrition and career decision-making. The macro level elements in the framework address both the demographic issue of teacher supply and demand and the broader social context, in particular the rapidly changing world of work. The literature review presented in this chapter suggests that each element in this framework is necessary in order to address the main research question.
Figure 2.2. Initial, emergent conceptual framework of the contextual factors influencing second-stage teachers’ careers
Chapter summary

This concludes the literature review presented in chapter two. The review has provided an overview of the scholarly literature that underpins the study, clarified key terms and concepts used throughout the thesis and located teachers’ careers within their local and global contexts. At the micro level, it can be concluded that teachers’ careers have been conceptualised in two dominant ways: as a series of stages and as a trajectory. Both of these perspectives position teachers as individual career actors making discrete career decisions. At the meso level, it can be concluded that school systems and government policies are actively seeking to both sustain and develop teachers’ careers over the long-term. The past decade in particular has been a time of immense changes to the systems and policy structures surrounding teachers’ work. At the macro level, it can be concluded that teachers’ careers have been shaped by a complex range of sociological factors, including shifts in the gender, class and age/generational composition of the teaching cohort. The challenges of demand and supply faced by the Australian teacher workforce mirror those faced by many other OECD countries.

Moving on to chapter three, the next part of the thesis will outline the methodological foundation of the present study, including the epistemological framework underpinning the study. Chapter three will also outline the methods used throughout and make explicit the details of the research design. This chapter will conclude with an exploration of the issues concerning the quality and validation of mixed methods research.
Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The previous chapter presented the empirical foundations for this study based on current literature. Teachers’ careers were considered at the micro level (teacher as individual career actor); at the meso level (the school structures, systems and policies that surround teachers); and at the macro level (the broader historical, social and cultural contexts within which teachers work). The literature review ended with several broad conclusions about how teachers’ careers have been analysed in the empirical literature to date and about the major policy and structural challenges ahead.

The purpose of this chapter is to both present an accurate account of how this study was conducted, as well as to discuss the particular issues surrounding the choice of methodology, research design and methods. The aim is not to provide an exhaustive account of the various methodological issues relating to these topics, but rather to highlight the central issues that were considered and choices that were made during the development of the study. In doing so, this chapter seeks to convince the reader that this study was conducted in a robust, systematic and methodologically appropriate manner resulting in a reliable study from which valid inferences can be drawn.

Structurally, this chapter consists of five related parts. The chapter begins with an outline of the research questions and the key concepts and hypotheses that underpin the study. Secondly, the chapter outlines the philosophical foundations of the study, including the research paradigm and logic of inquiry. The chapter then describes the mixed methods research design created for this study, including its advantages and limitations. Next, the chapter provides an outline of the specific methods used in each strand of the study, including how the data was generated and analysed, and how the three data sets were linked together. This chapter concludes with a justification of the quality and rigour of the study.

Research questions, concepts and hypotheses

It is important at this point to re-state the research questions because these drive the entire study. The main research question posed in this study is:

*What are the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers?*
There are also several sub-questions that contribute to answering this broader question:

1. *How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?*
2. *What is the demographic context in which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?*
3. *How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?*
4. *How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’?*
5. *How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other?*

This study has been guided by the key concept of ‘career’, adopting the definition from Sullivan and Baruch (2009) that the career is “an individual’s work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organisations, that form a unique pattern over the individual’s life span” (p. 1543). More particularly, this study has focused on the career experiences of “second-stage teachers” (Donaldson et al., 2008) – namely, those teachers who have been accredited in NSW at Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher level since 2004 and are in their fourth to tenth year of teaching. This study draws on three data sources: policy documents, secondary workforce data and teacher interviews.

Further, this study has adopted a particular theoretical foundation emerging from the literature review. Silverman (2013) suggests that theories are essential for both defining and explaining a phenomenon and that “without a theory there is nothing to research” (p. 112). This study aims to first describe and second explain the phenomenon of second-stage teachers’ careers, with an understanding that “description focuses on what is the case, whereas explanation focuses on why (and sometimes how) something is the case” (p. 17). As theory is placed first, the study aims to verify, extend and further develop existing theories of second-stage teachers’ careers, rather than generate whole new theories.

Two existing substantive theories about teachers’ careers were influential in founding this study. Firstly, Huberman’s (1989, 1993) ‘teacher career cycle model’, and in particular the second two phases (‘stabilisation’ (4-6 years) and ‘experimentation / activism or reassessment / self-doubt’ (7-18 years)). This model is highly cited and has
been used as a theoretical framework in several recent studies of teachers’ careers (Choi & Tang, 2009; Margolis, 2008; Richter et al., 2011). Additionally, Day et al.’s (2007) VITAE project and their ‘teacher professional life phase model’, with its two corresponding phases of establishing identity and confidence (4-7 years) and managing changes in role and identity (8-15 years), was also influential as a comprehensive model that generated a large body of work into different aspects of teachers’ careers (Day, 2008; Day & Gu, 2009; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006). A more comprehensive discussion of these models can be found in part one of the literature review.

At this point in the study, based on both extensive time immersed in the literature and on my own experiences as a teacher and school leader, I formulated several hypotheses about second-stage teachers’ careers. These broad hypotheses led towards choices about what data needed to be collected and how this data might be analysed. These hypotheses can be summarised as follows:

- second-stage teachers have distinctive ideas about how they imagine their future careers, both inside and outside of teaching (S. M. Johnson, 2004, 2009);
- second-stage teachers are at risk of ‘early’ exit from the profession (Gallant & Riley, 2014), however the issue of teacher attrition has been under-problematised (Buchanan, 2009a, 2009b);
- new teacher career trajectories are emerging which appear to be neither entirely externally defined nor internally defined (Peske et al., 2001; Rinke, 2009, 2011; Rippon, 2005; Smethem, 2007);
- teachers make career decisions in ways more complex than the research into ‘stayers’, ‘leavers’ and ‘movers’ suggests, including the new category of ‘shifters’ (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012; Lindqvist et al., 2014; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Quartz et al., 2008);
- being the first generation to use the new Professional Standards and to undergo compulsory accreditation has given this cohort a unique insight into the changing policy landscape (as outlined by Ingvarson and others in part two of the literature review); and
- these teachers are the targets of policy drives to raise the status of teaching and improve teacher ‘professionalism’ and ‘professionalisation’ (Day & Smethem, 2009), and thus have important insights into how this is manifesting ‘at the chalk face’.

This study is thus based on these particular questions, concepts and hypotheses.
Philosophical foundations: paradigms and the logic of inquiry

In making explicit the frameworks that guided choices made during the research process, I acknowledge the importance of the underlying paradigm that was fundamental in shaping this study. Blumer (1969) argued that, “one can see the empirical world only through some scheme or image of it. The entire act of scientific study is oriented and shaped by the underlying picture of the empirical world that is used” (p. 24). Based on Kuhn’s (1970) argument that researchers locate their work within a particular methodological “community paradigm” of understanding (p. 46), Morgan (2007) defined a paradigm as “the consensual set of beliefs and practices that guide a field” (p. 49). This shared belief system influences both the kinds of questions researchers ask and how they interpret their data. Paradigms thus give researchers a shared understanding of the ontological and epistemological beliefs guiding their work and provide a framework for viewing ‘reality’.

This research study has been guided by what has been identified as the pragmatic research paradigm. Pragmatism is a longstanding and well-established set of ideas, dating from the classical pragmatists (e.g., Dewey, 1920, 1931; W. James, 1907; Peirce, 1905) to contemporary pragmatists (e.g., Cherryholmes, 1992; Murphy, 1990; Rorty, 2000). Peirce’s (1905) pragmatic maxim of logic argued that researchers should analyse concepts in such a way that they “trace out in the imagination the conceivable practical consequences - that is, the consequences for deliberate, self-controlled conduct - of the affirmation or denial of the concept” (p. 494). James (1907) later extended this to emphasise the need for researchers “to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences” (p. 18), and Dewey (1920) echoed that “in order to discover the meaning of the idea [we must] ask for its consequences” (p. 132). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) formally linked pragmatism to mixed methods research. In essence, they argue that both qualitative (QUAL) and quantitative (QUAN) methods should be used in a single study, the research question is of primary importance (more so than either the worldview or the methods) and that methodological choices should be guided by a practical and applied research philosophy. In mixed methods research, the pragmatic maxim could be translated as “choose the combination or mixture of methods and procedures that works best for answering your research questions” (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Pragmatism thus seeks to shift the focus onto the importance of the questions asked, the use of multiple data collection methods and the consequences of research.
When considering the nature of reality, pragmatism takes the ontological view that reality can be both singular (i.e. a theory may explain a given phenomenon) and multiple (i.e. different perspectives exist on the same phenomenon). Researchers thus recognise “diverse viewpoints regarding social realities” and seek to make the “best explanation within personal value systems” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 89).

Epistemologically, pragmatism takes the view that we gain knowledge based on “practicality” and the collection of data according to “what works” in this particular context to answer the research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 42). This allows the researcher to be more or less objective/subjective at different stages of the research process.

In drawing inferences and making arguments, mixed methods research generally takes one of two main approaches to the logic of inquiry: the inductive-deductive research cycle (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) or abductive reasoning (Morgan, 2007). In this research study, abductive reasoning was used to ground the relationship between data, theory and method within the pragmatist philosophy. Data was interpreted by working backwards from an observed consequence/affect in the data to find a probable cause, converting those observations into theories and then testing out those theories by drawing connections with existing literature and theory. Abduction is thus a process of “creatively generating insights and making inferences to the best possible explanation” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 329). Abductive logic can be summarised as:

The surprising phenomenon, X, is observed.
Among potential hypotheses A, B, and C, A is capable of explaining X.
That is, if A were true, then X would be a matter of course.
Therefore, there is reason to believe that A is true. (p. 89)

Following this logic, the researcher then connects their abductive inferences with existing literature and theory. Abduction requires an “unexpected event” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 89) or “empirical surprise” (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014, p. 123), such that the researcher is puzzled by their observations of the data. Tavory and Timmermans (2014) have captured the essence of abductive logic in their summary:

Abduction is the form of reasoning through which we perceive an observation as related to other observations . . . The proposition A is neither assumed before the fact (as it is in deduction) nor observed (as it ideally is in induction). Rather, the proposition is guessed at, presumed after the fact to explain observations we cannot easily explain away. (p. 37)
Abduction thus eliminates alternative explanations and offers “a plausible interpretation rather than a logical conclusion derived from premises” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 336).

Two further social science concepts need to be considered when taking a pragmatic viewpoint. Pragmatism emphasises the importance of making “transferable” inferences and recommendations from data. Rather than creating a dualism between context-dependent and universal/generalised knowledge, Morgan (2007) argues that pragmatic researchers must consider “the extent to which we can take the things that we learn with one type of method in one specific setting and make the most appropriate use of that knowledge in other circumstances” (p. 72). This reflects a firmly pragmatic focus on how knowledge is used in the ‘real world’ beyond the confines of a study and the degree to which research inferences might be utilised in different circumstances. The present study demonstrates three of the four types of transferability identified by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009). Firstly, this study has “ecological transferability” because the inferences and recommendations could be transferred to similar educational contexts outside of NSW. This includes other Australian states and territories, as well as countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Canada. These countries have broadly similar approaches to education Standards and policy frameworks. Secondly, this study has “population transferability” because second-stage teachers can of course be found all over the world. Many education systems also have policy documents addressing teachers’ careers that could be compared and contrasted with those examined in this study. Finally, this study has “temporal transferability” because the inferences and recommendations produced are clearly applicable to the future. I.e. second-stage teachers careers will continue into the future and new teachers will continue to move into the ‘second’ stage of their careers.

Pragmatism also emphasises the importance of “intersubjectivity” when considering the relationship between the researcher and the research process. Rather than creating a dualism between subjective and objective relationships, Morgan (2007) argues that pragmatic researchers work iteratively back and forth between both objective and subjective frames of reference. Pragmatic researchers thus aim to “achieve a sufficient degree of mutual understanding with not only the people who participate in our research but also the colleagues who read and review the products of our research” (p. 72). Shared meaning and communication are facilitated through taking a reflexive approach to research and documenting the researcher’s relationships throughout.
Methodological approach: mixed methods design

Whilst the paradigm ‘wars’ (circa 1975-1995) saw an active conflict between competing scientific worldviews guiding quantitative research (e.g., positivism, post-positivism) and qualitative research (e.g., constructivism, interpretivism) (Kuhn, 1962, 1970, 1996), this study accepts the ‘compatibility thesis’ that combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches is a good and appropriate research strategy (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005) and notes that “the paradigm debate has been resolved for many researchers” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 15). Mixed methods research dates from the late 1980s, as researchers began to describe and articulate ways of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches (Bryman, 1988; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Morse, 1991). Mixed methods research has been called the “third methodological movement” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 5), the “third research paradigm” (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 14) and the “third research community” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 4). The essence of mixed methods research is that both qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in a single study to collect and analyse data and draw meaningful inferences. Mixed methods research acknowledges that both quantitative and qualitative research are important and useful, and that rather than replacing either of these approaches researchers should draw from strengths of both (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Using both approaches can also meet the demands of the increasingly more complex and inter-disciplinary nature of research.

Mixed methods research offers five key strengths for this study. Firstly, using mixed methods can “offset” the disadvantages that certain research methods have on their own, combining the strengths of one to make up for the weaknesses of another (Bryman, 2006a). Methods can be combined in ways that provide “complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses” (R. B. Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 299). Secondly, employing both approaches may increase the “credibility” or integrity of the findings by providing stronger evidence for conclusions through convergence or corroboration of findings and insights that might be overlooked with a single method (Bryman, 2006a, p. 106; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 21). Further, using mixed methods in this study allows for a greater sense of “completeness” and the production of a more comprehensive account of knowledge from the study (Bryman, 2006a, p. 106; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 21). Additionally, mixed methods in this study allows for “triangulation” as the different findings are combined, compared and contrasted, with words adding more meaning to numbers and numbers.
adding more precision to words (Bryman, 2006a, p. 105; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 21). Finally, using mixed methods allow this study to address a broader and more multifaceted range of research questions, acknowledging that research problems have become increasingly more complex (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 21).

Using mixed methods in this study also created a number of challenges. Undertaking this project as a mixed methods study has meant that I have needed to develop a broader range of skills, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques and additional research skills in how to appropriately combine them. Further, generating and analysing data across three strands has required additional time and resources compared to a single strand, resulting in a longer doctoral process. Finally, most mixed methods researchers recommend working in a research team, allowing for both a greater range of skills and more personnel to share the workload: “because of the increased demands associated with mixed methods designs, mixed methods researchers should consider working in teams. We realise that this is impractical for graduate students who are expected to work independently” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 15). In summary, choosing a mixed methods study for this project has increased the complexity and range of challenges on myself as a doctoral researcher, whilst hopefully improving the credibility, completeness and opportunities for triangulation within the study.

There exists a wide range of typologies and models for designing mixed methods research (e.g., R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). A design was selected and adapted from the typology outlined by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), in order to be make the study more manageable and to provide a framework that guided the implementation of the methods. Selecting a design is not like choosing from an unalterable menu. As Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) note, “it is important to understand that one can easily create more user specific or more complex designs . . . A tenet of mixed methods research is that researchers should mindfully create designs that effectively answer their research questions” [original emphasis] (p. 20). Based on the research questions and the time and resource constraints, this study has been designed using the “convergent parallel” mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This is amongst the most well-known and established approach to mixing methods, and is also known as “simultaneous triangulation” (Morse, 1991) or “parallel study” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In the convergent parallel design, the different strands
are kept independent during data collection and analysis, but then integrated during the overall interpretation. All strands are implemented concurrently during a single phase of the same study. In short, this study was designed such that I collected and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, and then combined the different sets of results during a final interpretive phase. During this final phase, the different strands of data were simultaneously examined to consider multiple facets of the key phenomena.

The convergent parallel design was specifically chosen for this project in an effort to "obtain different but complementary data on the same topic" (Morse, 1991, p. 122). More specifically, complementary data were collected, compared and contrasted in order to "develop a more complete understanding of a phenomenon, and comparing multiple levels within a system" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 77). The strengths of this design are that it is an efficient design that allows both types of data to be simultaneously collected and analysed, and is thus well suited to "the sole researcher who can collect limited quantitative and qualitative data" (p. 77). This design also "makes intuitive sense" and is a relatively straightforward form of mixed methods research (p. 78). This design also comes with the challenges of all mixed methods research, particularly that much expertise is required across the different strands and it can be difficult to merge different data sets in a meaningful way (see further discussion of how this was achieved below). Figure 3.1 outlines the different steps in the convergent parallel mixed methods design of this study.

Following on logically from this design, a mixed methods sampling strategy was chosen from a typology identified by Teddlie and Yu (2007). As befits the methodological design of this study, the overall sampling strategy was “concurrent mixed methods sampling”, wherein both probability and purposive sampling procedures were used simultaneously in different strands of the study (p. 89). One advantage of this sampling design is that it facilitates the triangulation of results from the separate quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research during the final phases of data analysis. The individual sampling strategies chosen for the different data strands are outlined in the following section.
**Research Question:** What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers?

*Sub-question 1:* How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?

*Sub-question 2:* What is the demographic context in which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?

*Sub-question 3:* How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?

*Sub-question 4:* How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’?

*Sub-question 5:* How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other?

**Paradigm:** This study takes the pragmatic worldview, with an emphasis on abductive reasoning, intersubjectivity and transferability (Morgan, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

**Conceptual lens:** The key concept of interest is the teachers’ ‘career’, defined as is “an individual’s work-related and other relevant experiences, both inside and outside of organisations, that form a unique pattern over the individual’s life span” (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009, p. 1543).

**Theoretical lens:** This study draws on two related substantive theories, the ‘teacher career cycle’ model (Huberman, 1993) and the ‘teacher professional life phase’ model (Day et al., 2007).

**Methodological design:** This is a cross-sectional study using the convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

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**Mixed Methods Interpretation, Sub-question: 5**

Relate, compare and/or contrast data from each strand, drawing “meta-inferences” across all strands (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).
Methods and procedures: Strand A

Method selection.

The aim of Strand A was to answer research sub-question 1: How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents? Mixed methods content analysis was used here. Content analysis has a long and eminent history in the social sciences, dating from the study of mass communications in the 1940s, and has since been used in a wide range of research disciplines. Whilst some researchers consider content analysis to be a chiefly quantitative (Krippendorff, 2013; Neuendorf, 2002) or chiefly qualitative method (Mayring, 2000), others argue that content analysis can be approached using both methods (Bergman, 2010; Oleinik, 2011) and that, ideally, researchers should adopt “a hybrid approach, incorporating elements of qualitative and quantitative content analysis” (White & Marsh, 2006, p. 41). Content analysis is most commonly defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 24). Put another way, content analysis provides “a passport to listening to the words of the text and understanding better the perspective(s) of the producer of these words” (B. L. Berg, 2007, p. 308). Quantitative counts of textual elements help to examine, organise and discover patterns in the data, whilst qualitative interpretation of the literal words helps to identify themes, biases and meanings.

Content analysis is “unobtrusive”, cost effective, time efficient, can be managed by a single researcher and allows for large volumes of data to be analysed (p. 327). Whilst it is limited to examining texts that have already been recorded, this can be overcome by using content analysis as a tool for inquiry, rather than a complete standalone research strategy (p. 328).

The data selected for analysis in this strand were policy documents. Governments and other regulatory authorities construct many such documents that seek to define, produce and reproduce social realities. Atkinson and Coffey (2011) argue that such documents “should be regarded as data in their own right. They often enshrine a distinctively documentary version of reality” (p. 80). Documents are analysed in order to discover what kind of reality the document seeks to create and how it goes about doing so. Documents also provide crucial data on the setting and circumstances within which participants operate, with “text providing context” (Bowen, 2009, p. 29).

However, caution is needed when using documents in research. Given that documents were produced for purposes independent of the researcher, they often provide
insufficient detail to answer a research question and thus may need to be combined with other data and methods. The availability of certain documents and unavailability of others suggest “biased selectivity”, and thus researchers need to be conscious of how documents are aligned with organisational principles and political agendas (p. 32). Prior (2011) also cautions that documentary content analysis alone is insufficient unless it is combined with further analysis of how documents are actively assembled and used in “networks of influence” or action. i.e. how “the word” connects with “the world” (p. 96).

**Sampling procedures.**

Purposive sampling was used in this strand, with documents specifically selected in order to answer the research questions (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2009). Documents were gradually sampled in a sequential manner, allowing the sample to evolve as data collection progressed. Documents were selected using “theoretical sampling”, defined as follows:

Theoretical sampling follows the principle of gradual selection, with each site or case providing information that leads to the next logical site or case. Investigators follow the dictates of gradual selection to the site or case that will yield the most valuable information for further theory refinement. (p. 177)

Data collection commenced with the purposive sampling of a single policy document, the ‘Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework’ (AITSL, 2012b). Theoretical sampling then guided the selection of the next document, making this a truly emergent process. References both explicit (in the main body of text) and more implicit (in the policies reference list) led to other policy documents as further data sources. It was unknown at the outset how many data sources would be needed or exactly from where they would be collected. This dynamic and interactive form of sampling continued until a final sample of ten policy documents was collected. This sample is recorded in table 4.1 in the following chapter.

**Obtaining permission and ethical considerations.**

The policy documents selected for analysis are publicly and freely available on the Internet. The URL (Uniform Resource Locator) web address for each document is included in Appendix A. Given that these documents are public and content analysis is “virtually unobtrusive” (Berg, 2007, p. 327), no specific permission was required to collect and analyse them. The ‘Australian code for the responsible conduct of research’ (Australian Government, 2007a) notes that researchers have a responsibility to
“maintain high standards of responsible research”, and emphasises that the researcher must "adopt methods appropriate for achieving the aims of each research proposal" (p. 13). As such, this strand of the study meets these ethical guidelines by using mixed methods content analysis as an appropriate approach to data analysis and maintaining a clear and transparent audit trail of the analytic procedures used.

**Data collection.**
Data collection for Strand A (often referred to as “data selection” in document analysis (Bowen, 2009, p. 31)) commenced with a single document, the ‘Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework’ (AITSL, 2012b). Close reading and memo writing with the first document led to two further AITSL documents, which in turn led to two key policy statements from the federal government. Turning specifically to the NSWIT policies, starting with the two existing versions of the teaching Standards (NSWIT, 2004, 2012a) led to three further key documents (listed later in Table 4.1). The policy documents themselves made the process of theoretical sampling straightforward because of their high degree of ‘intertextuality’, that is, the degree to which “documents reflect and refer (often implicitly) to other documents” (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011, p. 86). Policy documents were limited to those published between 2004 and 2012 and to those that were of particular relevance to second-stage teachers accredited at proficient teacher/professional competence. Although any number of documents could have been included, these parameters yielded a total of ten documents.

**Data recording.**
Each of the ten documents in the sample was collected in Portable Document Format (PDF), meaning that the text and graphics could be viewed and electronically stored without being altered. The documents were imported into NVivo 9 for Windows, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) software tool. Although NVivo was initially developed for qualitative data, its most recent versions “have now developed specific capacities for integrative mixed methods analyses” (Bazeley, 2010, p. 435). An NVivo ‘Project’ was created for the entire study, and the policy documents were the first ‘Sources’ imported into the project. Each policy document was given its own ‘Linked Memo’ as a place to store written notes and reflections, and an additional memo was created to store written reflections on the document analysis as a whole. The use of NVivo as a CAQDAS tool was invaluable across the study, and perhaps most especially in this strand. In particular, keyword analysis facilitated my examination
of large amounts of text without losing the ability to focus in depth on the details evident in small amounts of text. Keyword analysis was also a good way of identifying specific sections within the text that would likely be fruitful for more detailed scrutiny (Seale, 2013).

**Data analysis.**

This study adopted the systematic framework for mixed methods content analysis developed by Bergman (2010), termed ‘hermeneutic content analysis’ (p. 380). Each policy generated both qualitative and quantitative information, making this “inherently mixed data analysis” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 273). Each of the three distinctive steps undertaken in performing mixed methods content analysis is outlined as follows.

*Step 1: Initial qualitative content analysis.*

The aim of this first step was to identify “themes, concepts, components, identities, agents, interactions, and structures relevant to the research focus or question” (Bergman, 2010, p. 389). Once each policy had been closely read and memos written for each, NVivo was used to find the 200 most frequently occurring words. From this list, a final sample of 46 words was chosen on the basis of their theoretical relevance to the research question. Although any number of words could have been chosen from this list of 200, only 46 words turned out to be theoretically relevant to the research question. Using this sample, 46 ‘key word in context’ (KWIC) searches were performed to generate text extracts from the documents. A ‘broad context’ function was used to show several lines of text either side of the key word to illustrate the context. Each of these KWIC searches then became a code and formed the basis for the coding of the policy documents. Bazeley (2010) suggests that these counts can communicate the frequency of certain features of the text and begin to summarise patterns in the data, indicating the relative magnitude and importance of emergent themes. The use of frequencies and KWIC searches was the first step towards identifying and organising the content of the policy documents:

> Counting is integral to the analysis process, especially to the recognition of patterns in data and deviations from those patterns, and to making analytic or idiographic generalisations from data . . . Anytime qualitative researchers take raw data and place it into categories or discern regularities in it to which they attach codes or designate themes, they are drawing from the numbered nature of phenomena for their analysis. (Sandelowski, 2001, p. 231)
Step 2: A quantitative dimensional analysis of the themes derived in step 1.

The purpose of this step was to decontextualise the elements identified in step 1 in order to examine the underlying structure and patterns between them. Bergman (2010) suggests that “patterns identified in this way cannot usually be observed with qualitative methods, so this set of results is likely to add additional insights into the content and meaning structure embedded in the non-numerical data” (p. 389). The goal of this step is “complementarity”, such that the QUAN results complement and offer further insights into the QUAL results.

There are many options available for dimensional analysis. e.g., correspondence analysis, multidimensional scaling. For the present study, a “cluster analysis” was performed for the 46 keywords to provide an overview of the data’s structure and help illuminate patterns within the data set. NVivo’s clustering tool was used to calculate the similarity of the codes based on the similarity of words used within those codes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Cluster analysis provides an overview of the structure of the data and “can aid in visualising the overall relationship among a multitude of codes and themes and to corroborate interpretation based on other analytical strategies such as code frequencies and isolated pairs of co-occurrence” (Guest & Mclellan, 2003, p. 187).

Step 3: A qualitative recontextualisation of the quantitative results from step 2 by interpretation within text and context.

The aim of this step is to integrate the results from the first two steps and to do so within the context of the original textual material (Bergman, 2010). The cluster analysis produced a large dendogram, within which six smaller clusters were apparent. These clusters became the six themes that emerged from the data. In the final step, each of these themes was elaborated and described using relevant quotes from the document corpus. To illustrate these themes, a further cluster analysis of the 6-9 keywords identified was performed. Each theme helped to answer the relevant research sub-question. Bergman (2010) notes that this form of mixed methods content analysis is difficult with very large data sets and cannot create generalisations beyond the given set of texts. On the other hand, mixed methods content analysis draws on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to produce a comprehensive and holistic analysis of a given document corpus.
Methods and procedures: Strand B

Method selection.

The aim of Strand B was to answer research sub-question 2: What is the demographic context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place? In this strand, quantitative descriptive statistical data analysis was used as a simple form of statistics to describe basic data patterns (Neuman, 2011). The aim of this analysis is usually to illustrate a sample through numeric and graphical techniques that summarise the data. In the present study, the aim was to illustrate the population, namely all New Scheme teachers in NSW accredited at Professional Competence/Proficient Teacher and to make comparisons with all Australian teachers more broadly. Unlike inferential statistics, descriptive statistics cannot make claims about the associations or correlations between different variables, or their relative significance or importance.

New Scheme teachers are defined as those who commenced teaching in NSW since 2004. This includes teachers who returned to teaching after an absence of five or more years and teachers coming from interstate or overseas. The New Scheme system commenced in 2004 and this study is examining second-stage teachers in 2013. Therefore by virtue of the study’s timing, the majority of New Scheme teachers are also second-stage teachers. I.e. are also in their fourth to tenth year of teaching. This data is useful for providing a macro level perspective on second-stage teachers’ careers. The aim of this strand of the study is to provide a description of the NSW second-stage teacher population and make comparisons with the broader Australian teaching population. At the time of data analysis, no systematic data about these teachers was publically available.

The data collected for analysis in this strand was “secondary data” originally collected for purposes outside of this study and that the researcher was not directly involved in collecting (Neuman, 2011). Secondary data is considered to be “nonreactive” or “unobtrusive” research because the people being studied are unaware of it. Secondary data is particularly well suited to studies of large bureaucratic organisations and can be used to produce a description of an organisation and the people within it (p. 370). Whilst I did have to pay to access the data, this was still at a much lower cost than surveying the population directly. Not all of the data requested was available or provided, creating ‘gaps’ in the final dataset.
**Sampling procedures.**

Probability (random) sampling was used in this strand, with the aim of generalising to the population and giving every individual in the population an equal and independent chance of being included in the study. More specifically, “cluster sampling” was used because the sampling unit was “not an individual but a group (cluster) that occurs naturally in the population” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 171). The population examined in strand B (all second-stage teachers in NSW) is a cluster sample from the broader population (all teachers in NSW), which is again a cluster from the broadest population (all teachers in Australia). The aim was to collect data on all New Scheme teachers in NSW and, the exact number of which was unknown at the time of data collection. In 2013 there were a total of 90,637 teachers in NSW (ABS, 2014, p. 29). The sample size was logically a proportion of this number.

**Obtaining permission and ethical considerations.**

Information was sought from the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT). Access to data was sought by making a submission through the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW), also referred to as the GIPA Act. From 1 July 2010, the GIPA Act replaced the Freedom of Information Act 1989 (NSW). The GIPA Act applies to all NSW government agencies and some public authorities (e.g., universities). The GIPA Act is designed to encourage government agencies to proactively release information, to help facilitate public access to information and to ensure that access is only restricted where there is an overriding public interest to do so (NSW Government, 2009). Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) board before obtaining this data (Project No. 2013/340; Approval date: 17/5/2013). See Appendix B for details.

According to Neuman (2011) there are two main ethical concerns with secondary data. Firstly, researchers have a responsibility to protect the privacy and confidentiality of those being studied. All data was de-identified through the use of NSWIT teacher identification numbers and no individual names were provided. Secondly, official statistics are social and political products that represent the implicit values and biases of those who collect them (p. 380). As is described below, the NSWIT were only willing to supply some of the data requested and did not hold complete records for several of the variables of interest.
Data collection.
Data was collected by making a submission through the GIPA Act to gather demographic and employment information about teachers accredited with the NSWIT. A summary of the information requested is presented in table 3.1.

The following is a brief recount of the process of data collection. In October 2012, I approached Robyn Mamouney (Manager of Standards and Accreditation at the NSWIT) via email, outlining the research study and the requested data. In January 2013 I met with Ms Mamouney to discuss the nature of the data of interest, the logistics of obtaining the data, and the willingness of the Institute to assist. Following ethics approval from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee in May 2013, an official request for data from the NSWIT using the GIPA Act was submitted in July 2013. Along with the requisite paperwork, there was a $30.00 processing fee. Once the request was accepted, I paid an additional $390.00 to have the data processed and collated. I received a spreadsheet of data from the Institute in September 2013.

The final spreadsheet of data contained only some of the requested elements. All of the data in categories A and B was provided. In category C, data on teaching qualification (undergraduate or postgraduate) was only available for any teacher who was provisionally or conditionally accredited on or after 1 January 2009, and there are gaps in these data. Data on teaching qualification (primary or secondary) were not known by the Institute and hence not provided. In category D, data on school location, teaching role, school sector and employment status was provided, with the caveats that this is teacher-reported data and as such may not be current if a teacher has not updated their details. Further, all of these data points were incomplete. Data on the reasons for teachers taking a leave of absence was not provided on the grounds that retrieval of the information would require an unreasonable and substantial diversion of the Institute's resources.
Table 3.1. *Description of the data requested from the NSWIT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Population</td>
<td>As at (the most recently available date), how many teachers have been accredited at ‘Professional Competence’ in NSW?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Demographic</td>
<td>For each teacher accredited at ‘Professional Competence’: Gender: - Male - Female Age: - 20-29 - 30-39 - 40-49 - 50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Accreditation</td>
<td>For each teacher accredited at ‘Professional Competence’: Teaching qualification gained via: - Undergraduate study (Bachelor Degree) - Postgraduate study (Dip. Education or BTeach/MTeach) Qualified to teach: Primary (K-6) Secondary (7-12) Date of accreditation at ‘Graduate Teacher’ Date of accreditation at ‘Professional Competence’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Employment</td>
<td>For each teacher accredited at ‘Professional Competence’: School location where currently working: - Metropolitan - Rural - Remote Current teaching role defined as: Classroom Teacher Support/Specialist Teacher Head/Executive Teacher Assistant Principal Deputy/Vice Principal Principal Other Currently employed as a teacher in which school sector: Government Catholic Independent Currently employed as a teacher on what basis: Permanent full time Permanent part time Temporary full time Temporary part time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data recording.
Data were provided and stored in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Nominal level measures (to indicate a difference among categories) were gender, school sector, school location, employment status and teaching role. Ordinal level measures (that indicate both a difference and can be rank ordered) were age and the time taken to achieve accreditation at Proficient Teacher. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the final dataset for strand B. An additional category for ‘unknown’ was also added for each variable to reflect the gaps in the dataset.

Data analysis.
Upon receiving the dataset from the NSWIT, a codebook was established and the database was cleaned so that missing or incomplete data could be noted. A frequency distribution was created for each variable in the form of a histogram. Measures of central tendency (means) were calculated for the two ordinal level variables. Once a demographic picture of the New Scheme teacher population was complete, each variable was compared against the broader population of all Australian teachers. This data was collected from three main sources:

- the ‘Schools, Australia (cat. no. 4221.0)’ report produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2014);
- the ‘Staff in Australia’s schools 2013: Main report on the survey’ produced by the Australian Council of Educational Research (McKenzie et al., 2014); and
- the national teaching workforce dataset: Data analysis report produced by the Australian Government (Willett et al., 2014).

The analysis of this data provided a broad demographic snapshot of the second-stage teacher population in NSW and how they compare with the wider Australian teaching population.
Table 3.2. *Teacher variables analysed in strand B*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population size</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male, Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, 50+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of accreditation at ‘Graduate teacher’</td>
<td>Day/Month/Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of accreditation at ‘Professional Competence’ / ‘Proficient Teacher’</td>
<td>Day/Month/Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sector</td>
<td>Government, Catholic, Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School location</td>
<td>Metropolitan, Regional/Rural, Remote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Permanent full-time, Permanent part-time, Temporary full-time, Temporary part-time, Casual, Leave of absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching role</td>
<td>Classroom teacher, Executive teacher, Assistant/Deputy principal, Principal, Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods and procedures: Strand C

Method selection.
The aim of Strand C was to answer research sub-questions three and four:

- How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?
- How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’?

In this strand, qualitative (thematic) data analysis was used. Qualitative data analysis is a complex form of inquiry involving "three concurrent flows of activity: (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing / verification" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 12). Through an iterative process of coding, comparison and reflection, the aim was to develop a limited number of generalisations from across the interview database. These inferences were then compared with existing constructs and theories to answer the research questions. Key features of qualitative inquiry include the intense and/or prolonged contact with participants, an emphasis on naturalistic settings and an absence of standardised instruments, as "the researcher himself or herself is essentially the main instrument in the study" (p. 9). In relation to the present study, qualitative data analysis offered three main strengths:

- the ability to focus on a specific phenomenon embedded within its natural setting, including local contextual influences;
- the ability to reveal complexity and depth through an emphasis on "richness"; and
- the power to discover participants’ meanings of social phenomena through an emphasis on their lived experiences.

Qualitative data analysis was thus appropriate because it is particularly “well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes and structures of their lives and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them” (p. 11).

The data in this strand came from semi-structured interviews. These interviews can be thought of as each being a “conversation with purpose” and data was actively ‘generated’ rather than simply ‘collected’ (Mason, 2002, p. 67). These interviews were characterised by a topical approach to questioning and a relatively flexible structure to allow unexpected ideas to develop. They were also conducted with an understanding of the importance of situation and context, as the researcher-participant interactions reached meanings through a co-production or co-construction of knowledge rather than an “excavation” of it (p. 63). Qualitative interviewing offered many strengths for this
study, in particular the ability to explore participants’ experiences and understandings, to uncover the ways that social processes function and the ability to help construct “compelling arguments about *how things work in particular contexts*” (Mason, 2002, p. 1). On the other hand, qualitative interviewing required substantial expertise to be well-conducted and extensive time and resources for both generating and analysing data.

**Sampling procedures.**

Purposive sampling was used in this strand such that each participant was selected “based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 170). Collectively, this was achieved through “typical case sampling”, with the aim being to select cases that were “the most typical, normal, or representative of the group of cases under consideration” (p. 176). The overall goal was to collect a sample of ‘typical’ second-stage teachers. Individually, the aim was to collect a heterogeneous, diverse sample of teachers to maximise the range of perspectives and to make comparisons between teachers on a series of key criteria. Purposive sampling was achieved through the use of a “quota” to set the initial sampling parameters and act as “a baseline against which to measure both how well your sampling strategy is filling your quotas, and also how useful those quotas continue to be” (Mason, 2002, p. 138). The aim was to generate a sample of twenty-four teachers that was broadly representative of the NSW second-stage teacher population. The quota parameters are listed in table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Minimum 16 female teachers (minimum two-thirds female sample)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Minimum 6 teachers in each age bracket (20-29, 30-39, 40+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>An equal (or close to) number of primary and secondary teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sector</td>
<td>Minimum 14 and maximum 17 government sector teachers, with the remainder a combination of non-government sector teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Minimum 4 and maximum 8 temporary/casual teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This sample size was also chosen in reference to work by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006). Using data from sixty in-depth interviews, they documented the process of achieving data saturation during the course of thematic analysis and found that saturation occurred after analysing twelve interviews (p. 74). They note that this number depends upon both how unusual or contentious the key phenomenon is and how diverse the sample is. Based on the diversity of my sample, and considering the limitation of having one researcher to conduct, transcribe and analyse all interviews, a final sample size of twenty-four was chosen.

The original plan was for interview participants to be recruited with the assistance of the NSWIT through both a notice on their website and via an email invitation using the NSWIT teacher database. The recruitment notice was advertised online from September 2013 to December 2013 and is contained in Appendix C. Unfortunately, whilst the NSWIT was initially keen to support an email invitation, as the time drew nearer to commence recruitment they indicated that they were no longer willing to help.

An alternative plan, therefore, was generated to recruit participants through the ‘TeachMeet’ organisation. TeachMeet is a voluntary organisation where professional development is organised by teachers for teachers. The focus is on the sharing of learning and on teacher networking across school levels and sectors. TeachMeets have taken place all over Australia since 2011, they are open to all and do not charge an entry fee. See http://www.teachmeet.net/ for further details. In September 2013, I contacted the NSW coordinator of TeachMeet and requested an email contact list of teachers who had attended TeachMeets in NSW. TeachMeet has sub-groups across 20 geographic locations in NSW and each sub-group has an online contact sheet where people can place their details when they sign up to attend a TeachMeet. It is important to note that the use of TeachMeet participants for this study may mean the sample is skewed towards teachers who are perhaps more engaged and committed to their work than the average, evident in their participation in voluntary professional learning outside of school hours. On the other hand, it may also mean the sample is skewed towards those who are more disenchanted with the accreditation system. Both of these possibilities suggest that all responses should be treated with appropriate caution.
Table 3.4. Summary demographic information on the final interview sample of 24 teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Sample numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>17 female, 7 male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>6 aged 20-29; 11 aged 30-39; 7 aged 40+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>12 primary, 12 secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sector</td>
<td>15 government; 3 Catholic; 6 independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>18 permanent full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 temporary full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 temporary part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 on maternity leave, planning to return part-time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the online, publically available spreadsheets with details of TeachMeet participants across NSW, I then constructed a sampling frame made up of every teacher who had provided their email contact when they participated in a TeachMeet event in NSW. An email was sent to each of the 490 teachers on this list, and a copy of this email is provided in Appendix D. Teachers who expressed an interest were sent a short questionnaire asking them to provide some background information about themselves (gender, age, years of teaching, qualifications, employment sector and status). A list of interview participants was then generated according to the quota guidelines. Table 3.4 summarises the final sample.

Obtaining permission and ethical considerations.

Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) board before obtaining this data (Project No. 2013/340; Approval date: 17/5/2013). See Appendix B for details. According to the ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research’, the interviews in this study are considered to be “low risk research” because “the only foreseeable risk is one of discomfort” (Australian Government, 2007b, p. 13). Each participant was provided with a Participant
Information Statement (see Appendix E), outlining the nature of the study and what was required to be involved. Prior to commencing each interview, participants were asked to read and sign a Participant Consent Form (see Appendix F). This document emphasised that their participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. It also explicitly asked consent for the interview to be audio recorded and for participants to be contacted with feedback. All participants signed consent forms. Each participant was asked if they would like to receive a copy of the transcript, in accordance with the guideline that "respect for the participants requires that the accuracy or completeness of each interview transcript should be verified by the relevant participant before analysis is complete" (Australian Government, 2007b, p. 26). All participants were emailed a copy of their transcripts and were invited to give feedback. Whilst several participants replied that they were happy with the transcript, all declined the invitation to give further feedback, perhaps reflecting that the interview topics were neither sensitive nor controversial.

The anonymity of participants was protected through assigning each participant a pseudonym of the same gender. The confidentiality and privacy of participants was protected through careful storage of the data on the researcher’s computer (Room 620, Building A35, The University of Sydney). At the conclusion of the study, data were stored in the chief investigator’s storage office (Room 522, Building A35, The University of Sydney). Participants were given a $20 gift voucher as a token of appreciation for participating in the study (funded by the researcher). The ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research’ notes that payments must not be disproportionate to the time involved or induce participants to take risks (Australian Government, 2007b, p. 17). The small, tokenistic nature of the gift voucher was thus ethically sound and not considered to impact on the study’s results. Finally, a safety protocol was developed to manage the risks to the researcher during the interviews (see Appendix G).

**Data generation.**

Based on the research questions and the literature review, an interview guide was developed for the purpose of data generation. The guide contained four broad topics:

- Career background and experiences
- Professional Teaching Standards and accreditation experiences
- Professional roles and activities
- Career plans and future aspirations
Within each of these topics, five to eight specific questions were developed. Although the questions were numbered for ease of reference, the exact flow of the questions depended upon the interviewee as topics naturally arose during the course of the interview.

The initial interview guide was piloted with two teachers (one primary and one secondary), both of whom were acquaintances of the researcher. This helped to refine and extend the interview guide, and also build the confidence and competence of the researcher. The data generated during the pilot was not used beyond this phase. A copy of the final interview guide is included in Appendix H. The interviews took place between September and December 2013. The interviews were carried out in four different locations: in participants’ classrooms or school meeting rooms (14), in the researcher’s office at Sydney University (4), in participants’ homes (3) and online via Skype (3). Most interviews were one hour in duration, yielding approximately 1,450 minutes of recorded audio material.

Data recording.
Three tools were used to manage the recording, storage and analysis of this data. Firstly, the interviews recorded on an Olympus (WS-812) digital voice recorder. Each audio recording was uploaded onto my computer in an MP3 format. Secondly, I transcribed the interviews using “Inqscribe” transcription software (https://www.inqscribe.com/). This very simple software allowed me to import audio files, slow down the material, dampen background noises and ‘time stamp’ the transcript at the start of each new question. During transcription, participants’ words were transcribed verbatim, including pauses and other informal sounds (e.g., Umm, yeah, mmm). Once completed in Inqscribe, each transcript was exported into Microsoft Word. Finally, each transcript was entered into NVivo 9 for Windows in the established NVivo Project created at the start of the study. Each transcript was given its own ‘Linked Memo’ as a place to store written notes and reflections on the document, and an additional memo was created to store written reflections on the whole interview analysis.

Data analysis.
Data analysis began simultaneously with the transcription process. As I completed each transcript, I began the process of analysis as outlined here in the following six steps:
Step 1: Initial data exploration through reading and reflection
Firstly, I read through each complete interview transcript several times to get a sense of the depth and breadth of its content. I used the NVivo ‘linked memo’ function to note key points that caught my attention. I then wrote a short ‘profile’ for each participant to capture key background information and demographic context. I also created a spreadsheet to capture key details about each participant and to keep a record of their pseudonyms. A copy of this spreadsheet is included in Appendix I. As I got a sense of each participant, I wrote a short narrative of his or her “career story” as told in the interview. Bazeley (2013) recommends this focus on narrative as a way to “reveal the embedded ways in which members of a particular cultural or social group comprehend their world” (p. 113).

Step 2: Open coding
A process of initial or ‘open’ coding was then undertaken and each code became a ‘node’ in NVivo. Codes were developed inductively from the data itself. The unit of analysis or ‘meaning unit’ was the sentence, with an emphasis on fine-grain, close analysis. Codes typically overlapped so that most sentences had several codes. Bazeley sees this as a process of “slicing or layering rather than fracturing” as multiple codes were used for each sentence as necessary (p. 144). After completing open coding with all twenty-four interview transcripts, there were more than 2000 individual codes. This volume was only manageable through the use of NVivo software.

Step 3: Development of categories and sub-categories
This step happened multiple times, once at the end of open coding for each complete transcript, and then again at the end of open coding for all twenty-four interviews. The open codes were sorted, sifted and connected so that a collection of key codes became broad categories and the other nodes were organised into sub-categories below these. Seventeen broad categories emerged:

- Career control
- Critical incidents
- Differentiated job roles
- Early years of teaching
- Future career years
- Getting a teaching job
- Identity
- Lifelong career
- Middle career years
- Ongoing learning
- Professionalism
- Promotion
- Registration / Standards / Accreditation
- Teaching as work
- Teaching as a profession
- Why I teach
- Work conditions

Step 4: Focused coding to develop key concepts
The next step was to undertake a process of ‘focused coding’. These focused codes were more abstract and analytical, rather than descriptive, with the aim being “to reflect either overarching ideas or higher-order concepts, or to identify broader, more complex themes running through the data” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 179). As the codes, categories and sub-categories were again sorted and shifted, four main concepts emerged and were developed through a process of description and theorising. These four concepts were:
- Career as a pathway
- Career as an evolving journey
- Career as membership of a professional group
- Career as engagement with policy and structure

Each of these different conceptualisations of ‘career’ are described and theorised in the following findings chapters.

Step 5: Comparative analysis
Each participant was compared on the basis on each of these four concepts. A cross-case comparative matrix was made for each concept, comparing all participants on key dimensions of the concept. This was initially done using the ‘Classifications’ function in NVivo, and later exported to Microsoft Excel. Each of these displays is presented in the findings chapters later in the thesis.

Step 6: Making connections with literature and theory
The four concepts each became a key finding from the interview data. Each of these findings was written up and presented in their own sub-chapter. These findings were then interrogated and interpreted in the light of existing literature and theory as part of the discussion sections of the thesis.
The use of NVivo software was integral throughout the whole interview analysis process. NVivo allows coded chunks of data to be instantly viewed within their larger context, memos for each data source remain ‘attached’ to the primary data and “links between and across data segments, sources, codes and coded passages . . . are readily established and mapped” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 18). Ultimately, NVivo provided greater flexibility and power for data analysis. The initial open coding process was much quicker with NVivo than manually and I was able to identify broad patterns in such a large volume of data quite quickly and early on in the analysis process (Seale, 2013).

Generating inferences and connecting the data sets

The final critical stage of the study was to develop interpretations and conclusions from the data in order to make inferences. The inference process involved a series of thinking steps to actively make meaning from the findings, generating answers to the research questions and leading to the development of new understandings of the key phenomenon. The aim was to “create an understanding on the basis of all results, a whole that is bigger than a simple set of isolated conclusions made on the basis of different findings of a study” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 288). Key steps in the inference process included:

- a deep and thorough literature review;
- the use of field notes and memos;
- keeping the research questions at the forefront during each stage of the study;
- answering each research sub-question explicitly, with references to the literature; and
- combining the inferences from each strand to generate mixed methods inferences.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) describe the inference process as “both an art and a science”, as researchers compartmentalise the components of a phenomenon, understand each alone, and then reconstruct them for a fuller understanding (p. 289). In this study, I sought to follow their “golden rule of making inferences” to “know thy participants”, including their culture and context (p. 289). My background as a member of the second-stage teacher population was another ‘lens’ through which I viewed the three data sets, reflected in my field notes and memos throughout the study. The inferences drawn from the documents and numeric data in strands A and B were
generally more etic (from the point of view of the researcher as a cultural outsider); the inferences drawn from the interviews in strand C were generally more emic (from the point of view of the researcher as a cultural insider) (p. 288).

In order to bring the study together as a cohesive whole, the different qualitative and quantitative inferences needed to be linked. In connecting the three data sets, the mixed methods design of the study logically led to the use of “parallel mixed data analysis”, with an emphasis on triangulation and convergence (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 266). Four separate rounds of data analysis were undertaken. Each of the three strands was first analysed independently using appropriate methods (as outlined above). The findings and interpretation for the different strands of the study are presented in chapters four, five and six. Each chapter provides a different perspective for understanding the key phenomenon.

The final interpretive phase culminates in a synthesis of the findings through a mixed methods analysis and discussion in chapter seven. This chapter answers the final research sub-question and then makes inferences to the main, driving research question. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) emphasise the distinction between drawing “inferences” (conclusions or interpretation from each strand) and “meta-inferences” (conclusions or interpretation across all strands together) (p. 266). Whilst in practice, the different strands ‘talked to each other’ in a semi-iterative manner throughout the analysis process, they were not formally combined to form meta-inferences until the end of the study. Using Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) convergent design, researchers can either “transform” data to make direct comparisons or “merge” the results to compare data sets (p. 221). Data transformation was not appropriate to the data in this study, and thus the later approach was chosen.

Merged data analysis occurred in two ways. Firstly, a “joint display” was developed so that convergent and divergent findings could be integrated into a data analysis display table. This display took the form of a table with the four key interview findings across the horizontal axis and findings from both the demographic and policy document data on the vertical axis. Each cell was shaded to indicate the nature of the intersection between the different findings. The shaded boxes were determined through a constant comparative process of analysing each cell for specific examples in the data where there was an overlap of theme or idea (Bazeley, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). Three different forms of shading were used to indicate whether the intersection of datasets was best characterised as: (a) silence/neutral overlap; (b) agreement/convergence; or
(c) tension/divergence. Each overlap was scrutinised for whether or not there was a strong argument that the datasets agreed, disagreed, or were silent on a given data point. Appropriate data extracts were then drawn out to highlight the relationships between the different findings. Secondly, a “side-by-side comparison” developed inferences to the main research question: What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers? In interpreting the merged data results, the goal was to note both “discrepant” and “congruent” results, following Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) advice to “look for how the quantitative and qualitative databases tell different stories” (p. 233). The meta-inferences drawn from across all strands also led to the development of a revised conceptual framework of the key phenomenon.

Quality and validation of the research

There is no single set of universally accepted criteria for assessing the quality of mixed methods research. Several scholars have conceptualised what quality means for mixed methods research (Bryman, Becker, & Sempik, 2008a; Bryman, 2006b), whilst others have constructed models for explicitly assessing quality. The earliest attempt was Caracelli and Riggin’s (1994) identification of 20 quality criteria, clustered into the four domains of design, data, bias and interpretation. A much larger and more comprehensive approach was developed with Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2003) original “integrative framework for inference quality” in mixed methods research, which was significantly expanded and revised in Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009). Other researchers have explicitly built on and extended their work, e.g., the “legitimation model” (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006); and the “validation framework” (Dellinger & Leech, 2007). O’Cathain (2010) has taken on board all of these existing models and explicitly used them as the foundation for her larger “quality framework for mixed methods research”. Alternatively, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) have developed a series of guidelines for helping researchers minimise threats to validity throughout the mixed methods process.

Given this range of models, it was difficult to determine how best to evaluate the present study. Whilst it can be argued that the different strands (qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods) need to be evaluated separately, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) suggest that having three sets of quality criteria is cumbersome and impractical. Although O’Cathain’s (2010) “quality framework” is by far the most comprehensive, she notes herself that the framework currently has “too many criteria” and that her
experience of trying to apply it to a real mixed methods study “was time consuming and difficult” (p. 552). Given that most of the available models present variations on the core of Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2009) “integrative framework”, the decision was made to adopt this framework to evaluate the present study. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) emphasise the importance of the final phase: “the most important step in any MM [mixed methods] study is when the results (i.e., findings, conclusions) from the study’s QUAL and QUAN strands are incorporated into a coherent conceptual framework that provides an effective answer to the research question” (p. 286). The quality and credibility of meta-inferences made at the end of the study are heavily dependent upon the rigour of each separate quantitative and qualitative strand.

The ‘traditional’ criteria for evaluating qualitative research are credibility, confirmability, transferability and dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additional criteria include transparency, relevance to users and reflexivity (Bryman, Becker, & Sempik, 2008, p. 267). The ‘traditional’ criteria for evaluating quantitative research are validity, reliability, replicability and generalisability (Neuman, 2011). Additional criteria include understandability, transparency and the use of appropriate methods (Bryman et al., 2008, p. 265). Each of these aspects has been captured and extended upon in Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2009) ‘Integrative Framework for Inference Quality’ (pp. 301-302). The framework has two broad families of criteria: design quality (four criteria) and interpretive rigour (six criteria). These ten criteria have been summarised in Table 3.5. Each criterion will be considered in turn and used to scrutinise the present study.

Firstly, ‘design quality’ – the degree to which the most appropriate procedures were selected and implemented to answer the research questions. (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 302). There are four criteria for design quality. Suitability or appropriateness of the design can be seen in the harmonious alignment between the research questions and the research design. A mixed methods design was chosen in order to obtain a range of different data that could be combined to develop a more complete understanding of the key phenomenon. The convergent parallel mixed methods design was specifically adopted and adapted to best suit the demands of the main research question. No other mixed methods design (eg. sequential, embedded, transformative, multiphase) was as well suited to the aims of this study.

The fidelity or adequacy of the different design components can be seen in the detailed outlines of the three different methods described in the preceding sections. Careful attention was given to specialist advice from research methodologists who
were recognised experts in the collection and analysis of the relevant data type. Guidance in the following areas was invaluable: document analysis (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011; Bowen, 2009) content analysis (Bazeley, 2010; Bergman, 2010), descriptive statistics and secondary data (Neuman, 2011), interviewing (Mason, 2002) and qualitative data analysis (Bazeley, 2013). Using these established and respected techniques with care and rigor enabled different meanings and relationships to be captured in the study.

The **within-design consistency** of the study can best be understood with the help of Figure 3.1, the figure presented earlier in the chapter outlining the convergent parallel mixed methods design. This figure shows the flow from research questions, to paradigm, to conceptual lens, to theoretical lens, to methodological design. Each of these key components of the design fits together in a logical manner. The three strands of the study were combined in the final mixed method interpretation phase, as the independent results were synthesised and compared. The reader can best judge the **analytic adequacy** of the study by reading and evaluating the remaining chapters of the thesis. These chapters outline the key findings of the study, discuss connections with existing literature and theory and explicitly answer the research questions. The effectiveness of the final mixed methods synthesis is seen in the extent to which the research questions are adequately answered and justified with sufficient evidence.

<p>| Table 3.5. <em>Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2009) ‘Integrative Framework for Inference Quality’ (pp. 301-302)</em> |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Quality</th>
<th>Research Criterion</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Design quality | 1. Design suitability (appropriateness) | 1a. Are the methods of study appropriate for answering the research question? Does the design match the research question?  
1b. Does the mixed methods design match the stated purpose for conducting an integrated study?  
1c. Do the strands of the mixed methods study address the same research questions (or closely related aspects of questions)? |
<p>| | 2. Design fidelity (adequacy) | 2. Are the QUAL, QUAN, and MM procedures or design components (e.g., sampling, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures) implemented with the quality and rigor necessary for (and capable of) capturing the meanings, effects or relationships? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3. Within-design consistency | 3a. Do the components of the design fit together in a seamless manner? Is there within-design consistency across all aspects of the study?
|   | 3b. Do the strands of the MM study follow each other (or are they linked) in a logical and seamless manner? |
| 4. Analytic adequacy | 4a. Are the data analysis procedures/strategies appropriate and adequate to provide possible answers to research questions?
|   | 4b. Are the MM analytic strategies implemented effectively? |
| Interpretive Rigour | 5. Interpretive Consistency |
|   | 5a. Do the inferences closely follow the relevant findings in terms of type, scope, and intensity? |
|   | 5b. Are multiple inferences made on the basis of the same findings consistent with each other? |
| 6. Theoretical consistency | 6. Are the inferences consistent with theory and state of knowledge in the field? |
| 7. Interpretive agreement | 7a. Are other scholars likely to reach the same conclusions based on the same results? |
|   | 7b. Do the inferences match participants constructions? |
| 8. Interpretive distinctiveness | 8. Is each inference distinctively more credible/plausible than other possible conclusions that might be made on the basis of the same results? |
| 9. Integrative efficacy | 9a. Do the meta-inferences adequately incorporate the inferences that are made in each strand of the study? |
|   | 9b. If there are credible inconsistencies between the inferences made within/across strands, are the theoretical explanations offered for these inconsistencies explored, and possible explanations offered? |
| 10. Interpretive correspondence | 10a. Do the inferences correspond to the stated purposes/questions of the study? Do the inferences made in each strand address the purposes of the study in that strand? |
|   | 10b. Do the meta-inferences meet the stated need for using an MM design? |
Secondly, ‘interpretive rigour’, defined as the degree to which the results have been used as the basis for making credible interpretations from the study (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 303). There are six criteria for interpretive rigour. The interpretive consistency of this study is evident in structure of the following chapters. In chapters four, five and six, findings are presented and then immediately followed by a discussion of the inferences and connections to literature and theory. This structure is outlined in Table 3.6.

This structure enables the findings to be clustered according to the key themes that emerged during the study and also helps the reader to see the connections between the findings and the analysis. The theoretical consistency of the study is evident in the discussion sections of the thesis. Each discussion highlights the connections with existing knowledge and theory in the literature. The key researchers identified in the earlier literature review are again present in the relevant discussion sections of the thesis. The fact that it was readily possible to make many strong connections with other researchers’ empirical findings suggests that this study has a high degree of theoretical consistency.

Table 3.6. Structure of thesis chapters four, five and six

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Career organisational context</td>
<td>Policy document findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview finding 1: Entry pathway into a teaching career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview finding 2: The evolving journey of a teaching career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion A: How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed in current policy documents? What is the demographic context in which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Career trajectories</td>
<td>Interview finding 3: Career as membership of a professional group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion B: How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: Career cultures</td>
<td>Interview finding 4: Career as engagement with policy &amp; structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion C: How to second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The **Interpretive agreement** of the study can be considered for each dataset. The policy documents analysed in Strand A are freely available online. Another scholar could access these documents and follow the steps outlined in the methods and procedures section of this chapter. Of course, there is no guarantee that this would generate exactly the same inferences and conclusions as every researcher brings to the data his or her own prior experiences, biases and worldviews. The secondary data analysed in Strand B are not freely available and cannot be shared in raw form as a condition of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. Another researcher could easily replicate the statistical procedures outlined earlier and the same conclusions could be drawn. Considering the interview data in Strand C, it is unlikely that any two researchers using the same interview data would ever draw exactly the same conclusions. Again, every researcher brings to the data his or her own prior experiences, biases and worldviews. What is more important here is the extent to which the inferences drawn match the constructions of the participants themselves. All participants were sent a one-page summary of the findings via email and given the opportunity to offer any further thoughts or feedback. All participants declined this invitation, suggesting that there were no major discrepancies between my inferences and the participants reported constructions of their beliefs and attitudes.

To protect the **interpretive distinctiveness** of the study, a crucial step for each strand was to consider the range of plausible conclusions and to select the most credible conclusion that was consistently and overwhelmingly supported by the data. This was particularly a concern in the working with the interview data. During the initial interview data analysis, the process of memo writing and constant comparison generated a range of possible findings and inferences. The deeper layers of analysis, particularly focused coding to develop key concepts and comparative analysis across cases, helped to narrow down the most robust and plausible findings. Whilst writing up the findings, I was constantly returning to the data to justify and find evidence for my arguments. In presenting the final findings, other possible findings have been refuted. In Strands A and B, the findings sections discuss other possible conclusions and present plausible arguments for why my conclusions are the most plausible.

The **integrative efficacy** of the study comes under scrutiny in chapter seven, where meta-inferences are drawn from across all strands to answer the research sub-question: *How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other?* This sub-question was deliberately included in the study to ensure that meta-inferences would explicitly be drawn in a robust and obvious
manner. Chapter seven shows that views of career constructed in policy documents both converge and diverge from views of career constructed by teachers themselves. This reflects the complementarity of the data, as this study has highlighted different perspectives on the same phenomenon. These divergent inferences “might be a result of two different definitions of reality that can be linked theoretically. This leads to a better understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 308). In other words, both consistencies and inconsistencies between different findings help to strengthen the study’s design and are a key part of being able to more richly answer the main research question.

Finally, the thesis structure also supports the study’s interpretive correspondence. Each strand of the study answers one or more research sub-questions specifically tailored to the data for that strand. A mixed methods design was chosen for this study in order to obtain “different but complimentary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122) which could be compared and contrasted to “develop a more complete understanding of a phenomenon” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 77). This purpose is clearly achieved in chapter seven, as the different strands are connected and reflected against each other and the main research question is addressed. The key phenomenon is investigated from micro, meso and macro levels using all three data sets. The three strands together provide a more multifaceted understanding than any single strand alone.

**Chapter summary**

This chapter has outlined the research methodology for the study. It has provided philosophical foundation for the study as a whole and outlined the key features of the mixed methods research design. The specific methods and procedures undertaken for each of the data sets have been described and the crucial mixed methods synthesis has been discussed. Finally, this chapter has justified the quality of the research using Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2009) quality criteria for mixed methods research. This chapter marks the end of the first third of the thesis, wherein the background context for the study has been established. The following three chapters will present the empirical findings of the thesis, including a discussion of how these findings connect with the broader literature, theory and contexts within which the study took place.
Chapter Four: Career organisational context

This chapter marks the start of the findings, discussion and interpretation section of the thesis. Over the next three chapters, each research sub-question will be addressed and the findings and discussions of each data set presented. This will then culminate in a mixed method synthesis of the findings in chapter seven, with final conclusions and implications offered in chapter eight.

Chapter four will address the career organisational context for second-stage teachers in NSW. This chapter is divided into three parts:

- Part One. Policy document findings
- Part Two. Secondary data findings
- Part Three. Discussion A: Second-stage teachers’ career organisational context

Taken together, these three parts combine in an effort to answer the first two research sub-questions: *How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents? (RSQ1)*; *What is the demographic context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place? (RSQ2)*. Parts one and two will present in-depth findings using tables and figures to capture and summarise the main ideas. Part three will then discuss the findings and make connections to the literature and theories outlined earlier in the thesis and then draw some preliminary conclusions.

Part One: Policy document findings

Part one of this chapter will present the findings generated from the policy document data collected in strand A of the study. These documents were analysed using mixed methods content analysis (Bazeley, 2010, 2013; Bergman, 2010). An extensive discussion of the principles underlying this method and the specific sampling, data collection and analysis processes undertaken can be found in the previous methodology chapter. This section contributes to the thesis by illustrating the policy context within which second-stage teachers’ careers have taken place. As was articulated in the literature review, substantial policy changes in Australia over the last decade have shifted the organisational landscape for teachers.

This section will be presented as follows. Firstly, an overview of the most frequently occurring words from within the document corpus will be displayed. From this, a
sample of 46 keywords was chosen and cluster analysis was performed to determine patterns within the text. The cluster analysis revealed six sub-clusters, each of which was developed into a key theme. These themes will be discussed and illustrated with relevant quotes from the document corpus.

**Document sample.**
Data collection commenced with the purposive sampling of a single policy document, the ‘Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework’ (AITSL, 2012b). Theoretical sampling was then used to guide the selection of the next document, making this a truly emergent process. The documents themselves made the process of theoretical sampling straightforward because of their high degree of ‘intertextuality’, that is, the degree to which “documents reflect and refer (often implicitly) to other documents” (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011, p. 88). Close reading and memo writing with the first document lead to two further AITSL documents, which in turn lead to two policy statements from the federal government. Turning specifically to the NSWIT policies, starting with the original ‘Professional Teaching Standards’ (NSWIT, 2004) and the more recent updated version (NSWIT, 2012a), these lead to three further documents. The final sample of ten policy documents is presented in table 4.1. Documents were limited to those published between 2004 and 2012 and to those that were of particular relevance to second-stage teachers accredited at proficient teacher/professional competence (not teachers accredited at higher levels), and within the NSW context.

A text search for the names of each of the policy documents illuminates the high degree of intertextuality between them. As can be seen in table 4.2, the names of the documents appear a total of 283 times across the ten document sample. Of those, 133 references are examples of one document referring to another document. These figures help to illuminate the dense connectedness between the documents and suggest that there is value in considering the sample as a cohesive text corpus.
Table 4.1. *The final sample of policy documents included in the content analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework</td>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders</td>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality</td>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians</td>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Teaching Standards (original)</td>
<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Professional Standards for Teachers (updated)</td>
<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy for Accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy for Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Professional Development Policy: Supporting the Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2. Counts of intertextuality within the document sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>References to self in own document</th>
<th>References in other sample documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Teaching Standards (original)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Professional Standards for Teachers (new)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy for accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy for maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing professional development policy: Supporting the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher/ Professional Competence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total = 283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word frequency.

After attending to each document through close reading and memo writing, a word frequency query was conducted to identify the 200 most frequently occurring words within the sample (displayed in Figure 4.1). A table providing a summary of each word along with its frequency and weighted percentage is provided in Appendix J. One surprising aspect of this was the position of the word “professional” as the second-most frequently occurring word across the corpus. “Career”, the key word of interest in this study, does not appear in the one hundred most frequently occurring words. With fifty-two occurrences across the corpus, it comes in at number one hundred and thirty-seven on the list.
Key words in context.

From this list of 200 words, a final sample of 46 was chosen. These words were selected on the basis of their theoretical relevance to the research question and are presented in table 4.3. For each word in this sample, a ‘key word in context’ search was performed using NVivo. This search generated extracts from the documents where each word appeared. A ‘broad context’ function was used to show several lines of text either side of the key word for maximum contextual illustration. Each of these key words then became a code and formed the basis for the coding of the policy documents.
Table 4.3. Sample of 46 keywords chosen for close analysis within the policy documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>teachers'</td>
<td>1494</td>
<td>teacher, teachers, teachers'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>professionals</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>professional, professionalism, professionally, professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>develops</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>develop, developed, developing, development, developments, develops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>teaching</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>teach, teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>standards</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>standard, standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>educators</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>educate, education, education', educational, educative, educator, educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>accrediting</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>accredit, accreditation, accreditations, accredited, accrediting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>continuous</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>continual, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuity, continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>Australian, Australians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>practices</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>practical, practice, practice', practices, practicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>knowledge, knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>nationally</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>nation, national, nationally, nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>improve</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>improve, improved, improvement, improvements, improves, improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>effect, effective, effectively, effectiveness, effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>proficient</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>quality</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>competent</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>compete, competence, competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>colleagues'</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>colleague, colleagues, colleagues'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>level</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>level, levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>engage</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement, engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>evaluate</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>evaluate, evaluated, evaluates, evaluating, evaluation, evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>performing</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>perform, performance, performed, performing, performs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>registered</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>register, registered, registering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>demonstrate</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>demonstrated, demonstrates, demonstrating, demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>working</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>work, worked, working, works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>goals</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>goal, goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>governments</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>governance, governing, government, governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>states</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>state, stated, states, states'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>maintenance</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>reforms</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>reform, reform', reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>culture</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>cultural, culturally, culture, cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>maintain</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>maintain, maintained, maintaining, maintains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>training</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>train, trained, training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cluster analysis.

A cluster analysis was performed for these 46 keywords to provide a structural overview and help illuminate patterns within the data set. The ‘similar words’ also formed part of the total in each case. NVivo’s clustering tool was used to calculate the similarity of the codes based on the similarity of words used within those codes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, p. 236). The results are presented as a multidimensional plot in figure 4.2 and as a dendogram in figure 4.3. Both figures illustrate patterns of connection between the codes. Note that the selection of different colours is not significant to their meaning, but rather is a default setting of the NVivo software. Within the dendogram in figure 4.3, six smaller clusters are apparent. These clusters became the six themes that emerged from the data. An additional cluster analysis of the six to nine relevant keywords for each theme was also performed. In the following sections, each of these themes will be elaborated and described using relevant quotes from the document corpus. The six themes each provide part of the answer to the research sub-question: how are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?
Figure 4.2. A multidimensional plot of the 46 codes from the document sample
Figure 4.3. A cluster analysis of the 46 codes from the document sample
Theme: teachers’ careers are being standardised.

The first theme evident within the data was that teachers’ careers are being ‘standardised’. This is displayed in the dendogram in figure 4.4, showing the seven codes within this theme. Table 4.4 shows the frequency of these codes across the document corpus.

Figure 4.4. Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘standardised’

Table 4.4. Word frequencies for the codes within the theme ‘standardised’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stages</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>Stages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>Recognised, recognises, recognising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>Nation, national, nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The word “career” appeared in the documents 52 times, of which 27 were within the phrase “career stage”. This suggests a clear move towards a stage-based, linear conceptualisation of the teaching career. The AITSL Standards provide an explicit definition of career stages as: “benchmarks which recognise the professional growth of teachers throughout their careers, represented by increasing levels of knowledge,”
practice and professional engagement.” The emphasis is on “professional growth” and on the improvement of a teacher’s practice over time. In making these stages explicit, the documents seek to define exactly how teachers’ careers could and should develop.

The AITSL Performance and Development Framework makes explicit reference to teachers’ “career progression” and the need for a framework that “provides a more coherent and visible path through the career stages”. This acknowledges that the Standards need to be part of a broader set of structures that support teachers’ careers. Teachers’ work is acknowledged as important – AITSL seeks to “recognise excellence in teaching” whilst the Standards “recognise the professional growth of teachers”. The NSWIT documents articulate the importance of “an integrated career-long approach to the preparation, support and development of quality teachers” and describe the Standards as “a foundation for career planning”. These two references recognise the continuous and evolving nature of careers.

Here, too, teaching as a “profession” is discussed (note that this is separate from the discussion of teachers as “professionals”). AITSL articulates the development of their Standards as aiming to “contribute[s] positively to the public standing of the profession” and to “raise the status of the profession”. This broadens the conversation from teachers’ careers as their own to the view of their careers within the context of the broader Australian community.

Evident throughout these documents is an emphasis on “quality”. Indeed, the AITSL Standards themselves claim to be “a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality”. The AITSL Performance and Development Framework emphasises the need for improvement, “there is no more important endeavour than further improving the quality of teaching . . . .the quality of teaching is the most significant in school factor affecting student outcomes”. The language of quality pervades the Melbourne declaration, with references to “high-quality schooling for all young Australians”, “a high-quality teaching and school leadership workforce”, “good-quality information on schooling” and “good quality data”. The ‘National partnership agreement on improving teacher quality’ clearly places this issue front and centre. It aims to “drive and reward systemic reforms to improve the quality of teaching” and to help “address the significant challenges Australia faces to maintain the quality of its teaching workforce”. This locates the issue of teachers having careers as intimately tied up within the broader quality discourse.
**Theme: teachers’ careers are being professionalised.**

One of the unexpected findings of this document analysis was the prevalence of the word “professional” within the documents. With 1258 references, professional (and its associated root words) was the second-most frequently occurring word in the corpus. The cluster analysis in Figure 4.5 below shows the other key words that were closely associated with professional, with “teachers” and “maintain” being the two closest.

Other words evident here focus on accreditation and the relevant levels for second-stage teachers – originally called ‘Professional Competence’ in the NSWIT Standards and now termed ‘Proficient Teacher’ in the updated Standards. The frequency of these keywords is shown in table 4.5.

Figure 4.5. *Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘professionalised’*

Table 4.5. *Word frequencies for the codes within the theme ‘professionalised’*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accrediting</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>Accredit, accreditation, accreditations, accredited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>Levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>Compete, competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>Maintained, maintaining, maintains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Professionals, professionalism, professionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’</td>
<td>1494</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>Teacher, teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The AITSL Standards are explicit in their aim to "contribute to the professionalisation of teaching". The National Partnership on Teacher Quality states one of its goals as being "to address the significant challenges Australia faces to maintain the quality of its teaching workforce". Placing the "maintenance" of teacher quality front and centre suggests a concern that some teachers are not consistently delivering quality practice throughout their careers. The use of the word "maintain" may also refer to the high degree of support that teachers require in order to successfully sustain their quality teaching practice, or it may be a cautious alternative to the word 'improve'.

The NSWIT developed a separate policy specifically for "the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher/Professional Competence". Two of its key stated aims are to "maintain a high quality of teaching" and to "assist teachers to maintain their accreditation", with the vast majority of the references (89/101) to the latter. This suggests that policy makers are concerned not only that early career teachers reach a minimum level of proficiency, but crucially that they uphold this over time. This may reflect a deeper concern that teachers become settled into their familiar practices and run the risk of complacency, perhaps especially the longer they have been teaching.

It is also useful to examine how the word "professional" has been used within these documents. The most frequent uses of "professional" were in relation to "professional development" (330 references) and "professional learning" (207 references). Being a professional is clearly defined in terms of the pursuit of further learning and development of one's teaching practice. Closely related to this were references to "Professional Standards" (239 references), including the three domains of teaching "professional practice" (45 references), "professional knowledge" (36 references) and "professional engagement" (28 references). Teachers are clearly being 'professionalised' in relation to the standards – the standards thus seek to define what it means to be a professional teacher.

By contrast, the word "professional" is sparingly used in other contexts outside of teacher development or the Standards. For example, "professional discussions/dialogue" (7 references); "professional growth" (7 references); "professional life" (3 references); "professional aspiration" (2 references); "professional capability" (2 references); "professional capacity" (2 references); "professional expertise" (2 references) and "professional judgement" (2 references). This suggests these broader and more personal notions of what it means to be professional a teacher, to the limited extent that they exist at all, sit quietly in the background of the
documents. They are exceptional amongst the dominance of statements about “professional standards” and “professional learning”. This appears to be a limited model of the professional teacher based on Standards and development.

**Theme: teachers’ careers are being monitored.**

Another theme evident in the document corpus is that governments are increasingly keen to ‘monitor’ teachers' work, and particularly to supervise the extent to which teachers are making ‘progress’ in their careers. Figure 4.6 shows the concepts that clustered around the theme of teachers’ careers being monitored. The ways in which teachers are monitored is clearly linked with the new registration processes and requirements for compulsory continuing development. The frequency of each of these concepts is displayed in table 4.6.

![Nodes clustered by word similarity](image)

*Figure 4.6. Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘monitored’*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>Monitored, monitoring, monitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>Progressed, progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>Document, documentation, documented, documenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>Registrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>Register, registering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>Continual, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>Develop, developed, developing, development/s,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the document corpus, the word “monitor” was used in two different ways. Firstly, both the NSWIT and AITSL have a role to monitor teachers’ work. NSWIT is responsible for “monitoring the accreditation process across all schools”. Once teachers are accredited, their supervision is ongoing: “teachers’ participation in continuing professional development activities at the level of Proficient Teacher/Professional Competence will be monitored and reviewed by the Institute”. Although not detailed in how this will work, the Institute’s “database” appears to be a key mechanism for monitoring teachers. This process starts from the earliest experiences of being a graduate teacher and continues for the duration of a teacher’s career. The NSWIT Maintenance of Accreditation Policy goes further to describe how the Proficient teacher is expected to monitor him/herself against the Standards:

_The teacher will monitor his or her maintenance against the standards across each five (or seven) year period. Progress against the Standard Descriptors/Standards will be recorded through the Maintenance of Accreditation at the level of Proficient Teacher/Professional Competence Report and their Continuing Professional Development Log. This is an ongoing professional process._

Teachers are simultaneously externally monitored and actively self-monitored. The Standards are a tool to support the increased oversight of teachers’ work, both through initial accreditation/registration and then ongoing professional learning. There is some complexity in the use of language here, as AITSL uses the language of teachers being “registered”, whilst NSWIT considers teachers to be “accredited” and they then must “register” their participation in ongoing learning. All of this activity creates a sizable paper trail as teachers “document their progress” throughout their careers. The “Professional Development Progress Report” records teachers’ progress every five-year period and is used as evidence of teachers meeting their continuing professional development requirements. Teachers’ careers could be seen perhaps as constructed through this documentation process, with those items that can be captured as tangible evidence serving to define career progress.

The data shows a clear connection between teachers being ‘monitored’ and teachers making ‘progress’. The NSWIT’s requirement is for all teachers to “reflect on, analyse and document their own progress against the standard descriptors”. AITSL has a somewhat broader view of progress, with the Performance and Development Framework aiming to “support the career progression of teachers”. This is achieved
through “a set of documented and regularly reviewed goals” which must have “ways of measuring progress towards them”. AITSL has thus connected ‘career’ and ‘progression’, although again this is still tied to teachers’ engagement with the Standards. A teacher’s career is defined in terms of the extent to which he or she makes progress with the Standards, both in terms of maintaining accreditation at Proficient Teacher/Professional Competence and potentially thought engaging with the higher, voluntary levels of certification.

**Theme: teachers’ careers are being reformed.**

The next theme evident within the documents is that teachers’ careers are part of an Australian government reform agenda. Figure 4.7 shows the keywords that clustered within this theme, with their associated word frequencies shown in table 4.7. The document corpus provides evidence of the growing influence of the federal government on teachers’ work.

![Nodes clustered by word similarity](image)

**Figure 4.7. Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘reformed’**

**Table 4.7. Word frequencies for the codes within the theme ‘reformed’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reforms</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Reform, reform’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>State, stated, states’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>Australians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governments</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>Governance, governing, government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>Educate, education, education’, educational, educative, educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>Train, trained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Melbourne Declaration, the National Partnership Agreement and the AITSL Standards echo each other in emphasising that “improving teacher quality is considered an essential reform as part of Australia’s efforts to improve student attainment and ensure it has a world class system of education.” Underpinning this is a broad objective to create an improvement in student outcomes via an improvement in teacher quality. The strong intertextuality between the documents was most clearly evident within this theme. For example, The AITSL Standards are explicitly described as “a fundamental component of the reforms agreed to in the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality” and as a tool for use to “help to realise the goals and commitments set out in the Melbourne Declaration”. Much of the language in the revised NSWIT Standards was taken directly from the AITSL Standards.

Improvements in teaching and learning are located within an international context of competition and comparison. The Melbourne Declaration sets the goal for Australia to be “second to none amongst the world’s best school systems”. Whilst the AITSL Performance and Development Framework explicitly acknowledges that Australia has performed well on international comparative assessments, nonetheless it goes on to create a sense of urgency by asserting that, “the rest of the world is not standing still”. The international context is used to justify the need for reform, with the documents positioning Australia’s aspiration as, “not to be among the best in the world, but to be the best”.

AITSL was established to “provide national leadership for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership with funding provided by the Australian Government.” The provision of both “leadership” and “funding” here are crucially important and reflect a key tension in the Australian federalist system. Whilst recent federal governments have been keen to lead school reform, they cannot do this without cooperation from the states. Conversely, whilst states constitutionally have responsibility for school education, they cannot finance this without support from the federal government.

At a material level, the reform agenda has been enacted through the National Partnership Agreement and its “reward payments”. In this document, the “states agree to implement all facilitation reforms . . . Elements of the reforms will be national in nature and funding will be provided through facilitation expenditure.” This suggests a flow from federal ideas to state-based actions. The National Partnership Agreement can be considered as the lynchpin connecting the AITSL policies and their state-based
implementation. As a policy document, the language of “bilateral agreements”, “performance benchmarks”, and “reform milestones” is pervasive. Key “outputs” include: “new professional standards to underpin national reforms”, “recognition and reward for quality teaching”, “national consistency in teacher registration” and “Improved performance management in schools for teachers”. The document lists ambitious objectives that touch all aspects of teachers work, underpinned by the broad aim “to deliver system-wide reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders”. Teachers’ work and careers at every stage are thus at the heart of this reform agenda.

**Theme: teachers’ careers are being developed.**

Another theme evident within the documents is that teachers’ careers are being ‘developed’. The documents emphasise “improving” and “evaluating” teachers’ work and encouraging “collaborative” practices. One underlying message is that teachers need to change from their current practices and advance to newer, superior practices. Figure 4.8 shows the keywords that clustered within this theme, with their associated word frequencies in table 4.8.

![Nodes clustered by word similarity](image)

*Figure 4.8. Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘developed’*
Table 4.8. Word frequencies for the codes within the theme ‘developed’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>Evaluated, evaluates, evaluating, evaluation, evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>Teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>Improved, improvement, improvements, improves, improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>Practical, practice, practice', practicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>Effect, effective, effectively, effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>Engaged, engagement, engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues'</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>Colleague, colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboratively</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>Collaborate, collaborating, collaboration, collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>Work, worked, works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quest for improvement is central throughout the document corpus: “there is no more important endeavour than further improving the quality of teaching in Australia”. In order to maintain the Standards, teachers must undertake compulsory professional learning, with the documents emphasising “the importance of professional learning in changing teacher and school leader behaviour”. Again, this focus on teachers’ work is explicitly connected to students’ performance, “improving teaching is not an end in itself. It is directed at improving outcomes for students”. This improvement is positioned as “central to the nation’s social and economic prosperity”. The National Partnership Agreement contains a long list of desired improvements, including “improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce”, “improved performance management and continuous improvement in schools” and “improved pay dispersion to reward quality teaching”. This suggests that the current state of teachers’ careers is far from ideal.

“Evaluate” was one of the most frequent words, particularly in relation to teachers taking on the role of “self-evaluators”. The underlying message appears to be the need for teachers to take a more proactive role in their own learning and to encourage “teacher and leader ownership of their learning through active involvement in the design, content, practice and evaluation of their learning”. Proficient teachers “regularly evaluate all aspects of their teaching practice” and “identify, plan and evaluate their own professional learning needs”. Teachers must evaluate each professional learning activity through an online evaluation system based on the Standards. The policy describes the wide-ranging nature of these evaluations: “course and program evaluation should gauge participant reaction, participant learning, application of
learning, provider support, organisational support for the application of learning and the perceived impact on teaching and learning”. This evaluative act, itself generating greater workload for teachers, is positioned as a pivotal part of the new system.

Another keyword to feature in the top forty was “colleagues”, which clustered with “collaborative” and “working”. Teachers are required to show their evidence of their work beyond the classroom, as “evidence should also demonstrate a teacher’s impact on colleagues”. This perhaps reflects the interdependence of teachers’ work because “teachers have a powerful role to play in each other’s development”. This proactive stance towards collaboration begins with new teachers seeking out their colleagues for support in undergoing initial accreditation: “teachers are expected to take responsibility for seeking advice from colleagues and supervisors regarding their practice and achievement of the standards”. Proficient teachers are described as “team members” who “work collaboratively with colleagues”. The important work of ‘developing’ teachers’ careers is positioned as a collective effort amongst teaching teams.

**Theme: teachers’ careers are being performed.**

The final theme evident within the document corpus is that teachers’ careers are depicted as a ‘performance’. The documents make a case for the need for “culture change” within Australian schools, with an emphasis on creating a “performance and development culture” underpinned by a “learning culture” amongst teachers. The keywords that clustered within this these are shown in Figure 4.9, with the associated word frequencies shown in table 4.9.

![Diagram of nodes clustered by word similarity](image)

Figure 4.9. Cluster analysis of the codes within the theme ‘performed’
Table 4.9. Word frequencies for the codes in the theme ‘performed’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Cultural, culturally, cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>Demonstrated, demonstrates, demonstrating, demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>Perform, performance, performed, performs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>Evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>Reflect, reflected, reflecting, reflects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>Individually, individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, the documents position the Standards as central to this new culture, with AITSL positioning the Standards’ as “the basis for a professional accountability model, helping to ensure that teachers can demonstrate appropriate levels of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement.” A key element of this culture is that teachers must not only be knowledgeable and engaged practitioners, but they must “demonstrate” themselves to be so. The move towards a performance-driven culture is a substantial shift, with the aim of changing “the overall approach to teaching and learning within a school” and becoming central to teachers' work, “rather than a separate and additional process”.

Teachers' work as performance – with its connotations of script, audience, enactment and judgement – begins with establishing their “goals”, again grounded in the Standards. These goals “should be designed to be measurable and should have a clear link to the types of evidence to be used as a basis for feedback and reflection”. As a performative act, teachers are required to “collect evidence”, which is then reviewed as part of an ongoing process of “feedback” and “reflection”. Viewed in this way, teachers' work can be seen as part of an ongoing performance that requires continual internal and external assessment. The AITSL documents also make a brief reference of the need to “identify teachers who are underperforming against the requirements of their position”. The documents emphasise that this will be “managed through separate processes which are negotiated industrially”, reflecting the roles of both the states and teacher unions in this process.
The focus on “improved teacher performance” is also aligned with a focus on “raising student performance”. In foreshadowing the implementation of the NAPLAN, the Melbourne Declaration identifies the need for “national reporting on the performance of all schools” and “information about the performance of their school compared to schools with similar characteristics”. Thus the work of all those in schools – both students and teachers – is conceived as a performative act inviting comparison and critique. Education systems are set “performance benchmarks” and “indicative performance indicators” to measure this improvement.

The collection and evaluation of “evidence” is a key part of the performative approach. Gathering evidence is positioned as a key part of a teacher’s work, with the NSWIT Accreditation policy articulating that, “it is the responsibility of the teacher to collect evidence of their practice”. There are also substantial references to research evidence within the document corpus. The documents largely note that the research evidence is included in reference lists, rather than discussing particular examples of the evidence. The AITSL Performance and Development Framework contains eleven references to an “evidence base”, including four independent papers commissioned by AITSL. The AITSL Charter contains twenty-nine references as “evidence that informed the development of the charter”, including five background papers written specifically for AITSL, two of which are unpublished. The word ‘research’ appears seventy-eight times throughout the document corpus, such as: “research is clear”, “research tells us”, “research is unambiguous”, “research shows” and “based on research”. The documents thus position themselves as grounded in indisputable research evidence.

**Section summary.**

This section has sought to provide empirical evidence of how teachers’ careers are portrayed and constructed within current policy documents. This evidence is illustrative of the complex, evolving policy context within which the second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place. From this analysis, it can be seen that the policy documents relating to teachers’ careers are part of a ‘reform’ agenda. Teachers’ work is positioned as needing to be ‘standardised’, ‘professionalised’ and ‘monitored’. To achieve this cultural change, the policies seek to focus on the visible ‘performance’ and ‘development’ of teachers’ practice. A discussion of these findings will be presented later in this chapter.
Part Two: Secondary data findings

Part two of this chapter will present the findings generated from the secondary demographic data collected in strand B of this study. The data presented in this section was collected through the Government Information Public Access (GIPA) Act 2009. A detailed discussion of the specific sampling, data collection and data analysis processes undertaken can be found in the earlier methodology chapter. This section contributes to the thesis by illustrating the demographic workforce context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place. As was articulated in the literature review, substantial policy changes in Australia over the last decade have shifted the organisational landscape for teachers.

Comparison data.

At the time of data collection, no single or complete demographic picture of the NSW second-stage teacher population had been developed. The data that was accessed through the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) came from amalgamating several different databases and the dataset remains incomplete. The data presented here was collected in 2013 and provides a description of the second-stage teacher population as at 25 July 2013. A frequency distribution (histogram) for each variable is provided. It is important to note that data on the school level (primary or secondary) was unavailable, and so this variable was not included in the analysis.

In order to compare NSW teachers with the broader Australian teacher population, comparison data was gathered from three sources. Firstly, the Australian Bureau of Statistics ‘Schools Australia’ report, which provides data on Australian schools and teachers in 2013, as at the school census date 2 August 2013 (ABS, 2014, p. 2). Secondly, the ‘National Teaching Workforce Dataset’ report, commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education and produced by Ernst and Young (Willett et al., 2014). The report is an initial attempt to produce Australia’s first national dataset on the teaching workforce. The report’s authors hope that the report will assist in “improving teacher quality through the provision of nationally consistent data” (p. 4). In using the National Teaching Workforce Dataset (NTWD) in this chapter, it is important to note that the figures used in this chapter only include the 313, 791 ‘known employed’ teachers. There are an additional 126, 522 ‘additional teacher registrants’ who have been identified in regulatory authority data, but not employer data. Willett et al. (2014) note that:
As data has not been collected from all employers in the independent and Catholic sectors, and not all regulatory authorities inquire (or validate) employment status, it is not possible to determine whether ‘additional teacher registrants’ in the NTWD are, or are not, currently employed (p. 13).

This dataset has been used extensively throughout this chapter as it is the largest and most complete available to date, but its figures must be interpreted in this light of these limitations. Finally, data was also drawn from the ‘Staff in Australia’s schools 2013’ survey report (McKenzie et al., 2014). This report was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education and produced by the Australian Council of Educational Research. This survey has been conducted every three years since 2007. For all variables other than population size, New Scheme teachers have been compared with the Australian teacher population rather than the NSW population. Data on the approximately one-third of NSW teachers who teach in non-government (Catholic and independent) schools is not publicly available for most of the key variables, making the available data on NSW teachers limited and incomplete. The data on the Australian teacher population (despite its many limitations) represents a more complete and comprehensive dataset at present. Future data collection exercises by BOSTES may improve this.
Population.
As at July 25 2013, there were 24,771 teachers in NSW who had achieved ‘Professional Competence’ with the NSWIT. In 2013 there were a total of 90,637 teachers in NSW (ABS, 2014, p. 29). Therefore, New Scheme teachers made up 27.33% of all teachers in NSW, or just over one-quarter. A breakdown of the NSW teacher population into New Scheme and Old Scheme teachers is displayed in Figure 4.10.

![Pie chart of the NSW teacher population in 2013](chart.png)

Figure 4.10. *Pie chart of the NSW teacher population in 2013*
Gender.

The New Scheme teacher population is made up of one-quarter (24.22%) male teachers and three-quarters (75.78%) female teachers. According to the National Teaching Workforce Dataset, in 2013 there were 313,791 ‘known employed’ teachers. Of those teachers, 81,983 (26.13%) were male and 231,180 (73.67%) were female (Willett et al., 2014, p. 19). These figures are displayed in Table 4.10 and Figure 4.11. New Scheme teachers are slightly more likely to be female than all Australian teachers.

Table 4.10. A gender comparison of New Scheme teachers and all Australian teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>New Scheme Teachers</th>
<th>All Australian Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5,999 (24.22%)</td>
<td>81,983 (26.13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18,772 (75.78%)</td>
<td>231,180 (73.67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>628 (0.20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24,771</td>
<td>313,791</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.11. Bar chart comparing the gender of New Scheme teachers with all Australian teachers
Age.

The age distribution of New Scheme teachers is reported in table 4.11 and the age distribution of all Australian teachers is reported in table 4.12. Figure 4.12 displays the frequency distribution of ages for both groups of teachers. Neither age range displays a normal distribution; New Scheme teachers are positively skewed whilst the Australian teacher population is negatively skewed. In 2013, three-quarters (74.56%) of New Scheme teachers were aged 39 or under, compared with just two-fifths (39.79%) of all Australian teachers (Willett et al., 2014, p. 21). Therefore New Scheme teachers are, on average, much younger than the broader Australian teacher population.

Table 4.11. Age distribution of New Scheme teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>8,194</td>
<td>33.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>10,275</td>
<td>41.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>3,991</td>
<td>16.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ years</td>
<td>2,311</td>
<td>9.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24,771</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12. Age distribution of Australian teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>49,391</td>
<td>15.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>75,448</td>
<td>24.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years</td>
<td>72,907</td>
<td>23.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ years</td>
<td>115,229</td>
<td>36.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>313,791</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.12. *Comparison of the age distribution of New Scheme teachers and all Australian teachers*
School location.

In 2013, the 24,771 New Scheme teachers were dispersed across the different school locations as follows:

- 14,982 (60.48%) taught in metropolitan schools
- 8,860 (35.77%) taught in rural/regional schools
- 433 (1.75%) taught in remote schools
- 492 (2.00%) unknown

According to the National Teaching Workforce Dataset, in 2013 the 313,791 ‘known employed’ teachers in Australia were dispersed across the different school locations as follows:

- 201,267 (64.14%) taught in metropolitan schools
- 95,818 (30.55%) taught in rural/regional schools
- 8,523 (2.72%) taught in remote schools
- 8,183 (2.61%) unknown (Willett et al., 2014, p. 73).

These two sets of data are compared in figure 4.13. New Scheme teachers are slightly less likely to work in metropolitan schools and slightly more likely work in rural/regional schools than all Australian teachers. This may reflect the fact that newer and less experienced teachers are more likely to travel to rural/regional areas to find teaching work.

Figure 4.13. Comparison of school location for New Scheme teachers and all Australian teachers
School sector.

In 2013, the 24,771 New Scheme teachers were dispersed across the school sectors as follows:

- 16,487 (66.56%) taught in the government sector
- 3,705 (14.96%) taught in the Catholic sector
- 4,579 (18.48%) taught in the independent sector

According to the National Teaching Workforce Dataset, in 2013 the 313,791 ‘known employed’ teachers in Australia were dispersed across the school sectors as follows:

- 237,535 (75.70%) taught in the government sector
- 46,381 (14.78%) taught in the Catholic sector
- 29,875 (9.52%) taught in the independent sector (Willett et al., 2014, p. 70).

New Scheme teachers are more likely to work in the independent sector compared to all teachers generally. These two datasets are compared in Figure 4.14.

Figure 4.14. Comparison of school sector for New Scheme teachers and all Australian teachers
Teaching role.

In 2013, the 24,771 New Scheme teachers were employed in the following range of roles:

- 23,683 (95.61%) classroom teacher
- 309 (1.25%) executive teacher
- 233 (0.94%) assistant/deputy principal
- 83 (0.33%) principal
- 463 (1.87%) unknown

According to the National Teaching Workforce Dataset, the 313,791 ‘known employed’ teachers in Australia were employed in the following range of roles in 2013:

- 216,133 (68.88%) classroom teacher
- 20,483 (6.53%) executive teacher
- 7,132 (2.27%) assistant/deputy principal
- 7,783 (2.48%) principal
- 62,260 (19.84% unknown (Willett et al., 2014, p. 63).

The substantial number of teachers with an unknown teaching role should be noted as a limitation of this finding. A comparison of New Scheme teachers and all Australian teachers is provided in Figure 4.15. New scheme teachers are more likely to be employed as classroom teachers compared to all teachers, however this reflects the fact that they are relatively early on in their careers.

Figure 4.15. Comparison of teaching roles for New Scheme and all Australian teachers
Leave of absence.

In 2013, 21,716 (87.67%) New Scheme teachers had an ‘active’ employment status, of whom 16,192 (74.56%) were female and 5,524 (25.44%) were male. The remaining 3,055 (12.33%) were on a leave of absence, of whom 2,580 (84.45%) were female and 475 (15.54%) were male. This is displayed in Figure 4.16. Female teachers are more likely to be on a leave of absence than male teachers.

![Gender distribution of New Scheme teachers with an ‘active status’ and those on a ‘leave of absence’ in 2013](image)

Figure 4.16. *Gender distribution of New Scheme teachers with an ‘active status’ and those on a ‘leave of absence’ in 2013*

There is currently insufficient data available to indicate exactly how many Australian teachers are on a leave of absence from teaching. The National Teaching Workforce Dataset indicates that an ‘active’ or ‘absent’ employment status is unknown for almost half of all teachers (Willett et al., 2014, p. 55). However, the Staff in Australia’s Schools (SiAS) survey added a new question to their survey in 2013 asking teachers whether or not they had any “interruptions” to their teaching career, e.g., through leave or resignation and later return. Their survey found that one-quarter of all males and half of all females had "interrupted" or “discontinuous” teaching careers. (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 81). The figures are similar for both primary and secondary female teachers: about one-quarter of females are absent for 2 years or less, 10-11% for 3-5 years and 11% for 6-10 years. McKenzie et al. (2014) note that the average length of interruption for a female teaching career is 4-5 years. This data suggests that a view of the
teaching career as continuous classroom service over the working life is inaccurate for many teachers. There is a range of possible reasons for interruptions to the teaching career, including family or caring responsibilities, pursuing non-teaching roles, travelling or undertaking further study. More data is needed to determine a more accurate picture of movement within the teaching career.

Employment status.

Table 4.13 displays the employment status of New Scheme teachers. In 2013, three-quarters (75.09%) were employed full-time and one-quarter (24.37%) was employed part time. This is on par with all Australian teachers – on average 77% of Australian teachers were employed full-time and 23% were employed part-time in 2013 (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). Just over half (55.37%) of all New Scheme teachers were employed in permanent teaching positions. More than one quarter (27.78%) were employed in temporary roles and the remaining 16.31% were employed in casual roles. These figures stand in stark contrast with the broader Australian teaching population, wherein four-fifths (81.70%) were employed in permanent roles, 16.65% were employed in temporary roles and just 1.65% in casual roles (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). New Scheme teachers are much more likely to be employed in temporary or casual roles than Australian teachers generally. This may reflect the fact that they are relatively early in their careers, when it typically takes longer to secure permanent work. This data is depicted in Figure 4.17.

Table 4.13. Employment status of New Scheme teachers in 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Full Time</td>
<td>12,794</td>
<td>51.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Part Time</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>3.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Full Time</td>
<td>5,803</td>
<td>23.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Part Time</td>
<td>1,077</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>4,041</td>
<td>16.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These figures can be further analysed by comparing employment status with teacher gender, as in Table 4.14. The data shows that four-fifths of New Scheme male teachers (80.47%) are employed full-time, compared with almost three-quarters (73.35%) of female teachers. Comparing these figures with the broader Australian teaching population, 90.7% of all male teachers work full-time and 71.0% of all female teachers work full time (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 43). This suggests that male New Scheme teachers are less likely to work full time than all Australian male teachers. Conversely, female New Scheme teachers are slightly more likely to work full time than all Australian teachers. See figure 4.18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Full Time</td>
<td>3726 (62.13%)</td>
<td>9067 (48.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Part Time</td>
<td>98 (1.63%)</td>
<td>820 (4.37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Full Time</td>
<td>1100 (18.34%)</td>
<td>4702 (25.05%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Part Time</td>
<td>114 (1.90%)</td>
<td>963 (5.13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>931 (15.52%)</td>
<td>3104 (16.54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>30 (0.50%)</td>
<td>116 (0.62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5997</td>
<td>18772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data in Table 4.14 also shows that male New Scheme teachers are more likely to be employed in permanent positions (62.13%) than their female colleagues (48.3%). New Scheme male teachers are thus less likely to be employed in temporary roles (20.24%) than their female colleagues (30.18%). Patterns of casual employment are very similar for New Scheme males (15.52%) and females (16.54%). These figures echo the patterns seen in the broader Australian teaching population. According to McKenzie et al. (2014), male teachers are more likely to be employed in permanent positions (85.1%) than their female colleagues (80.2%) (p. 44). Similarly, male teachers are less likely to be employed in temporary roles (13.8%) than their female colleagues (18.0%). Similarly again, male and female Australian teachers have similar rates of casual employment at 1.1% and 1.8% respectively. There is a much smaller gap between male and female Australian teachers compared with male and female New Scheme teachers. This may reflect the relatively younger age profile of New Scheme teachers, as younger teachers may prefer the flexibility that comes from temporary or casual employment. Alternatively, it may also reflect a lack of available permanent roles for newer teachers.
Achieving accreditation.

Since 2004, teachers who are deemed as ‘New Scheme’ are required to achieve accreditation at ‘Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher’ level. Teachers have different amounts of time in which to achieve this, depending upon their employment status (permanent, temporary, part-time, full-time, casual). Table 4.15 shows the number of teachers reaching ‘Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher’ status between 2004 and July 2013. As can be seen, there has been a steady increase in teachers achieving this each year. Since 2010, there has been a consistent rate of approximately 4,000 teachers per year achieving this status.

Table 4.15. Number of teachers achieving Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher status from 2004 to July 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher date</th>
<th>Number of teachers (N=24,771)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>4,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 (to July 25)</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data was also obtained for the date at which teachers achieved ‘Graduate Teacher’ status. This status is granted upon successful completion of a registered teaching qualification. Teachers who are registered as New Scheme teachers, but completed their qualification before 2004, must also achieve this status. Using data on the date at which teachers achieved ‘Graduate Teacher’ status, a calculation was made to determine how many years teachers had taken to achieve accreditation at ‘Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher’ status. This data is presented in Table 4.16. The majority of teachers (57.29%) took between one and two years to achieve accreditation at ‘Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher’ level. One-fifth of
teachers (20.09%) took between four and eight years to do so, suggesting that some teaches have a much longer, protracted experiences achieving accreditation.

Table 4.16. *Number of years taken to achieve accreditation at Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher* status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>1727</td>
<td>6.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7668</td>
<td>30.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6521</td>
<td>26.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3837</td>
<td>15.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2727</td>
<td>11.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1664</td>
<td>6.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>1.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24,711</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section summary.

This section has sought to provide empirical evidence of the demographic workforce context in which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place. From this analysis, it can be seen that New Scheme teachers make up just over one-quarter of the NSW teacher population. Three-quarters of all New Scheme teachers are female, and this is only slightly higher than the broader Australian teacher population. New Scheme teachers have a much younger age profile than the general Australian teacher population – almost three-quarters of New Scheme teachers are aged 39 or under, compared with two-fifths of all Australian teachers. New Scheme teachers are slightly more likely to teach in rural/regional schools than the Australian average, although a clear majority (three-fifths) teaches in metropolitan schools. New Scheme teachers are more likely to teach in Independent schools than the Australian average, although a clear majority (two-thirds) teaches in the government sector. New Scheme teachers are more likely to be employed in classroom teaching rather than executive or leadership roles, reflecting their relative inexperience in the profession.

A little more than one-in-ten New Scheme teachers are on a leave of absence, which reflects the broader trend amongst one-quarter of male and half of female teachers to have “interrupted” or “discontinuous” teaching careers over the course of their working life (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 81). Approximately three-quarters of all New Scheme teachers are employed full-time, which is on par with the Australian average, and males are more likely to be full-time than females. However, New Scheme teachers are much more likely to be employed in temporary or casual roles (44.09%) than the Australian average (18.30%). This may reflect a preference for the flexibility of temporary/casual work, or a lack of permanent positions available for New Scheme teachers. The majority of teachers (57.29%) take between one and two years to achieve accreditation at ‘Professional Competence / Proficient Teacher’ level, however one-fifth of teachers take considerably longer to achieve their accreditation in between four and eight years. A discussion of these findings will be presented in the next section of this chapter.
Part Three: Discussion A – Second-stage teachers’ career
organisational context

The previous two sections of this chapter have presented in-depth accounts of the findings generated from policy document analysis and secondary workforce data. This chapter will now conclude with a discussion of these findings, making connections with the literature outlined earlier in the thesis and drawing some conclusions. This discussion seeks to answer the first two research sub-questions: *How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents? (RSQ1); What is the demographic context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place? (RSQ2).* Taken together, the policy document and workforce data represent the organisational landscape within which second-stage teachers make career choices and goals.

Turning first to the policy documents, through the use of mixed methods content analysis six themes were discerned within the document corpus. Each of these themes makes explicit how teachers’ careers are portrayed and constructed within the policy documents. These themes, therefore, bring to light six particular ways in which the current policy context is influencing, or seeking to influence, teachers’ careers.

The document analysis in this study shows that teachers’ careers are being ‘standardised’. The policies conceptualise a teaching career as a stage-based concept, with an emphasis on “career progression” and movement through the “career stages”. For second-stage teachers, the career stage model shows the shift in their skills and understanding from ‘graduate’ to ‘proficient’ teachers. The body of US research into second-stage teachers has shown that this is a vitally important shift, as second-stage teachers undergo significant changes during their first few years (J. H. Berg et al., 2005; Charner-laird, 2007; Donaldson, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2008; Fiarman, 2007; S. M. Johnson, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2009). Second-stage teachers report that their daily experience of teaching is markedly different from their beginning years and that they have an emerging sense of competence and confidence in the classroom. The Standards thus provide an important function in recognising this aspect of teacher career development. The career stage model has also created the ‘Highly Accomplished’ and ‘Lead’ teacher levels, providing one way of conceptualising careers for second-stage teachers who may wish to stay within the classroom. These levels build on the earlier concepts of the Advanced Skills Teacher (Dawkins, 1990)
and the teacher “integrated career structure” (Ramsey, 1990). In doing so, they recognise an age-old problem that “teachers’ career futures extend out across a featureless plain with very little on the horizon” (Ramsey, 1990, p. 104). The Standards thus represent a significant shift in how teachers’ careers are structured in a sequential and standardised manner.

The document analysis also revealed how the standardised view of a teaching career is intertwined with two other contested public discourses. Firstly, the teaching Standards explicitly aim to “raise the status of the profession”. This relates to the long-standing perception that there is a “widespread crisis of morale amongst teachers” and a fear that “the status of the profession is disturbingly low” (Crowley, 1998, p. 1). Professional Standards and their associated policy measures have long been heralded as the solution to address the problem of low status (Dow, 2003; Ramsey, 2000). These policy documents are also intimately tied up with the broader discourse on teacher quality. Teacher quality (however defined) is frequently cited as being “the single most important school variable influencing student achievement” (OECD, 2005, p. 26). Such assertions focus on finding a measurable, quantifiable teacher ‘effect’ or ‘value-add’ on student’s test scores (Jackson et al., 2014; Leigh, 2010), whilst giving lower priority to the much larger influence that family background and home environment have on student outcomes (Emerson et al., 2012; Hattie, 2009). Indeed, Jensen (2010) argues that improving teacher effectiveness by 10% (however that could be measured), would improve productivity and “have a greater impact on economic growth than any other reform before Australian governments” (p. 4). Thus whilst the underlying intent appears to be simultaneously raising the status of teaching and improving teacher quality, the practical outcome for teachers is a more standardised and linear policy-based construction of what it means to have a teaching career.

Furthermore, document analysis also shows that teachers’ careers are being ‘professionalised’ according to new definitions of what it means to be a professional teacher. The policies conceptualise a professional teaching career as requiring constant “maintenance” in order to sustain good practice over time. There is an underlying anxiety about teachers failing to keep up to date with the ever-changing definitions of what constitutes best practice in their field. Current policies define this in terms of “professional Standards”, “professional development” and “professional learning”. Collectively, these three phrases appear more than 750 times in the document corpus. To be a professional teacher is thus to be constantly learning,
developing and improving. By contrast, “professional discussion/dialogue”, “professional life”, “professional aspiration”, “professional expertise” and “professional judgement” appear a total of just 16 times. To be a professional teacher is thus not associated with having the capacity for autonomy, expertise or self-reflection. These broader notions of what it means to be a professional teacher are a background whisper compared to the dominant discourse of teachers lacking as professionals. These findings extend on the work of Ryan and Bourke (2013), who found that teacher reflexivity had been largely minimised or excluded from the discourse of teacher professionalism in both the UK and Australian standards. Connell (2009a) has also argued that the Standards now define the ‘good teacher’ not as an intellectual worker, nor as a reflective practitioner, but rather as the “competent teacher” who displays “an assemblage of competencies” as defined by the Standards (p. 217). Connell suggests that the Australian Standards’ reduction of teachers’ work into “specific, auditable competencies and performances” reflects a fundamental distrust of teachers’ judgement and professionalism (p. 220).

It has been widely acknowledged that Australian teachers have not been trusted to operate as an autonomous and self-regulated group, and that this has negatively impacted on the low status of teaching as a profession (Crowley, 1998; Ingvarson & Kleinhenz, 2006; Ramsey, 2000). The Standards explicitly aim to “contribute to the professionalisation of teaching”, however they continue the trend of defining professionalism in managerialist and bureaucratic ways (Brennan, 1996, 2009; Sachs, 2001, 2003a). The Standards are essentially owned and operated by the government regulatory bodies that monitor teachers (BOSTES, AITSL etc.) and not by any independent body representing teaching as a profession. The findings of this analysis suggest that teaching as a career has increasingly been given some visible, external markers of professionalism without the foundational pillars of autonomy, self-regulation and trust. At best, the Standards may superficially make teaching as a career appear to be more professional. At worst, they may reflect the “rhetorical ruse” Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) identified as a means of getting teachers “to misrecognise their own exploitation and then comply willingly with increased intensification of their labour in the workforce” (p. 20).

The document analysis in this study further shows that teachers’ careers are being “monitored” in two particular ways. The NSWIT (now BOSTES) is positioned to ensure that teachers are “monitored and reviewed” through the initial accreditation period and in ongoing professional development activities. External monitoring is set to become a
commonplace feature of the teacher career landscape. Furthermore, each teacher must now “monitor his or her maintenance against the standards” and “document their own progress” as part of an “ongoing professional process”. This self-monitoring is positioned as a key, compulsory part of a teacher’s work. The paper trail created through this documentation contributes to the shaping and construction of each individual teacher’s career. The concept of “monitoring” is closely connected with another theme evident in the policy documents, namely that teachers’ careers are being “performed”. The AITSL documents make a case for “culture change” within Australian schools to enable teachers’ careers to take place within a “performance and development culture”. Such a culture, it is argued, supports teacher career development and provides “a more coherent and visible path through the career stages”. There is also a brief reference to the need to “identify teachers who are underperforming”. The more recent ‘Great Teaching, Inspired Learning’ policy notes that “teachers found unable to meet the Professional Teaching Standards will be removed from the profession” (NSWDEC, 2013, p. 17).

This monitoring and performance activity is neatly captured within Ball’s (2003) descriptions of “performativity”, wherein teachers’ work is regulated and “performed” in ways that are counted as measures of productivity or displays of “quality” (p. 216). Such policies, according to Ball, not only change teachers’ work but also “change what it means to be a teacher” and lead to the production of “new kinds of teacher subjects” (p. 217). The result for teachers can be uncertainty and instability, as they are continually monitored and held accountable but are never sure if they are “doing enough” or “doing the right thing” in the face of continually changing demands (p. 220). Others have noted the ways in which current similar policies in the UK have failed to acknowledge the importance of teachers’ personal and professional identities, both individually and collectively (Day et al., 2005). Such policies have created confusion amongst teachers about their professional identity and if, how and when “they are now able to use their discretionary judgement — arguably at the heart of their sense of professionalism” (p. 566). Another key limitation of these policies is that they define teaching as a predominantly individualistic task, when in fact teaching is inherently collective and collaborative. Rather than the single vision for a ‘good teacher’ outlined in the standards, Connell (2009a) contends that we need many “pictures of good teachers in the plural, and good teaching in the collective sense” (p. 226).

Recent research has identified the insufficient and poorly developed systems for teacher feedback and recognition in Australian schools (OECD, 2009). This has
prompted other researchers to draw links between improving teacher appraisal and feedback and raising student achievement levels (Jensen & Reichl, 2011, 2012). AITSL itself has acknowledged that current teacher review processes suffer from the potentially conflictual dual purposes of teacher accountability and teacher development (Marshall, Cole, & Zbar, 2012, p. 5). Yet the policy document analysis in this study has shown how the Standards are positioned as “the basis for a professional accountability model”. Teachers’ careers are constructed as an ongoing performance, with tangible products such as “goals”, “evidence” and “feedback” produced throughout. Gathering evidence has become a key part of teachers’ work, as “it is the responsibility of the teacher to collect evidence of their practice”. Teachers’ careers are thus an exercise in continual performance and monitoring, from both within and without.

Moreover, this document analysis highlights how teachers’ careers are being ‘developed’. This development is firstly framed as teachers needing to “improve the quality of teaching” through engaging in professional learning. There is abundant evidence that teacher professional learning is most effective when it is positioned as both an integrated part of daily school life and as a continuum across the teacher career cycle (Coolahan, 2002; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Fullan, 2007a). Current policy documents seek to do just this, making ongoing professional learning mandatory for all teachers from novice to expert. They then go on to emphasise the connection between teacher learning and student results: “improving teaching is not an end in itself. It is directed at improving outcomes for students”. In other words, teachers are only worth “developing” if doing so has a tangible improvement on student results. Of course, it is entirely logical and reasonable to hope that improving teaching practice will benefit students. What is missing within the policies is any sense of teachers as individuals with their own professional identities and career hopes and goals for the future. The teacher is thus positioned as only worth developing if doing so will ultimately improve measurable and institutionally determined student outcomes.

Teacher development is also framed as another self-monitoring activity, with Proficient Teachers required to “regularly evaluate all aspects of their teaching practice” and to “evaluate their own professional learning needs”. This includes written evaluations of each professional learning activity through an online evaluation system based around the Standards. Teachers are thus seen as responsible for actively managing this dimension of their own careers. This reflects Hall’s (1996, 2002) concept of the ‘protean career’, wherein the individual owns his or her career because no single
organisation (school or school system) can meaningfully plan for each person's career. Continual development of knowledge and skills is essential in order to ‘keep up’. Hall also emphasised that the protean career was ultimately about personal development, psychological success and satisfaction being seen as more important than vertical progression to the organisational top.

Teacher development and improvement are also positioned as “central to the nation’s social and economic prosperity”. This connects with the final policy theme – teachers’ careers are being ‘reformed’ as part of a broad agenda led by the Australian federal government. The underlying objective is to improve student outcomes by raising teacher quality: “improving teacher quality is considered an essential reform as part of Australia’s efforts to improve student attainment and ensure it has a world class system of education”. The emphasis here is on making Australia competitive on a global scale and positioning Australia to be “second to none amongst the world’s best school systems”. International student test comparisons highlighting the relative ‘success’ of certain countries and ‘failure’ of others have created a global anxiety amongst governments and policy makers since the early 2000s. The increased collection of student data has also highlighted large gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged students (Darling-Hammond, 2010; S. Thomson, 2011). School performance, now judged on a global scale, is explicitly tied to recruiting, developing and retaining “high-performing” teachers (Mourshed et al., 2010). Many of the teacher policy reforms in the present document corpus have been “borrowed” from the US and UK (Lingard, 2010) in a process described as a “policy epidemic” as ideas are uncritically copied from one context to another (Levin, 1998, 2010). Whilst these reforms originate at the federal level, the policies outline a complex flow of “reform milestones” and “reward payments” as the states are incentivised to implement these reforms within Australia’s complex federalist system. The policies capture “system-wide reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’ to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers”. All aspects of the teaching career are thus up for reform, as collectively the policies seek to standardise, professionalise, monitor, perform and develop teachers’ careers at every stage.

Turning now to the secondary workforce data, the analysis in this chapter identified the key variables shaping the demographic context for second-stage teachers’ in NSW. Each of these variables makes explicit the multifaceted and complex workforce context for second-stage teachers. The data presented in this part of the study is an important
part of the original contribution of this thesis because the data has not previously been publicly available.

The teacher workforce is one of the largest occupational sectors in Australia, with more than 250,000 full-time equivalent teachers working across almost 10,000 schools (Productivity Commission, 2012, p. 54). Approximately one third of the teaching workforce is employed in NSW. The data in this study has shown that only one-quarter (27.33%) of teachers in NSW are New Scheme teachers for whom the Standards and accreditation measures apply. Therefore, whilst the language of the policy documents speaks universally about “teachers”, at present three-quarters of all teachers are not covered under the New Scheme policies. The first decade of this system has thus targeted only one part of the teacher population. It is important to note that from January 2018 all teachers will need to be accredited to work in NSW schools, regardless of when they started teaching or how much experience they have, thus expanding the influence of these policies.

The data in this study shows that 75.78% of New Scheme teachers are female, which is only slightly higher than the Australian teacher population figure of 73.67% female (Willett et al., 2014, p. 19). Existing data shows that the gender divide is more pronounced when primary and secondary teachers are considered separately: 80% of primary teachers are female, compared with 58% of secondary teachers (Weldon, 2015, p. 6). Unfortunately, data on school level (primary/secondary) is unknown for New Scheme teachers, thus it is impossible to determine whether this trend exists among this population. However substantial existing research has shown how female teachers conceptualise, plan and enact their careers differently to their male colleagues (Acker, 1992; Evetts, 1986, 1987; Nias, 1981, 1989a; Raggl & Troman, 2008; Thornton & Bricheno, 2000). The most recent SiAS (Staff in Australia’s Schools) survey showed that today’s male teachers are less likely to consider teaching as a lifelong career and more likely to consider leaving within the next five to ten years compared to their female colleagues (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 117). This suggests that teacher career policies need to be broad and flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of career plans for male and female teachers. A key recommendation of this study is that there can be no one-size-fits-all approach to teacher career policies and scope for accommodating differences within the diverse teacher population is essential.
The data in this study also shows that New Scheme teachers are more likely to teach in Independent schools (18.48%) compared with all Australian teachers (9.52%); Conversely they are less likely to teach in government schools (66.56%) compared with all Australian teachers (75.70%) (Willett et al., 2014, p. 71). The data in this study suggests that New Scheme teachers are increasingly more likely to consider teaching across the range of school sectors and are slightly more likely to teach in non-government schools than the broader Australian teacher population. This may reflect a difficulty in securing work in the government school sector (either in a geographically or socially desirable location) or a preference for the working conditions in Catholic or independent schools.

The present study has revealed that just over half (55.37%) of all New Scheme teachers are employed permanently, with the remaining 27.78% being temporary and 16.31% being casual. There are far higher rates of permanent employment amongst the wider Australian teacher population, where 81.70% are permanently employed (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). A recent report by the NSWIT noted that, “most teachers commence their careers as casual teachers” (NSWIT, 2014, p. 109). New Scheme teachers are relatively early on in their careers, and thus many are still in this casual ‘phase’ of their careers when it typically takes longer to secure permanent work. Additionally, not all New Scheme teachers may be seeking permanent work. Willett et al. (2014) note that the median age of teachers in permanent employment is 46, and only 12% of these teachers are aged 30 and under (p. 109). The median age of teachers on temporary/fixed-term contracts is just 35, and 39% of these teachers are aged 30 and under. Interestingly, the picture for casual teachers is more mixed, with 23% aged 30 and under and 34% aged 55 and over. This suggests that teachers at both ends of the age spectrum find themselves casually employed. This flexibility may suit their needs to balance work with other commitments, however for some teachers it may also reflect difficulty in finding more secure, ongoing employment; further research appears to be needed here. There is a risk that “teachers who desire greater employment stability may look outside education to meet this need” (p. 5). Amongst New Scheme teachers, there are higher rates of permanent employment for males (62.13%) than females (48.30%), suggesting that gender may also be a key variable here.

Turning to consider employment status, almost one-quarter (24.37%) of New Scheme teachers are employed part-time. This is on par with the Australian average of 23% of teachers working part-time (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). However, whilst female New
Scheme teachers have similar rates of part-time employment compared with the Australian teacher population (26.65% and 29.0% respectively), male New Scheme teachers have much higher rates of part-time employment compared with the Australian teacher population (19.60% and 9.3% respectively). This may reflect the relatively young age profile of New Scheme teachers, as younger teachers may prefer the flexibility of part-time work (e.g. being able to combine it with other job roles or non-work responsibilities). Alternatively, it may reflect a lack of available full-time roles for New Scheme teachers. Further survey research is needed to help explain the reasons for higher rates of part-time employment amongst male New Scheme teachers.

Finally, the data in this study shows that just over one-in-ten (12.33%) New Scheme teachers are currently on a leave of absence. Of those teachers, the vast majority (84.45%) were female. It is not presently known whether these reported rates of leave are covering up the true extent of teacher attrition, as some teachers keep up their registration as an ‘insurance policy’ before ultimately leaving teaching (Haesler, 2012). Whilst just 4.06% of NSW teachers allowed their registration to lapse in 2013 (Willett et al., 2014, p. 81), currently almost three-quarters of NSW teachers are not registered under the current system. The National Teaching Workforce Dataset indicates than an ‘active’ or ‘absent’ employment status is unknown for almost half of all teachers (Willett et al., 2014, p. 55). For those teachers with a known employment status, 8.70% are on a leave of absence, and almost three-quarters of this leave is unpaid. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the largest group of teachers on unpaid leave are those aged females 30-39 (p. 109). Current surveys suggest that approximately one-quarter of male teachers and half of female teachers have “discontinuous” teaching careers (e.g. through leave or resignation and later return) and the average length of interruption for a female teaching career is 4-5 years (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 81). Longitudinal research shows that teaching is not always a continuous career. A recent Swedish study by Lindqvist et al. (2014; 2016) followed a cohort of 87 teachers for almost 20 years. They found that only half had careers with “straight-line trajectories” where they taught continuously for the duration of that period; the remaining half had more unpredictable paths, leaving and re-entering teaching at different points. Several recent studies have also highlighted the diversity of career pathways envisioned by many newer teachers, including time in differentiated roles within schools (Margolis, 2008; Peske et al., 2001; Rinke, 2009; Rippon, 2005; Smethem, 2007). New Scheme teachers appear to be continuing the trend of having complex career trajectories with ‘discontinuous’ periods inside and outside of the classroom.
Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the findings from Strands A and B of this study and discussed these findings in relation to the broader literature. This chapter has sought to address the career organisational context for second-stage teachers in NSW by answering the first two research sub-questions: How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?; What is the demographic context within which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?

The analysis presented in this chapter has shown that teachers’ careers are portrayed and constructed within policy documents in six specific ways: teachers’ careers are being standardised, professionalised and reformed, whilst teachers are expected to perform, develop and monitor themselves in the workplace. These reforms are intertwined in a national discourse about both raising the status of the profession and improving teacher quality in order to lift student outcomes. This discourse is linked to a broader anxiety about teacher quality and student performance as indicators of economic prosperity and competitiveness on a global scale. These reforms shift the organisational landscape of teachers’ careers in both obvious and subtle ways.

Secondary data analysis has revealed that New Scheme teachers make up just over one-quarter of the NSW teacher population. Almost three-quarters of New Scheme teachers are aged 39 or under, compared with two-fifths of all Australian teachers. A little more than one-in-ten New Scheme teachers are on a leave of absence, which reflects the broader trend amongst one-quarter of male and half of female teachers to have "interrupted" or “discontinuous” teaching careers over the course of their working life (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 81). Approximately three-quarters of New Scheme teachers are employed full-time, which is on par with the Australian average, and males are more likely to be full-time than females. However, New Scheme teachers are much more likely to be employed in temporary or casual roles (44.09%) than the Australian average (18.30%). This may reflect a preference for the flexibility of temporary/casual work, or a lack of permanent teaching positions.

The next two chapters will display and discuss the findings generated from the interview data in Strand C of this study. This provides important data that arises from the voices of teachers themselves to reflect against the contextual picture outlined above. Chapter five will focus on second-stage teachers’ career trajectories, whilst chapter six will address second-stage teachers’ career cultures.
Chapter Five: Career trajectories

The next two chapters will present the findings generated from the interview data in strand C of this study. Twenty-four teachers were recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews between September and December 2013. Details of the specific sampling, data collection and analysis methods are provided in the earlier methodology chapter. A copy of the interview guide is included in Appendix H.

Chapter five considers aspects of the career trajectories of these second-stage teachers, including both their current roles and future aspirations. This chapter is divided into three parts:

- Part One. Interview finding One: Career as a pathway
- Part Two. Interview finding Two: Career as an evolving journey
- Part Three. Discussion B: Second-stage teachers' career trajectories

These three sections combine in an effort to answer the third research sub-question: *How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a 'career trajectory'?* Parts one and two will present in-depth interview findings, including ‘teacher profiles’ of participants and relevant excerpts from interview transcripts. The profiles illustrate key themes with concrete examples based on particular teacher attributes, perceptions and experiences. Part three will discuss these findings and make connections to the literature and theories outlined earlier in the thesis and then draw some preliminary conclusions.

**Part One: Interview finding one – Entry pathway into a teaching career**

Part one of this chapter presents the first major finding generated from the interview data. The teachers in this study were asked to recount their career history, including both teaching and non-teaching work. This led them to consider and describe how they came to have a career in teaching, as distinct from why they wanted to become teachers. The common element amongst their responses was that teaching was a career ‘pathway’ that they could follow. The term ‘pathway’ was used here to reflect how teachers described their careers as a route or course of action. Each teacher’s perceptions of how they came to this pathway took one of four forms:

- Teaching as a career ‘destiny’
- Teaching as a ‘direction’ into a career
- Teaching as an ‘accidental’ career
- Teaching as a ‘family’ career

The findings in this section will be presented according to these four distinct ‘pathways’ and will include six brief teacher profiles.

Table 5.1 below classifies teachers on two dimensions: their beliefs about their career pathway and their intention to remain in teaching. Teachers were classified as intending to remain in classroom teaching (Stay Teaching), intending to remain in education more broadly but not in a classroom teaching role (Stay Education) or intending to exit teaching within the next five years (Exit Teaching). Table 5.2 shows some key characteristics of the teachers in this study and how they fit into each of these four pathways. One interesting feature to note here is that, of those who planned to leave teaching, all of them described teaching as a ‘direction’ into a career pathway. Of those in the ‘direction’ category, only one envisaged remaining in a classroom teaching role. These points will be elaborated on below.

Table 5.1. *Summary of teachers’ beliefs about their career pathway compared with their future career intentions*

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<th>Direction n = 10</th>
<th>Accident n = 3</th>
<th>Family n = 2</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Tanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracey</td>
<td>Colleen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jacqueline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alison</td>
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<td>Stephanie</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joanne</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Stay Education</td>
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<td>Karyn</td>
<td>Marcus</td>
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<td>Kaitlyn</td>
<td>Louise</td>
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<td>Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Cameron</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>David</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Amy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Michelle</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicholas</td>
<td></td>
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Table 5.2. *Summary of teacher’s beliefs about their career pathways into teaching*

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<td>Government</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Teaching as a career destiny.

(Destiny: events that will necessarily happen to a particular person in the future)

Nine teachers in this study identified that teaching was their career ‘destiny’. Regardless of whether or not they held previous jobs or started teaching from an undergraduate or postgraduate entry point, teaching was always what they saw themselves eventually doing. This was not necessarily a submissive or fatalistic perspective, but rather reflected that they had long held ambitions to become teachers and believed that it would eventually happen at some point in their working life. Six of these nine teachers had never held jobs other than teaching and had pursued teaching as their sole career goal. Anthony “knew from a young age I wanted to be a teacher”, whilst Alison identified herself as “a career teacher” who consciously chose teaching to the exclusion of other careers. Claire described teaching like a magnet that pulled her in, “I think this is what I do and even when I tried to not, I worked in an art gallery, I then became the art educator. So, I always sort of find my way back.” None of these nine teachers intended to leave teaching. Unsurprisingly, this suggests that the teachers in this study who saw teaching as their career ‘destiny’ were the most likely to remain in teaching.

Teacher profile: Tracey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
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<td>Employment status</td>
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Tracey came to teaching after more than a decade working in the food technology industry. In her mid-30s, inspired by a NSWDEC campaign to recruit new teachers, she “decided that I wanted to teach and make a difference, like the ad says”. She became a secondary teacher through the NSWDEC accelerated training program. Tracey spoke with great passion about her love of teaching and described how teaching was her purpose or calling, “I love being a teacher. It's what I was born to do, I think. And I
think, having come into it late in my career, has made me realise how lucky I am to be a teacher." Tracey's notion of being “born to teach” echoes the concept of destiny.

**Teacher profile: Kaitlyn.**

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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Location</td>
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</table>

Kaitlyn applied for a NSWDEC teaching scholarship at seventeen and recalled her certainty in choosing this pathway, “I put the form in knowing I wanted to be a teacher”. Reflecting on this, she described how she felt “very grateful that my past self did that” and was thankful for the opportunity to take up a permanent teaching role straight after graduation. Kaitlyn recalled her thought process; “it was visual arts, social science or English. That was my sort of area. It was always going to be teaching, though”. Kaitlyn described a strong sense of “knowing” that she wanted to teach and the imperative that she was “always” going to be a teacher. This suggests that teaching was her career ‘destiny’.

**Teaching as a direction into a career.**

{Direction: a specific course along which one moves}

Ten teachers in this study chose teaching because it offered a visibly defined direction from where they were into a distinct job. A teaching qualification was chosen as the ‘known’ option with a structured work trail that followed, rather than a generalist degree that could lead to many possibilities. The vast array of routes into teaching, including undergraduate, postgraduate, distance education and accelerated programs, made entry into teaching relatively easy for most participants. Teaching offered a job with a defined structure and obvious potential to build a career from.

Many teachers in this category had a generalist first degree and were either looking for a post-graduate option to direct them into work, or were seeking a mid-career change.
For example, Belinda pursued a range of jobs after completing her undergraduate study in IT, and easily transitioned into teaching: “I switched over to teaching, so I just did like a year-long course. I was lucky it was only a year”. Colleen chose teaching straight after high school because she didn’t feel “talented enough” to pursue her creative interests, “I did have a little bit of that, if you can’t do, teach syndrome . . . there was that little bit of, oh, I’m not quite talented enough to actually specialise in something”. Teaching offered a career path where she could still use her creative skills without having to specialise.

**Teacher profile: Michelle.**

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</table>

Michelle had worked in visual arts and design for a decade when she decided that she:

*Just wanted to get some more of a career of my own that I could continue with.*

*And so I took up teaching . . . I loved it and really felt that this was something that was actually going somewhere and that I could really build on.*

Compared to her undergraduate area of study, teaching provided “more of a career” that she could “build on”. A teaching career is thus positioned as a vocational pathway that can be developed and extended. Unlike the unpredictable and open-ended work path that flows from a career in the arts, teaching offers a ‘known’ pathway.
Teacher profile: David.

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David completed a BA in history, politics and philosophy and although he described this as “interesting”, he finished with no concrete employment goals. His mother, who was a teacher, encouraged him to consider teaching: “she goes, males in primary schools is [sic] really good. Do it!” After undertaking work experience in her school, David pursued primary teaching through a one-year accelerated teacher education course at Western Sydney University. This relatively short period of extra study opened up a whole new career pathway with clear job prospects and a defined route to follow.

Teaching as an accidental career.

{Accident: an incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally}

Three teachers in this study described how they never consciously intended or planned to become teachers, but circumstances led them to ‘accidentally’ enter the profession. They described their career pathway as something that chance, opportunity or an unexpected situation led to rather than a planned pursuit. For Marcus and Elizabeth, this even stemmed from an initial desire not to become teachers. Marcus described how he “didn’t actually want to get into teaching”, yet still “kind of somehow went into teaching”. Elizabeth “was always going to be a doctor”, however ill health and misadventure led her to change her career ambitions. Teaching was no part of her life plan:

I think that my outside life has been the hardest thing about being a teacher. I come from a very academic family, a lot of high achievers. Teaching is perceived to be a sub-level profession . . . You know, you’re just a teacher. You’re nothing but a teacher.

For Elizabeth, teaching was very much an ‘accidental’ career. Interestingly, despite the
unintentional nature of their teaching careers, all three of these teachers intended to remain in the profession.

**Teacher profile: Tristan.**

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<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Secondary (Science)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Independent</td>
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<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Permanent full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Eastern Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tristan never imagined himself as a teacher and described how “I never saw myself in the teaching profession in anyway. I just fell into it”. Tristan studied science after finishing school and started pursuing a PhD, but “wasn’t really enjoying it that much”. He was unexpectedly contacted by his former secondary school science teacher and was offered a teaching job. “I went, yeah, ok, well I'll give it a bash for nine months and we'll see how it goes. And I totally loved it and I've been here ever since”. Tristan was open to this opportunity, but it was not something he deliberately planned or sought out. This also reflects the fact that Tristan could take up a teaching position in an independent school without a formal teaching qualification, which he only gained several years later. Despite this chance beginning, Tristan spoke with great passion about his growing love of teaching and was confident that he wanted to remain in the classroom.

**Teaching as a family career.**

{Family: A group typically consisting of parents and their children living together as a unit}

Only two teachers in this study indicated that they made a conscious choice to enter teaching based on family reasons. Both teachers were female, aged in their forties and chose primary teaching in the government sector. Both saw themselves as remaining in the classroom until retirement, however both were working in temporary roles and had been unable to secure permanent work. Jacqueline studied as a mature age undergraduate once her kids were all at school, whereas Tanya studied as a
postgraduate via distance education whilst working to support her family. Whilst both chose teaching believing it would enable them to keep meeting their family commitments, only Jacqueline was ultimately satisfied with this choice.

**Teacher profile: Tanya.**

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<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Temporary full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Western Sydney</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

After pursuing work in design, administration and banking, Tanya unexpectedly became a single parent and needed to expand her work options to support her family, “I ended up on my own with my kids and needed something more than working part-time in a bank”. Once she started working in schools, Tanya found herself frustrated by the heavy workload demands of teaching. When asked whether teaching offered her the work/ life balance she was hoping for, she responded,

No. No. It’s terrible, a terrible job for a parent. Terrible. Especially a single parent . . . Yes you’ve got the holidays with your kids. That’s lovely . . . But, yeah, those nine to three hours, there’s no flexibility.

Tanya was also frustrated by the difficulty in finding permanent work. At the time of our interview, Tanya had just found out that her temporary contract was not being renewed the following year and was in the process of rapidly trying to find another teaching position. Despite choosing teaching because she hoped it would be manageable around her family, a teaching career had not offered the flexibility that she was hoping for. Tanya found herself starting over in a new school each year. This lack of stability combined with a lack of flexibility diminished Tanya’s job satisfaction:

I’ve never felt as insecure financially in my life since I became a teacher. I’ve never had that stress of ‘will I have a job’? I’ve always been employed. I’ve always had good jobs. And suddenly with teaching, no security at all.
Section summary.

This section has presented the argument that teachers perceived their careers as a ‘pathway’ – a route or trail along which they traveled. Across the twenty-four teachers in this study, there were four main paths travelled: the pre-destined path, the directional path, the accidental path and the family path. Whilst much existing research has focused on why people choose to enter teaching, these findings expand on the existing research by considering how people came to have a career in teaching and the many and varied pathways that took them there. An understanding of the reasoning and circumstances behind individuals’ entry to teaching adds a layer of complexity and contributes to knowledge of how teachers perceive their careers. The next section will expand on this to consider second-stage teachers’ future career aspirations.

Part Two: Interview finding two – The evolving journey of a teaching career

Part two of this chapter presents the second major finding generated from the interview data. The teachers in this study were asked to explain their current job role and then to describe where they would like to take their teaching career in the next five to ten years. They were also asked whether or not they thought teaching would be their lifelong career and what factors would support or hinder this. Analysis of these answers revealed six possible trajectories that teachers described themselves as interested in pursuing:

- Horizontal (classroom teacher)
- Diagonal A (differentiated/expanded role)
- Diagonal B (hybrid teacher leader)
- Diagonal C (teacher developer)
- Vertical (principal)
- Exit

Teachers who explicitly planned on leaving teaching in the next five years were considered to be on an exit trajectory. Whilst the horizontal and vertical trajectories are well established in the existing literature, the diagonal trajectories are a new concept that developed in this thesis through the data analysis. Whilst these trajectories are presented as distinct pathways, teachers were often interested in moving into, out of and between these trajectories at different points in their careers. The findings in this section will be presented according to the six trajectories identified above, including thirteen brief ‘teacher profiles’.
Several figures and tables help make these trajectories explicit. Table 5.3 classifies teachers on two dimensions: their future career trajectory and their intention to remain in teaching. Teachers were classified as either intending to remain in classroom teaching (Stay Teaching), intending to remain in education more broadly but not in classroom teaching roles (Stay Education) or intending to exit teaching within the next five years (Exit Teaching). This table summarises teachers’ future trajectory goals compared with their future career intentions. Table 5.4 shows some key characteristics of the teachers in this study and how they fit into each of these six trajectories.

Additionally, Figure 5.1 illustrates the teachers’ current career roles, with all teachers in this study currently working in either classroom (horizontal), differentiated (diagonal A) or teacher leader (diagonal B) roles. The six trajectories that second-stage teachers’ aspire to are depicted in Figure 5.2, with the arrows indicating the potential for flexible shifting between roles.

Table 5.3. Summary of teachers’ future trajectories compared with future career intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trajectory</th>
<th>Horizontal n = 6</th>
<th>Diagonal A n = 3</th>
<th>Diagonal B n = 3</th>
<th>Diagonal C n = 4</th>
<th>Vertical n = 4</th>
<th>Exit n = 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stay Teaching n = 12</td>
<td>Fiona, Tracey, Claire, Colleen, Joanne, James</td>
<td>Tanya, Jacqueline, Stephanie, Alison</td>
<td>Anthony, Tristan, Alison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay Education n = 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karyn, Cameron, Marcus, Kaitlyn</td>
<td>Louise, David, Megan, Elizabeth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit Teaching n = 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Belinda, Amy, Michelle, Nicholas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.4. Summary of second-stage teachers’ future career aspirations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Prior career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>PFT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>PFT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Temp PT</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>PFT</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>PFT(Mat L)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>PFT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HORIZONTAL, TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM (N=6)

DIAGONAL A, DIFFERENTIATED/EXPANDED (N=3)

| Tanya     | Female | 40-49  | Primary  | Government | Temp FT  | Yes          |
| Jacqueline| Female | 40-49  | Primary  | Government | Temp FT  | Yes          |
| Stephanie | Female | 20-29  | Primary  | Government | PFT      | No           |

DIAGONAL B, HYBRID TEACHER/LEADER (N=3)

| Anthony   | Male   | 20-29  | Secondary | Government | PFT      | No           |
| Tristan   | Male   | 30-39  | Secondary | Independent | PFT      | Yes          |
| Alison    | Female | 30-39  | Secondary | Independent | PFT(Mat L) | No          |

DIAGONAL C, TEACHER DEVELOPER (N=4)

| Karyn     | Female | 30-39  | Secondary | Government | PFT      | Yes          |
| Cameron   | Male   | 30-39  | Primary   | Government | PFT      | Yes          |
| Marcus    | Male   | 30-39  | Primary   | Government | PFT      | No           |
| Kaitlyn   | Female | 20-29  | Secondary | Government | PFT      | No           |

VERTICAL, PRINCIPAL (N=4)

| Louise    | Female | 30-39  | Secondary | Independent | PFT      | No           |
| David     | Male   | 20-29  | Primary   | Government | PFT      | No           |
| Megan     | Female | 40-49  | Primary   | Independent | PFT      | No           |
| Elizabeth | Female | 30-39  | Secondary | Independent | PFT      | No           |

EXIT (N=4)

| Belinda   | Female | 30-39  | Primary   | Government | PFT      | Yes          |
| Amy       | Female | 20-29  | Primary   | Government | PFT      | Yes          |
| Michelle  | Female | 40-49  | Secondary | Catholic   | Temp PT  | Yes          |
| Nicholas  | Male   | 30-39  | Secondary | Catholic   | PFT      | Yes          |

Note. PFT = Permanent full time  PFT (Mat L) = Permanent full time, maternity leave
Temp FT = Temporary full time  Temp PT = Temporary part time
Figure 5.1. Second-stage teachers’ current career trajectories
Figure 5.2. Second-stage teachers' aspirational career trajectories
The horizontal trajectory: lifelong classroom teaching.

Two-thirds of the teachers in this study were currently working in ‘traditional’ classroom teaching roles. The horizontal trajectory was the career pathway preferred by the six teachers in this study who wished to remain within this role. Five of the six were juggling the demands of parenting with teaching. The common thread amongst the six was the aim of remaining in traditional classroom teaching roles coupled with the intent to remain in teaching for the duration of their working lives. These teachers were keen to develop their expertise, including through subject specialisation (Fiona), grade specialisation (Joanne), changing schools (Tracey) and teaching overseas (Claire, Colleen). These kinds of changes were all envisioned within a traditional classroom teaching role. I.e. Being a generalist with the one class (primary) or being a subject specialist across many classes (secondary). Tracey was confident that she would “absolutely” persist with teaching, “I love teaching and I’m going to be a teacher forever” and felt that any boredom could be easily managed by a change of context, “when I get bored, I change schools, which gives me diversity again”. After twenty-eight years of teaching, Colleen described herself as “happy to be in the classroom” and not interested in moving outside of this role, “I have no ambition at the moment, except for doing the best I can within the classroom.” These teachers perceived the horizontal trajectory as a fulfilling and definitive career path.

Teacher profile: Fiona.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Secondary (English, HSIE &amp; Drama)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Permanent full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Inner-West Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fiona gave the most direct descriptions of choosing a horizontal career trajectory. She was uninterested in pursuing promotion roles due to the heavy workload and relatively small salary increase. She assessed her options as, “You stay a stock standard teacher and take stuff as it goes, you aim for management . . . Or you specialise. And so I’ll end up being a specialist teacher.” For Fiona, this meant remaining firmly in the
classroom, whilst specialising in middle school English and HSIE. Fiona saw this as an area that she could “niche in that would be marketable”, which was important when she considered transferring to other Catholic or independent schools. Having chosen teaching as a career-change in her mid-thirties, Fiona planned to remain in teaching for the duration of her working life. Her ideal scenario was to work four days per week, “because that would leave me room to be”.

**Teacher profile: Joanne.**

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<thead>
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<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Permanent full-time (maternity leave)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Northern NSW, Newcastle region</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joanne described herself as “a bit of a traditionalist” because “I like knowing my twenty-five to thirty children. I like being responsible for those kids and those kids alone.” Joanne acknowledged that “it can be hard being across all the strands” demanded of a generalist primary teacher, but she ultimately felt that the traditional primary model was important “there’s also a benefit in having your one teacher, like your one person that you can trust and connect with”. At the time of interview, Joanne was on maternity leave, but was planning to return to teaching, “I see myself being a teacher all of my days”. Joanne also articulated that, within the primary context, she was interested in specialising in infants (K-2) teaching, “I prefer infants, I think in my short teaching career I’ve decided that that’s what I’d like to specialise in. I want to be really good at that”.
**Teacher profile: Claire.**

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<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>30-39 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>9 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Temporary part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Southern Sydney</td>
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</table>

Claire was a qualified secondary visual arts teacher, however she had been working as a primary teacher because of the over-supply of secondary arts teachers. She was halfway through a two-year NSWDECE program to re-train as a primary teacher whilst teaching:

*Rather than going back to Uni and do a Masters, which would put me, like, nowhere, because there's still no jobs, at least this way I'm in a school doing it . . . It's the equivalent of two full school years in the same school and fill in heaps of paperwork . . . Then your principal signs off. No formal training, nothing.*

Claire's goal was to gain permanent work, however she worked in a highly desirable part of Sydney where teachers rarely left their permanent positions. She was also at the mercy of the job market, teaching in two areas of over-supply (secondary visual arts and primary). This created great uncertainty:

*I don't know if I'm going to have work next year . . . We want to have another baby and buy a house, but it's totally dependent on whether I have a job next year, how that's going to work. So, we literally plan a year and then have to re-assess every December.*

Claire reflected on her mother's experience of being a teacher for twenty-five years and never gaining permanency, which led her mother to dissuade Claire from teaching, *“she always said don't be a teacher. There's no jobs. Don't do it. It's too much work.”*

Despite these challenges, Claire intended to make teaching her lifelong career, although she expressed regret that *“I know people who think that's sad. I think people sort of change their careers so much.”* For Claire, teaching was *“what I do”* and she envisioned herself persisting with teaching in a traditional classroom role.
Diagonal trajectory A: differentiated / expanded role.
Six teachers were currently working in differentiated or expanded roles. These roles were typically support or specialist positions that had a significantly reduced teaching load and enabled teachers to pursue areas of expertise. Elizabeth acquired a differentiated role through filling a niche in her large, prestigious independent school. A brand new role as ‘head of outdoor education’ was created specifically for her, based on her unique interests and skill set. This saw her coordinating programs across the K-12 school, whilst maintaining only a very small teaching load in her original specialty area. Although primary trained, Stephanie started her career in a regional K-12 central school. This gave her the change to work in a wide range of roles and subjects across the K-12 spectrum. Stephanie had more recently moved into a primary school to gain permanency, but she hoped to work in differentiated roles again.

The other teachers with differentiated roles were working in government schools. Their positions had largely come about due to the expansion of funding through the PSP [Priority Schools Program] agreement. This saw schools in disadvantaged areas targeted with extra federal funding for a short-term period, typically two to five years. Many schools created differentiated roles that both targeted particular student needs and also tapped into teacher expertise. Thus, Kaitlyn was coordinating a new secondary school reading program across four grades, Marcus became an ESL teacher with responsibility for a large ‘new arrivals’ migrant program and Cameron became both teacher librarian and Assistant Principal, with a focus on ICT integration. He observed:

*So many people I know are now talking about roles that they want to move into. They want to move into ESL [English as a Second Language]. They want to move into LST [Learning Support Teacher]. They want to move into, I've got some that are re-training as counselors or support unit . . . If you're trying to differentiate from what you've got already, you're looking at getting out of the classroom and going either into executive or going into a support role.*

Perhaps because of the short-term or uncertain nature of these roles, only three teachers ultimately hoped to pursue differentiated roles in the future.
**Teacher profile: Jacqueline.**

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<tbody>
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<td>Age</td>
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<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>8 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>Government</td>
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<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Temporary full-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Jacqueline currently spent half of her day on class and the other half working as a Reading Recovery teacher (withdrawing children for one-on-one intensive literacy support in a highly structured program). Jacqueline had a particular passion for literacy and felt that her differentiated role offered significant benefits, *“It makes you more rounded as a teacher anyway because you get a different perspective on what teaching's all about.”* Coming to teaching as a mature-age entrant in her late thirties, Jacqueline was confident that she would remain in teaching, *“definitely, absolutely, nothing's going to change that”*. She hoped to continue in the differentiated role and was actively *“manoeuvring things now with my own professional learning so that that's a possibility”*. Jacqueline was working towards further qualification to develop her skills in teaching early literacy and hoped to continue in a differentiated role in that area.

**Teacher profile: Tanya.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>40-49 years</td>
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<td>Years teaching</td>
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<td>Government</td>
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<td>Temporary full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Western Sydney</td>
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</table>
Tanya requested a move to a differentiated role when major family issues made it extremely difficult to sustain her role as a full-time classroom teacher. At the time of our interview, Tanya had very recently been told that her temporary contract would not be renewed for the following year. She attributed this partly to her requesting a different role, “I stopped and put family first and probably haven’t got a job next year because of that in a way. But, I had to do it. So I've sort of pulled back”. Tanya was given an RFF [Release from Face to Face] teaching role with a lot of flexibility and was able to negotiate what she would teach. Tanya chose to tailor this by teaching across a range of KLAs, particularly using her skills and passion for visual art, public speaking and debating.

Tanya described her experience of this role as “fabulous” and “more me”. She was able to both meet her family responsibilities and develop herself as a teacher. Tanya was proud of what she had achieved in the role and felt that it had also given her a stronger sense of agency, “I’m much firmer now about what my preferences would be and what I'm prepared to do for work.” Tanya was in the process of applying for jobs and was keen to remain in a differentiated role. She was also considering re-training as a secondary teacher, although could only do that with significant financial support. Role differentiation, she felt, made “perfect sense . . . I think that's a great idea and you get more experience 'cos you're moving from side to side”. Tanya wanted to remain in teaching lifelong, but preferably in a differentiated role, “I can't picture being on class at seventy all the time. It would be exhausting.”

**Diagonal trajectory B: teacher / leader hybrid.**

This diagonal trajectory is a hybrid role that incorporates both classroom teaching and school leadership. In the primary school, this typically takes the form of an ‘Assistant Principal’ in charge of a specific stage, whilst in secondary school this often involves being a ‘Head Teacher’ responsible for a particular Key Learning Area (KLA). A crucially defining part of these roles is that teachers retain their traditional classroom role (with a slightly reduced teaching load), whilst expanding on it with additional leadership responsibilities. For most teachers, this is currently the only way to increase pay without completely leaving the classroom. These roles are well established and are presently the most widespread method that teachers have for moving between the horizontal and vertical trajectories. For some, these roles were seen as temporary ‘stepping stones’ on the way to other trajectories, whilst for others they were seen as a desirable end in and of themselves. At the time of interview, two teachers were
currently in teacher/leader roles (Megan and Tristan). Three teachers (Anthony, Tristan and Alison) indicated that their goal was to pursue these roles. Interestingly, all three of these teachers saw teacher/leader roles as an endpoint, without the desire for further promotion, mainly because of the appeal of remaining in the classroom.

**Teacher profile: Anthony.**

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<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20-29 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years teaching</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Secondary (Science)</td>
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<td>Sector</td>
<td>Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Permanent full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anthony was working as a science teacher in a large, comprehensive government secondary school and had enjoyed several terms of being a relieving Head Teacher. This inspired his current career plans: “I’m getting my resume together and will probably start applying to head teacher science jobs in the next probably six months.” Anthony was keen to work in a smaller school because it was difficult to get to know the students in his current 1200-student school. For Anthony, the experience of having already tried and succeeded in the Head Teacher role was very motivating. He also described his goals for the role:

> I do know what I want to do with the faculty. I have a very clear picture . . . I know where I want to go with that. I've got plans already drawn up for how it would look.

Anthony also perceived that his personal traits that made him suited to leadership, “I've always considered myself a leader. That's just in everything . . . I've always been that personality type.” Anthony was confident that he would “definitely” pursue teaching as his lifelong career. He did not see himself being a deputy principal because “I don't get angry enough” and he was not interested in the large welfare and administrative load that came with that. Most importantly, he didn’t want to become a principal because he really loved classroom teaching and had a passion for his subject specialty, “I don't know if I can get away from science enough. I really enjoy that and I really enjoy curriculum. I really enjoy programming. They're the things I love.” The teacher/leader hybrid role was appealing to Anthony because it enabled him to remain close to the classroom whilst having greater influence in school programming and planning.
**Teacher profile: Alison.**

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At the time of our interview, Alison was on maternity leave from her role as a foreign languages teacher at an independent girls school. Alison was conscious of how her identity as a teacher had changed as she gained more experience and was able “to zoom out and to kind of look at the school as a whole system”. This perspective led Alison to envision herself as a Head Teacher within her school:

*I would like to be in curriculum leadership in some sort of role, particularly a role involved with kind of working with other teachers on their practice. I really find that rewarding . . . To be able to kind of have contact with more than just your own classroom, to sort of see the bigger picture.*

Alison was confident that she did not want to be a Principal, but she was clear that she wanted to expand her influence within the school:

*I really love being in the classroom and I don't want to step away from the classroom entirely, but I do see how being say, for example, a curriculum leader you would get to have an influence on more classrooms than just your own, and I think that really appeals.*

Alison identified “status” and “progress” as important reasons for considering the teacher/leader role, particularly as there was no way to increase either of these (or salary) without taking on a leadership role, “in order to really kind of progress your career in teaching, you do need to step into leadership”.

Diagonal trajectory C: teacher developer.

The defining feature of the teacher developer role is that, whilst remaining connected to schooling and education broadly, this role does not involve classroom teaching. Examples include becoming a consultant (either independently or within a school system), working in the tertiary sector in teacher education and/or research or working in policy development (either at a systemic or government level). Teachers who aimed to move into these roles still felt that they had a lot to contribute to education, but did not see their future as being classroom teachers. Cameron, Marcus, Karyn and Kaitlyn indicated that it was their goal to become teacher developers. Interestingly, all four of these teachers were aged under 35 and had taught in Western or South-Western Sydney. All four taught in government schools and expressed a strong commitment to public education. Part of the desire for these roles came from an expanded perspective of education beyond the classroom and “realising you can make more change outside” of a school than within it:

As more of my perspective of teaching has been broadened to not just the classroom, but to more, I mean, I'd love to work and consult with the sort of broader educational context, especially with new teachers . . . I almost feel like you can initiate more change by talking to these treasures, these little new teachers, than you can necessarily in a structure. (Marcus)

Kaitlyn reflected on the precarious nature of consultancy roles, as the DEC had recently withdrawn funding for hundreds of consultancy positions, “there is no actual opportunity really for us to have a look at a different role of education because those positions have gone. It's very heart breaking.” Kaitlyn was aware that these positions were sometimes viewed as “middle men”, but felt that they were really important for “propping up” and supporting teachers, “they're providing us with resources and access to research and programs and phenomenal things.” Kaitlyn described the consultants she had worked with as “amazing educators” and reflected, “you're what I want to be when I grow up!”
Teacher profile: Cameron.

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Cameron had strategically secured himself an unusual differentiated role as a teacher librarian / assistant principal. He was confident that he would, “never be back in the classroom as a classroom teacher”. Cameron reflected on his frustration in the classroom:

I just can’t be in a classroom for that length of time . . . Honestly as an early career teacher in my, particularly in my first year, I used to count down to days where I wasn’t on class, or a big event or something where it was different . . . The routine of reading groups every day; I just wanted to bang my head on a wall and cry.

He felt that promotion was likely, and perhaps inevitable, “it seems to be heading that way”. He didn’t see his future in either a classroom teaching or leadership role:

If I was to head anywhere in the future it would be consultancy or being involved in policy, trying to direct how the department moves . . . Especially because of the big movement of public education, too, you feel an ownership of the whole system.

Cameron saw himself in a role that involved developing teachers and schools, with a focus on ICT and strategic planning. He recognised that consultancy was limited because “the job security there is very shaky”, but nonetheless he envisioned his future as a teacher developer.
**Teacher profile: Karyn.**

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Karyn had recently been placed as a ‘nominated transfer’ to another school due to a drop in student numbers. Although Karyn felt that it was time to move on from her current school, she was unhappy that she had no choice in the matter. When considering if she would remain lifelong in classroom teaching, she responded, “my gut says no, but I don’t know why”. The notion of differentiated roles appealed to Karyn because it suggested a way to make teaching more sustainable as a career, “I get a feeling of longevity when I think of it that way, as opposed to forty years in a classroom, I think, oh my God!” Karyn described herself as currently considering her career options, “I’ve got a bunch of ideas I’m throwing around”, and she envisioned herself working across a range of roles:

*I was considering more beginning teacher support, perhaps working in the university system with drama methodology . . . Professional learning is important to me as well, having gotten a lot of responses from my blog and at professional learning events.*

Karyn described her ultimate goal as “to be influential in some way in the drama field”, and considered professional learning, HSC marking and the development of new resources as key ways to achieve this.
Vertical trajectory: the principalship.

The vertical trajectory was the pathway for teachers who aspired to the principalship to lead and manage a school in a non-teaching capacity. Four teachers in this study identified the vertical trajectory as their career goal. They saw the intermediate leadership roles of head teacher, assistant principal and/or deputy principal as important stepping-stones, but were clear that these were short-term options only. Of these four, Megan was the only teacher who very clearly envisioned herself working within schools for the duration of her career. David, Elizabeth and Louise also described themselves as open to other opportunities and were very aware of the broader educational context. None of these teachers had families, and this created mixed feelings about the role. For David, a key part of his ambition for the principalship was related to the salary increase and starting a family, “with my fiancée having to take time off work, you know, that's the big thing for me wanting to move up. Like, we need that bit of extra income.” Louise felt that teaching was a family friendly profession, but that she would have her children before taking on a principalship. Elizabeth was uncertain that she would re-think her principalship goal if she were to find a partner and start a family. Megan had consciously chosen not to have children and felt that this allowed her the time necessary to devote herself to school leadership.

Teacher profile: Louise.

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Louise was working in a traditional classroom teaching role. She enjoyed teaching and felt that she would continue working “within the education umbrella”, however this didn't necessarily translate as teaching, “I couldn't say that it would still all be in the classroom”. Louise had been encouraged by her current principal to consider leadership roles and she hoped to take her teaching career “to the top”. Open conversations with her principal about “different pathways in that direction” gave Louise a sense of confidence that she could achieve this, “I'm in my early thirties, so I sort of
Imagine that in twenty years. And she [the principal] said, I think we can do it in ten. So, I guess that’s in the back of my mind.” Louise felt that her current partner was supportive of her aspirations and did not feel that her ambition was problematic with their plans to have a family, “obviously I would be thinking that having children would be somewhere down the track, and I guess I feel that I’m lucky because it’s an industry that is supportive of that.” Louise hoped to have her children and pursue other leadership roles on the way to becoming a principal in this next ten years.

Teacher profile: Elizabeth.

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Elizabeth enjoyed her present differentiated teaching role, but after eight years in her current school she felt that “there’s sort of nothing here” and she was currently applying for jobs in other schools in order to “challenge myself and get broader experience”. Elizabeth wanted to continue working in education, but did not see classroom teaching as her lifelong career. She was in the process of applying to undertake a PhD research project part-time whilst continuing with teaching. Her goal was “to end up as a principal” and she was actively seeking out roles and opportunities “to get as much experience as I can”. However, Elizabeth was “open to trying new things . . . I see myself staying in education, but I am open to the possibility”.

Elizabeth noted that this might alter if her personal circumstances changed:

I think that if I got married and had kids, it would be very difficult to do the job that I currently do. I would have to become a minimalist teacher. So, I think the holidays are helpful for people with kids.

Elizabeth had already completed two further postgraduate qualifications since becoming a teacher and was immensely dedicated to her job, but felt that a leadership role may not be compatible with having a family.
Exit trajectory: planning to leave teaching.

Four teachers in this study identified that they planned to pursue a horizontal trajectory in the short term, but ultimately planned to leave teaching within the next few years. The common thread amongst Amy, Belinda, Nicholas and Michelle was the inability to envision themselves in teaching roles beyond the short term. Whilst the flexibility of teaching, particularly the holidays, was very appealing for Amy and Belinda, this was not enough to entice them to stay. Nicholas and Michelle were not happy with their current work arrangements and believed that they would ultimately need to leave teaching to improve their job satisfaction and work/life balance.

Teacher profile: Amy.

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Amy chose teaching without the intention of making it a lifelong career, “when I started out, I never thought that it would be forever. I just thought, oh, you know, that would be a kind of good job.” This translated into choosing temporary roles for the first three years of her career because of the flexibility this gave her, “I have no problem sacrificing, you know, a year of working towards getting a permanent job to go and travel and spend time with my partner and enjoy life.” Amy was also not interested in pursuing leadership positions, feeling that they were “a completely different job” and “not what I studied”. Amy’s short-term goal was to remain in the classroom mastering her role as a kindergarten teacher:

I just want to be happy in my job and doing it as best I can and still learning . . .
I didn’t get into teaching just to be a teacher; I got into teaching because I love learning.

Amy felt that she would remain in teaching for now as she was planning on starting a family. This was an important time when “life needs to be a bit settled” and teaching offered stability. Ultimately, Amy saw herself pursuing other career interests:
I think it’s in my genes that I need to try something else . . . I think she [my mum] just inspires me to not kind of think down the one road track. Like, there’s always options and if you find something that you’re interested in, you need to be open to change.

**Teacher profile: Nicholas.**

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Nicholas completed a double degree in industrial technology and engineering. Feeling that job opportunities in Australia were limited and not wanting to move overseas, teaching provided another career path. After teaching in several independent schools, he secured a permanent job at his alma mater, a large Catholic boys college. Nicholas had taken on a temporary promotion role as a year coordinator and was not keen to do it again because his school had “a lot of behaviour issues with boys” and he felt very under-supported. He also cited the growing bureaucracy and negative culture around risk management, particularly teaching very practical subjects, such that “anything that is fun is made not to be fun anymore”. His school facilities were old and in need of an upgrade, but his school were unwilling to put money into this area. He was offered a substantive promotion to become a subject coordinator, but turned this down, “I just won’t take those leadership roles. It’s just a trap for myself. I’m setting myself up to, for a year of heartache and I’ve already done it once and I’ve learned my lesson”. In the short term, Nicholas ultimately planned to leave teaching:

_I do love it. I wish I could teach for the rest of my life. I just think, if I want to be the next level, have a family; financially it wouldn’t be enough to support the type of lifestyle . . . What are more financial rewards in doing three degrees in comparison to being a delivery driver making the same money without the sort of headache?_
Nicholas was actively considering other work that he could do with his tertiary qualifications.

**Section summary.**

This section has presented the argument that second-stage teachers consider their careers to be an evolving journey. Eleven of the twenty-four teachers in this study intended to change roles or trajectories, nine planned to stay and four planned to exit teaching altogether. A model of teachers’ career trajectories was presented which aims to capture the diversity and complexity of second-stage teacher career aspirations by presenting six different pathways that teachers themselves conceptualised for their futures. Whilst these pathways are not discrete, and many teachers were keen to experience different pathways at different times in their careers, the important point to note is the multiplicity and variety present amongst this small sample of teachers. Policies that consider teaching as a single, uniform career pathway risk ignoring the great complexity and diversity within the profession. The next section will conclude the chapter by further discussing the interview findings presenting thus far in relation to the existing literature.

**Part three: Discussion B – Second-stage teachers’ career trajectories**

The previous sections of this chapter have presented in-depth accounts of the first two findings generated from interview data analysis. The chapter will now conclude with a discussion of these findings, making connections with the literature outlined earlier in the thesis and drawing some conclusions. This discussion seeks to answer the third research sub-question: *How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’?* The concept of a teaching ‘career trajectory’ was closely examined in the preceding literature review. It is clear from the interview findings that second-stage teachers have multifaceted understandings of their career pathways and diverse aspirations for the career futures. Their perspectives add greater detail and nuance to the concept of a career trajectory in teaching.

Turning to the first interview finding, it can be concluded that second-stage teachers make sense of their teaching careers within the context of their broader work and life histories. Whilst this study did not seek to address either the construction of teacher identity, nor what motivates people to enter teaching, these research areas offer
important parallels. Given that ‘trajectories’ are inherently linear and temporal, teachers inevitably have a ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’ career story. In considering their career pasts, this study concludes that there are four main pathways by which second-stage teachers enter teaching:

- Teaching as a ‘career destiny’: being born to teach and having long held ambitions to (eventually) become a teacher;
- Teaching as a ‘career direction’: choosing teaching because it offers a visible, predictable career pathway, with clear structures and defined job roles and opportunities;
- Teaching as an ‘accidental career’: falling into teaching without deliberately planning to do so; and
- Teaching as a ‘family career’: choosing teaching because of a perception that it provides a flexible work environment that can accommodate family responsibilities.

Teaching as an ‘accidental career’ is not evident in the existing literature, although there is some literature on teacher educators having “accidental” careers as academics (Mayer, Mitchell, Santoro, & White, 2011) and on teachers having “unplanned” careers as school leaders (C. James & Whiting, 1998). The pathways of ‘destiny’, ‘direction’ and ‘family’ can all be seen as resonating in the existing literature into the motivations of pre-service and beginning teachers entering the profession.

The teachers in this study who identified that teaching offered a ‘career direction’ also often reflected on the opportunity for greater financial rewards and job security compared to their previous employment. Richardson and Watt (2005) identified these as key motivating factors for many career switchers entering teaching later in life. In the present study, thirteen teachers had held other jobs prior to teaching, nine of whom had had extensive prior work experience and would be classified as “career switchers”.

For teachers such as Amy, Belinda and Michelle, teaching offered greater stability and financial reward than their previous work. On the other hand, choosing teaching came with no guarantee of permanent, stable employment. Anthony and Ord (2008) have noted that the trend for beginning teachers to start out in short-term, temporary positions is particularly difficult for career switch teachers who may have families and other financial responsibilities. For example, Tanya made the career switch into teaching in her forties and was struggling to find permanent work:

"I've never felt as insecure financially in my life since I became a teacher. I've never had that stress of 'will I have a job'? I've always been employed. I've always had good jobs. And suddenly, with teaching, no security at all."
Michelle also made the career switch to teaching in her thirties and was now leaving partly because of the inability to find a permanent, part-time teaching role. Other research shows that the vast majority of teachers begin in casual roles (NSWIT, 2014, p. 10) and that two-fifths of Australian teachers aged under 30 only hold temporary contracts (Willett et al., 2014, p. 109). There are evidently many teachers for whom teaching is not a secure form of employment.

Watt & Richardson (2008) identified “highly engaged persisters” as a core group of pre-service teachers who reported feeling that teaching was their vocation, calling, “dream ambition” or what they were “supposed to do” (p. 417). This echoes the nine teachers in this study who identified that teaching was their career ‘destiny’. Eg. Anthony commented that, “I knew from a young age I wanted to be a teacher”, Tracey was confident that teaching was “what I was born to do” and Kaitlyn applied for a teaching scholarship whilst still a secondary student herself because her future career was “always going to be teaching”. Alison, Colleen and Anthony all described teaching as their “vocation”. For some secondary teachers, passion for a particular discipline and “deep interest and love of their specialist subject” has also been identified as a key motivating factor to choosing teaching (Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003, p. 106). This was reflected in the present study, for example in Tracey’s passion for food technology, James’ passion for mathematics and IT and Anthony’s passion for science, “I really enjoy that [science] and I really enjoy curriculum. I really enjoy programming”. Thus for some teachers the idea of destiny was intertwined with their desire to engage deeply with a particular aspect of the curriculum.

Teaching has long been perceived as an appealing career for women because of its apparent family-friendly conditions (Evetts, 1990; Lortie, 1975). The perception that teaching “fits in with family as well as career goals” is still often reported as a key motivating factor in choosing to teach (Watt & Richardson, 2008, p. 417). Similarly, those making the later switch to teaching also report hoping that teaching would allow them time, flexibility and “a better quality of life for themselves with their families” (Richardson & Watt, 2005, p. 486). In the present study, only two teachers identified entering teaching because of the perception that it was a ‘family career’, and these two had strikingly contrasting experiences. Jacqueline had worked continuously in the same school for the duration of her career, getting new twelve-month temporary contracts each year. After eight years, she felt established in her current school and found that teaching was working well for her, “It’s not a big drain on my personal life and it makes it really easy to keep that balance”. On the other hand, Tanya had started
at a new school each year and felt that teaching was “a terrible job for a parent”, particularly because “there’s no flexibility”. The pressure of being in class full-time and dealing with her own complex family situation meant that Tanya ultimately took a ‘diagonal A’ trajectory to “put family first”. This came with a more manageable workload and almost total freedom to choose what aspects of the curriculum she taught.
However, Tanya felt that this move was damaging for her career and was probably why her temporary contract had not been renewed for the following year.

Several teachers without families reflected that, if they were to have children, they might not be able to continue with teaching. Elizabeth, who was very committed to her career and keen to become a Principal, noted, “if I got married and had kids, it would be very difficult to do the job that I currently do. I would have to become a minimalist teacher”. Amongst those who did not have children, there was a divide between those who felt that teaching was family-friendly (e.g., Belinda, Louise, Amy) and those who felt that it would be difficult to combine teaching with raising children (e.g., Karyn, Megan, Elizabeth). This perception of teaching as family-friendly is also connected to the notion of work engagement. Kirkpatrick and Johnson (2014) have shown that, as a result of their increased confidence and autonomy, second-stage teachers feel they have greater choice in the degree to which they invest time and energy into their teaching, having “realised they did not need to continue to engage in their work the way they had as novices . . . Whether and how they continued to engage as second-stage teachers was largely up to them” (p. 237). For example, Tanya described she had “pulled right back” to spend more time with her family:

Those first couple of years it was just work, work, work. And it doesn't work. That's not a life. You end up resenting work . . . I'm much firmer now about what my preferences would be and what I'm prepared to do for work.

Tristan reflected on the fact that, if he were to start a family, he could easily change his engagement with teaching to give him the time and flexibility to do this:

If I have more commitments outside in terms of family and whatever, then I can easily scale back. Like, that's a do-able thing. I mean, I won't be doing my job as well as I am now, but, you know, like, that's what you do.

Colleen also reflected on her choice to remain in a traditional classroom role rather than pursue leadership roles because this gave her more time to be with her children:

I've been in those positions before. I know what I have to do to up my reputation, if you like, here in a new place. But I just don't want to. I choose not to do that at the moment because I'm trying to get other things in balance.
Thus it would seem that the degree to which teaching is a “family career” depends upon the stability of your employment, how settled and established you are in your school and the degree to which you take on additional responsibilities outside the classroom.

Turning to the second interview finding, it can be concluded that second-stage teachers careers are evolving journeys. In this sample, three different trajectories were evident from teachers’ current positions (horizontal, diagonal A and diagonal B). However, these second-stage teachers indicated interest in pursuing a diverse range of trajectories in the future. Some of these are readily available, whilst others require a more active pursuit. It can be concluded, therefore, that second-stage teachers, having largely overcome the ‘survival’ concerns of beginning teachers, are engaged in actively reflecting on their future career choices and plans. There are three main ways in which teachers envision their career futures, leading to six possible trajectories:

- Depth / classroom-focused teachers (horizontal, diagonal A and diagonal B trajectories)
- Breadth / education-focused teachers (diagonal C and vertical trajectories)
- Transient / short-term teachers (exit trajectory)

There is much in the literature that intersects with these trajectories. The strength of these findings is that they bring together the range of possible trajectories into one model, whilst focusing on the unique perspective of second-stage teachers.

Four decades ago, Lortie (1975) asserted that teaching was “career-less” because it offered “less opportunity for the movement upward which is the essence of career” (p. 84). However, the teachers in this study clearly challenged this statement. Similar to MacLean’s (1992) observation that teachers were “conscious of the fact that their career moves were patterned, and generally planned, rather than random” (p. 188), many teachers in this study were actively planning their career futures. For example, Anthony was preparing his resume to apply for Head Teacher jobs and had a clear plan for what he wanted to achieve within that role. Fiona had carefully considered her options and determined that she did not want to remain “a stock standard teacher” or take on a leadership role, so she decided that, “I’ll end up being a specialist teacher”. Many teachers reiterated that they were “open” to new opportunities that may come along, whilst still working towards current plans. The diversity of responses from these teachers makes their career trajectories perhaps less predictable than previous generations, but not less planned.
All of the teachers in this study reflected Connell’s (1985) observation that teachers make an important decision about which approach they want to take to their careers “after the trauma of their first year or two” (p. 161). She characterised this as the choice between a “career-structured approach” (which could include the diagonal A, B, C and vertical trajectories evident in this study), or a “non-career approach” through either exiting teaching or by choosing a horizontal trajectory based solely in the classroom. The teachers in this study challenged the view that taking a horizontal trajectory was a “non-career approach”. Fiona, Tracey, Claire, Colleen and Joanne, whilst clear in their preference for the horizontal trajectory, still saw themselves as having significant and worthy teaching careers. For example, Colleen described herself as having “no ambition at the moment, except for doing the best I can within the classroom”. Joanne reflected on what she would do after maternity leave as, “I just want to be back in the classroom when my kids are bigger . . . to be doing my job well, really well, as best I can”. This attitude can also be seen in the teachers in McLaughlin and Yee’s (1988) study that described teachers’ career satisfaction as being connected to their subjective sense of “making a difference” and developing an “expertise-based, individually determined notion of career” (p. 26).

However, whereas McLaughlin and Yee described that more than 90 percent from their sample of 85 teachers planned classroom-based careers centred on their students, only half of the teachers in this study did the same. The 12 teachers pursuing horizontal, diagonal A and diagonal B trajectories were clearly basing their careers in the classroom, focused on deep engagement with their students and schools. However, the other half of the teachers in this study did not envision their careers in this way. Although the patterns within this small sample must be treated cautiously, this represents a shift from the career goals and aspirations seen in McLaughlin and Yee (1988) and even earlier in Becker (1952) from a substantial majority of teachers envisioning themselves in the classroom for the duration of their careers to perhaps only half envisioning their teaching careers as being based on the classroom. Furthermore, for these teachers with deep, classroom focused career trajectories in mind, it is clear that the decision to remain in the classroom was an active, positive and optimistic one, buoyed by an enjoyment of their work and a passion for learning. This contrasts with the Draper et al.’s (1998) finding that the majority of teachers who remained full-time in the classroom did so “by accident and circumstance rather than by design” (p. 383). Indeed, what is striking about the teachers pursuing horizontal, diagonal A and diagonal B trajectories is the degree to which their ambition to remain in these classroom-based roles is a planned and deliberate choice.
Whereas half of the teachers in this study planned depth/classroom-focused careers, a further third of the teachers sought breadth/education focused careers by pursuing either vertical trajectories to the Principalship or diagonal C trajectories that took them out of schools and into other diverse roles, including teacher education, policy, consultancy and professional learning. Cameron, Marcus, Kaitlyn and Karyn exemplified Rippon’s (2005) description of a small but significant group of teachers who she identified as working within an “investment culture” built upon a desire to work in the education sector more broadly and to seek out job opportunities beyond schools (p. 284). These teachers saw themselves as ‘educationalists’ and members of the ‘education profession’, which encompassed a wider range of work experiences than suggested by the label the ‘teaching profession’. The career ambitions of the four teachers in this study seeking a diagonal C trajectory align well with this description. Although they valued their classroom experiences, they did not see this as constituting the totality of their career plans. Similar to the findings in this study, Rinke’s (2009) case study showed that, even early on in their working lives, teachers are actively exploring their career options and seeking out a professional path for themselves. The teachers interviewed by Peske et al. (2001) who articulated a desire to have a long-term teaching career typically did not see themselves remaining in traditional classroom roles, “when respondents talked about a life-long career in teaching, what they often meant was a lifelong career in education” (p. 306). Peske et al. noted that their teachers “anticipated wanting variety, new challenges, and different roles and responsibilities as their careers progressed” (p 306), and this is clearly echoed by the teachers in this study. What is striking is the diversity of trajectories, opportunities and job roles that they saw as constituting a teaching career.

One distinction between the teachers pursuing horizontal and/or diagonal A trajectories and those teachers seeking diagonal B and/or vertical trajectories was their emphasis on more internal or external dimensions of their career, or “how promotion minded they were” (MacLean, 1992, p. 209). Both Draper et al. (1998) and MacLean’s (1992) analysis of promotion patterns suggests that secondary teachers are more inclined towards promotion than their primary colleagues and that male teachers are more likely to seek promotions than female teachers. Considering the seven teachers who were “promotion-minded” in this study (diagonal B, and vertical trajectories), there were more secondary (five) than primary (two) and slightly more male (four) than female (three) teachers. This seems to bear out the existing research into promotional patterns. Several primary teachers (E.g. Belinda, Joanne, Claire, Tanya, Amy, Colleen)
re-iterated that they were not interested in formal promotion positions as Assistant Principals, largely because the hybrid nature of the role brings demanding additional responsibilities on top of a substantial teaching load. Existing research suggests that the Assistant Principal role is both crucial and complex, and may be hard to attract recruits to (Hausman, Nebeke, McCreary, & Donaldson Jr, 2002; Oleszewsk, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012; Petrides, Jimes, & Karaglani, 2014). The gender distinction evident in this study is representative of the Australian teaching workforce more generally. Females make up 80.9% of primary teachers, but just 65.5% of primary leaders. Females make up 58.4% of secondary teachers, but just 48.2% of secondary leaders (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 27). The second-stage teachers in this study did not appear to be challenging these gender norms in their aspirations for leadership roles.

Margolis (2008) has identified the ways in which second-stage teachers seek out roles that can be either “regenerative” (keeping them enthused about their teaching) and/or “generative” (widening their scope of professional influence). This can be seen in many of the teachers in this study. Teachers seeking horizontal and diagonal A trajectories were keen on “regenerative” (interesting) roles that kept them enthused about teaching. For example, Jacqueline wanted to be a literacy leader with K-2 students and to take on roles that would help with “fine tuning what I already know so that it can be used to sort of help other teachers develop their craft”. The inability to access these roles can have negative implications. For example, Michelle described the kind of role she wanted as, “I want to be more active. I just don’t want to be a passive school teacher. I’d like to be more involved”. Unable to find a role like this that was both part-time and secure, Michelle was planning to ultimately leave teaching. Teachers seeking diagonal B, diagonal C and vertical trajectories teachers were keen on “generative” (influential) roles. For example, Karyn aimed “to be influential in some way in the drama field”, Marcus wanted to work with beginning teachers because “you can initiate more change by talking to these treasure, these little new teachers, than you can necessarily in a structure” and Alison wanted to become a Head Teacher so she could “have an influence on more classrooms than just your own”. This study provides strong evidence that second-stage teachers are indeed seeking both generative and/or regenerative roles.

Concern has also been expressed that ‘differentiated’ roles (diagonal A trajectories) may become ‘stepping stones’ that ultimately lead teachers out of the classroom altogether (J. H. Berg et al., 2005). At the time of interview, six teachers held differentiated roles, and all of these teachers reported a high degree of satisfaction with
their current roles. Cameron even credits his role as keeping him in teaching

*I don't think I'd be teaching now if I was still in a kindergarten class. I don't think I could do it . . . [in my differentiated role] there's so much flexibility. I've admin time that I can juggle around. I don't feel confined to a particular space.*

However, only Tanya and Jacqueline wanted to continue in these roles. The other four all saw them as stepping-stones into either vertical or diagonal C trajectories. When teachers move into these roles, does this mean that classrooms are inevitably ‘poorer’ for having lost these practitioners, or are schools and school systems ‘richer’ for having gained expertise in new areas? The move into diagonal C roles, either within school systems (e.g., staff development, administration, beginning teacher support) or outside of school systems (e.g., tertiary education, curriculum development, educational software development) has been labelled as “shifting” (Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Quartz et al., 2008). Whereas Rippon (2005) is optimistic that these career trajectories have the potential to re-define and re-new the modern teaching career, Quartz et al. are more cautious and fear that shifting could be “a form of sanctioned attrition” (p. 245). The dilemma is whether these breadth, education-focused teachers are a net asset to the education sector as a whole, or an undesirable loss for students.

The experiences and motivations of the four teachers in this study who identified their plans to exit teaching within the next few years are also reflected in the extant literature. Existing studies show that some teachers enter teaching with the intention of having a relatively short teaching career (Donaldson et al., 2008; Peske et al., 2001). Watt and Richardson (2008) identified the phenomenon of people making teaching their “five year plan”, by which time they anticipated being ready to move on. In the present study, this can be seen in Amy’s reflection that “I never thought that it [teaching] would be forever. I just thought, oh, you know, that would be a kind of good job, I think I'd like it”. Similarly, Belinda was preparing to take twelve months off to pursue other interests outside of school. Casual or part-time teaching roles were appealing if she could combine them with other pursuits because, “I've just got a lot of outside interests at the moment so, yeah, there's that kind of tension”. Both Belinda and Amy were being “pulled” out of teaching by the lure of interests beyond the classroom.

The literature also suggests that many teachers plan to make a longer-term contribution to teaching, but may be “pushed” out when their schools fail to offer the support or conditions they feel are necessary for them to stay (Donaldson, 2005; S. M. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). In the present study, this can be seen in Nicholas’ regret
over leaving teaching due to the relatively low salary, “I do love it. I wish I could teach for the rest of my life. I just think, if I want to be the next level, have a family, financially it wouldn’t be enough to support the type of lifestyle [I want]” and also because of his dissatisfaction within his current school and especially his disappointing experience of taking on a leadership role. Australian research has shown that salary can be a key reason why some choose to leave teaching (Australian Education Union, 2009; Buchanan, 2010). Other research has shown that the main factor driving teachers to either shift schools or leave was their perceived ability to be effective teachers for their students (S. M. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Teachers were influenced by how much their school working conditions “either supported or stymied them in that search for success” (p. 583). Nicholas was frustrated that he couldn’t get new resources for his students or take them on the kinds of excursions he wanted to. Officious restrictions such as students being banned from playing soccer on the oval during their lunch break further frustrated him, leading him to engage in the ‘forbidden’ games with his students in defiance. Michelle was also planning to leave because she couldn’t find a secure and satisfying part-time role. This led her to consider other options outside of teaching:

*I haven’t really got, you know, a job that’s really engaging me at the moment. So, I’m kind of like going, oh, I need something. I’ve got the itch . . . I can’t just teach, teach, teach. I get bored. There’s got to be something bigger than that. More holistic.*

Ingersoll (2003) found that, after salary, school climate has the most significant effect on teacher attrition. This includes “lack of support from the school administration . . . and lack of influence over decision-making” (p. 16). Similarly, Wynn et al. (2007) found that teachers who left were often seeking work environments in which “they could feel like professionals” (p. 212). Michelle identified that she was leaving because she could not find secure, part-time work and did not have a strong connection with a school, describing her role as a “gap filler”. Thus the experiences of the teachers within this study who were considering leaving teaching have been well documented within the existing literature.

What is perhaps surprising is the relatively small numbers (four out of twenty-four participants) within this study who were intending to leave. The relatively low rates of teachers planning to exit teaching in my sample do not reflect current Australian data on teacher attrition. Riley and Gallant (2010) have estimated that approximately 40% leave within their first five years. Skilbeck and Connell (2003) found that 30% of qualified Australian teachers are employed in occupations outside of teaching (p. 23).
McKenzie et al. (2014) have identified that only approximately half of all current teachers plan to make teaching their lifelong career (p. 207). The low numbers of those actively planning to leave teaching altogether in this study may reflect the way in which the sample was recruited, as interviewees who voluntarily attend a free, voluntary professional learning opportunity (the TeachMeet) are perhaps more likely to be committed to their teaching careers than those who do not attend such events. New Scheme teachers who have already left teaching have, by definition, already been excluded from this study. On the other hand, only twelve of the twenty-four teachers in this study reported planning to remain in classroom teaching. The rest planned to either become principals (four), work in education more broadly outside of schools (four) or to exit altogether (four). This is, of course, a discussion of intentions; therefore the actual numbers will potentially by different. From this perspective, this sample is fairly representative of the Australian trends in teacher retention, but suggests that the notion of ‘exiting’ is more complex than often assumed in the literature and policy documents.

Finally, the strongest resonances with this study come from the literature that has presented new ways of conceptualising career trajectories for teachers. In particular, Smethem’s (2007) distinction between three broad categories of teachers has strong parallels with this study. Smethem described the category of “classroom teachers” being those who preferred to remain in the classroom. The teachers described in this study as pursuing horizontal, diagonal A or a diagonal B trajectory provides three possible trajectories within this depth/classroom-focused approach to teaching. Smethem further describes “career teachers” as those committed to teaching as a career and ambitious for promotion. This obviously includes the teachers in my study who wanted to pursue a vertical trajectory to the Principalship, but it could also describe those on the diagonal B trajectory who were seeking Head Teacher/Assistant Principal/Coordinator roles. Whilst these are promotional roles, teachers who sought these were very clear on their desire to remain close to the classroom and engaged with students. Smethem’s final category of “portfolio teachers” who saw teaching as a temporary career and one of many within their work ‘portfolio’ draws parallels with the four teachers in my study who planned to exit teaching in the short term. This current study provides evidence of the need to highlight the complex ways in which teachers envision their career, as diversely occurring within classrooms, within schools or within education systems more broadly. These distinctions provides a key way of understanding the different trajectories second-stage teachers hope to pursue.
Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented two significant findings from Strand C of this study and discussed these findings in relation to the broader literature. This chapter has sought to address the career trajectories of second-stage teachers in NSW by answering the third research sub-question: How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of a ‘career trajectory’? The analysis presented in this chapter has shown that there is great diversity in the ways in which second-stage teachers both come to have teaching careers and plan to continue, modify or conclude their careers. Second-stage teachers make sense of their careers within their broader work and life histories. In considering their career pasts, the data suggests that there are four pathways by which second-stage teachers enter teaching: teaching as a ‘career destiny’ that they planned to pursue, teaching as a ‘career direction’ that provides a clear occupational pathway, teaching as an ‘accidental career’ that was unintentionally entered into, and teaching as a ‘family career’, chosen for its perceived ability to be combined with family responsibilities.

Further, second-stage teachers’ careers are evolving journeys. Having overcome the ‘survival’ concerns of beginning teachers, second-stage teachers have both the intellectual space and available time within which to reflect on their future career choices and plans. There are three main ways in which teachers envision their career futures, leading to six possible trajectories: depth/classroom-focused teachers (horizontal, diagonal A and diagonal B trajectories); breadth/education-focused teachers (diagonal C and vertical trajectories); and transient/short-term teachers (exit trajectory). These findings provide further evidence for the assertion that “‘stayers’ and ‘leavers’ are not homogeneous groups, as is sometimes assumed in research and policy. Rather, there are multiple variations of practice-coupled-with-career decisions” (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012, p. 844). They provide an insight into the complexity and diversity of contemporary second-stage teachers’ career patterns.

The next chapter will display and discuss the remaining findings generated from the interview data in Strand C of this study, with a focus on second-stage teachers’ career cultures.
Chapter Six: Career cultures

This chapter will present the remainder of the findings generated from the interview data in strand C of this study. Chapter six considers the career cultures within which second-stage teachers work, and particularly the cultures evident within the current NSW context. This chapter is divided into three parts:

- Part One: Interview finding three – Career as membership of a group
- Part Two: Interview finding four – Career as engagement with policy and structure
- Part Three. Discussion C: Second-stage teachers’ career cultures

Taken together, these three parts combine in an effort to answer the fourth research sub-questions: How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’? Parts one and two will present in-depth interview findings, including ‘teacher profiles’ of participants and relevant excerpts from interview transcripts. Part three will discuss the findings and make connections to the literature and theories outlined earlier in the thesis and then draw some preliminary conclusions.

Part One: Interview finding three – Career as membership of a professional group

Part one of this chapter presents the third major finding generated from the interview data. This finding is based on teachers’ interview responses relating to the concept of teaching as a profession. This was considered an important next step in connecting teachers’ perceptions of their careers with the focus on teacher professionalism evident in recent policy documents. A core aspect of this finding is that having a teaching career involved joining a broader collective of teachers. For some, this was interpreted as being part of the ‘teaching profession’. For others, this was conceptualised more broadly in terms of working with those who shared their vocational passion. For others still, this involved seeing teaching as a job or occupation, but not necessarily a profession. Teachers reflected on the question ‘what does being a professional teacher mean to you?’ Interestingly, many teachers did not seem to have a strong sense of affinity with the identity of being a professional and found the topic quite difficult to discuss. Teachers were then asked whether or not they considered teaching to be a profession. Their responses fell into three categories:

- Yes – teaching is a profession
- Becoming – teaching is undergoing substantial changes and transitioning into a profession
- No – teaching is simply a job or occupation

Teachers also reflected on the ways in which they perceived teaching to be substantially different to other professions.

Table 6.1 below shows some of the characteristics of the teachers in this study and how they fit into each of these three categories (profession, becoming or job). Beneath it, table 6.2 classifies teachers on two dimensions: their beliefs about teaching as a profession and their intention to remain in teaching. Teachers were classified as either those who intend to remain in classroom teaching (Stay Teaching), those who intend to remain in education more broadly but not in classroom teaching roles (Stay Education) and those who intend to exit teaching within the next few years (Exit Teaching). One interesting feature to note here is that all of the participants who considered teaching to be a job/occupation had held other jobs prior to entering teaching, whilst the majority of those who considered teaching to be a profession had never worked outside of schools. Further, all four of the teachers who identified that they planned to leave teaching also believed that teaching was a job/occupation rather than a profession.

Table 6.1. Summary of teachers’ beliefs about teaching as a profession compared with their future career intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Becoming a profession</th>
<th>Job/Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stay Teaching</td>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Tristan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 12</td>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Joanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alison</td>
<td></td>
<td>James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacqueline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephanie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay Education</td>
<td>Kaitlyn</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Amy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 8</td>
<td>Karyn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Belinda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louise</td>
<td></td>
<td>Michelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nicholas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.2. Summary of teachers’ beliefs about teaching as a profession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Teaching qual</th>
<th>Prior career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlyn</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karyn</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracey</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacqueline</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEACHING IS BECOMING A PROFESSION (N=5)

| Cameron    | Male   | 30-39 | Primary  | Government | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Marcus     | Male   | 30–39 | Primary  | Government | Postgraduate  | No           |
| Megan      | Female | 40-49 | Primary  | Independent | Undergraduate | No           |
| Elizabeth  | Female | 30-39 | Secondary | Independent | Postgraduate  | No           |
| Fiona      | Female | 40-49 | Secondary | Catholic    | Postgraduate  | Yes          |

NO, TEACHING IS A JOB/OCCUPATION (N=8)

| Belinda    | Female | 30-39 | Primary  | Government | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Amy        | Female | 20-29 | Primary  | Government | Undergraduate | Yes          |
| Michelle   | Female | 30-39 | Secondary | Catholic    | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Nicholas   | Male   | 30-39 | Secondary | Catholic    | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Tristan    | Male   | 30-39 | Secondary | Independent | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Tanya      | Female | 40-49 | Primary  | Government | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| Joanne     | Female | 30-39 | Primary  | Government | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
| James      | Male   | 30-39 | Secondary | Government | Postgraduate  | Yes          |
What is a professional teacher?

Teachers were asked ‘what does being a professional teacher mean to you?’ Many appeared to find this challenging, with the two most common responses being ‘I don’t know’ and ‘that’s a hard question’. Teachers focused on relatively superficial attributes, such as appearance:

“A professional teacher dresses smartly.” (Tracey)

“It is a hard question, actually. Wearing a tie to work, I guess.” (Nicholas)

“Looking nice; wearing your name badge.” (Fiona)

There were also many comments comparing teaching to other professions, such as:

A professional teacher for myself starts with the way you appear. I think it's important that you dress like a professional. You think of lawyers, you think of solicitors, you think of all those people that are seen as professional people. (David)

Other surface-level of descriptions focused around teachers’ organisational skills, including “being on time to class”, “turning up to every meeting” and “being prepared”. There was a focus on “keeping all your paperwork up to date” and a belief that “professional also means paperwork”.

The remainder of the teachers’ comments fell into two categories. The first category included key qualities of individual teachers, identified as: passion, hard work, accountability and involvement. Passion was seen as essential, “[if] you want to be a professional something, you’ve got to be passionate about it.” Being a passionate teacher was also interpreted as “taking your job seriously”, “having an investment in what you do” and being “someone who’s incredibly committed”. Professional teachers were universally described being “a hard worker” and being “prepared to work”. The phrase “you do your best” was often repeated. Several comments also focused on “being accountable” and “doing your job to a high standard”. A professional teacher was characterised as someone who was engaged beyond the classroom:

“A professional teacher doesn’t just do the mundane things in the room. They think outside the square. They go, how can I improve the whole school?” (David)

The second category centred on the specific knowledge and skills needed to be a professional teacher, identified as: building positive student relationships, working collegially, having appropriate content knowledge, and engaging in continual learning. There was an emphasis on “making sure your kids are learning and happy” and
“treating children with kindness and care”. The other aspect here was the importance of “establishing boundaries, so you're not a friend, you're a teacher”. A professional teacher was described as someone who was “willing to share their knowledge and their skills, not only with the students but also with their colleagues.” This extended to “working with others and learning from them”, as well as “being able to have professional conversations, constructive criticism”. Professional teachers also “have to know their content.” This was interpreted as “knowing where you’re going, knowing the curriculum”. There was also a broader emphasis on the importance of “being qualified” and “being trained and knowledgeable in what you’re teaching”. Finally, almost every teacher discussed the importance of “engaging in professional learning to develop your skills” and “always up-skilling yourself, always being current”. Cameron connected professionalism with ongoing learning, “as a professional, it takes on the lifelong aspect of it. So my role as a teacher is to constantly look at improving.”

On the whole, teachers did not appear to feel a strong sense of ownership over or connection to the word ‘professional’. Several teachers (e.g., Belinda, Tristan, James) articulated that this was “not important” to them. Even those teachers who felt it was important held ideas dominated by concerns of process and appearance, “It means you have to almost have a business focus not a family day care focus . . . If a parent calls, treat them like a client in a sense, as opposed to a casual, happy hanging out sort of situation” (Elizabeth).

Teaching as membership of a profession.

Eleven teachers in this study articulated that they felt teaching was a profession. For some, this was a simple confident statement “yes, absolutely it is” or “yes, I definitely think so.” Kaitlyn felt that teachers “make do a lot, so we don't always have the provisions to make us look like professionals.” Louise articulated that she had “always” felt that teaching was a profession, but that it lacked the accountability of other professions, “there's rarely the teacher that would get fired for poor performance. In every other industry everywhere, if you don't perform, there are consequences for that. There doesn't seem to be that so much in teaching.” One frequently repeated belief was that teachers’ perceptions of the profession differed from wider community perceptions, “in my eyes it is, yes. I'm not sure about the broader public”. Anthony felt that teaching was a profession, but lamented the fact that others in his community saw him as “just a teacher” and that teaching was considered to be “definitely bottom of the list” of desirable careers:
Personally I think it is [a profession]. This community here don't think it is . . . The kids, they ask what I got for my UAI [University Admission Index]. Then when I tell them they say, what are you a teacher for?

This suggests that teachers’ own views on teaching as a profession are challenged by the tension between their personal views and those of their surrounding communities.

**Teacher profile: Colleen.**

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Colleen was the most experienced teacher in this study. She started her teaching career in NSW in the 1980s, followed by more than a decade teaching overseas in Australian International schools in Hong Kong and Singapore. Upon returning to Sydney in 2011, she was registered as a ‘New Scheme’ teacher because of her time away from NSW, and this was a source of great vexation for her. Colleen was confident that teaching was a profession:

*Is it [professional] just a sort of emotional adjective that you stick before teacher? Or, what's a professional really mean? I mean, you do your best . . . I wouldn't think of myself or anyone I teach with as anything else but professional.*

Colleen lamented the fact that teachers are “still sometimes just seen as caregivers”, reflected in this comment about parent-teacher interviews:

*If you're running a little bit over-time, some parents just think that that's dreadful. Yet, they wouldn't think twice about waiting for half an hour in a doctor's surgery because they were running over time.*

Again, there is this divide between teachers perceiving themselves as professionals and the public sharing this view.
### Teacher profile: Stephanie.

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<tr>
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Stephanie was confident that teaching was “definitely” a profession. She identified two main reasons for this. Firstly, teachers’ engagement with professional development and striving for improvement were seen as key markers of professionalism. Secondly, teachers were professionals because of their place within community life:

*We are seen in the community as professionals. We need to be aware of what we do in the community as well and how we are seen to other people and parents. We’re always kind of on, you know? There’s no time when, you know, we’re always looked at as having to be on our best behaviour and being professional.*

In this way, teachers were considered as community role models whose conduct in public was always under scrutiny. Stephanie offered these suggestions with ease, suggesting that she hadn’t necessarily questioned this notion of teaching as a profession before. Stephanie’s perceptions were perhaps a reflection of her location in a small regional town where she felt that education was valued and the local school was a focal point of the community.

### Teaching in transition: becoming a profession.

Five teachers felt that teaching was undergoing substantial changes towards becoming a profession, or at least had the potential to become one. These changes were linked to the introduction of the New Scheme system and the gradual retirement of an older generation of teachers. Elizabeth felt that classroom teachers were often considered less professional than their school leader colleagues, “as you move through the ranks as in head of department or a deputy principal, you’re more considered a professional, as opposed to just a teacher.” Reflecting on her previous work life before making the mid-career switch to teaching in her 40s, Fiona noted that, “professionalism is an
anomaly for a number of people who are twenty-year plus career teaching teachers.” Cameron lamented that the New Scheme system was more relevant for many of the older teachers who were not part of it, “these are standards and expectations that so many teachers that have been doing it for twenty, thirty years just do not grasp what professional actually means in the current day.” These teachers felt that teaching would thus not be a profession until all teachers had to abide by the same standards and procedures.

Teacher profile: Marcus.

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<td>Age</td>
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After six years of teaching, Marcus re-trained as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. He was motivated to take on this role by both the guarantee of a permanent position and the differentiated nature of the role (working across the whole school without the constraints of having his own class). When asked whether teaching was a profession, Marcus definitively stated, “no, I don’t feel it is”, identifying three reasons. Firstly, the lack of connection between quality and salary, “I do find it disturbing that you can be an average or less than average educator and still . . . get [paid] the same.” Secondly, he felt that teaching was not “esteemed” the same as other professions. Thirdly, he cited a feeling that teachers are not “given enough professional autonomy . . . I think the school structure doesn't necessarily allow you to be that professional.” Marcus was optimistic that New Scheme system would help to professionalise teaching, but felt that there needed to be significant changes, “I sort of use the term revolution. I don't know if that's the right word, but I think there needs to be some sort of fundamental changes.”
**Teacher profile: Megan.**

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Megan migrated to Australia after a more than decade of teaching in New Zealand and the UK. She was registered as a ‘New Scheme’ teacher because her experience was outside of NSW. Megan reflected on her “belittling” experience trying to get a job with the NSWDEC:

> I went to the DEC and they went, well, it doesn't matter that you've had fifteen years’ experience and you've been an acting principal . . . You'll go on a list and you might get a job one day . . . Two years later, they rang me from the casual list. And I said, well, I'm really glad that I found my own job, because I would've starved by now!

Megan is currently the Head of the Junior School in a large K-12 elite independent school. She described three reasons why teaching was not yet a profession. Firstly, “teacher training is not rigorous enough”, particularly because it seems “impossible to fail”. Secondly, “I think our pay is not professional” compared to other professions. Thirdly, Megan felt that the unprofessional conduct of some teachers tarnished the whole profession, and that “a lot of women take it on because they know that it's good hours and school holidays.” Systemic changes regarding entry to the profession and salary progression were necessary for teaching to become a profession.

**Teaching as a job or occupation.**

Eight teachers in this study considered teaching to be a job or occupation rather than a profession. Joanne felt that teachers were ubiquitous and “just one of those community jobs that has to happen”. Nicholas bluntly observed that teachers have “become glorified baby sitters”. For Tristan, professional was “just a word” and he had did not identify with it: “it depends what you perceive by that label [professional]. I mean it's a
Reflecting on his role as a senior secondary teacher in an elite independent school, Tristan felt that the diversity of the teaching workforce made it difficult to consider all teachers as equal professionals, “teaching here is very different from primary teaching, from teaching in lots of other schools. The job is not the same”. Michelle reflected that, “I don't see myself as much of a professional” because working in a temporary, part-time role, “I can't be. There's no room for me to be a professional and a gap-filler in the week.” Amy echoed this comment:

I think there are people that are doing it who aren't very professional and probably don't see it that way, people that may just be focused on the convenience factor or, you know, this is just what I fell into.

An external orientation towards the needs of others also contributed to the reluctance of teachers to consider themselves as professionals, “it's not about yourself, it's about what you can do for the kids”.

Teacher profile: Belinda.

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Belinda described teaching as “unique” and as having “a lot of differences to a lot of other kinds of professions” because it is “a job where, you know, you can always do more”. This led her to consider teaching as a job rather than a profession, “I'm not overly concerned with being seen as a professional . . . I'm just enjoying my job and trying to be the best I can at it.” Belinda described herself as content with her work, having “learnt to draw the line and say, ok, you know, I've done enough now”. She also was confident that she could balance her teaching commitments with other interests, “I'm really happy with my work/life balance and I don't want to be putting any more time into teaching. I'd rather be spending my other time doing other enjoyable things”. Belinda re-iterated several times that she had “no aspirations” to take on additional roles, “it's just a time thing. I mean, as a teacher now I can always just draw the line
wherever I want to and stop working”. This mindset was evident in Belinda’s plans to take leave without pay for the following year to pursue personal goals including yoga instructor training and travel.

**Teacher profile: James.**

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James made the career switch into teaching after fifteen years working in IT, initially because he could not find work in the IT field whilst living in a regional town, and later because he wanted to “be valued by the community” and to “do something more human”. James considered the lack of males in teaching as a strong indicator that teaching was not highly valued. He was reluctant to classify teaching as a profession:

*Do I see it as much of a profession? I don't know . . . I don't think that the community’s attitude is that teaching is that much of a profession. It's really what you do after you've had babies and if you got a job for something to do when your kid's gone to school.*

James felt that he would “probably” stay in teaching, but noted that, “my goal isn't actually to take my career somewhere”. Teaching also offered a high degree of convenience:

*I see a lot of people who find somewhere they like and stay there. So, yeah, they like the school. They feel comfortable. They've got their routine . . . It's very easy, so I think that's a big attraction for a lot of people. And, you know, I'm, there's a big part of me that's very lazy as well and, you know, that was probably part of my decision about teaching.*
How is teaching different to other professions?

For many teachers, the reluctance to label teaching as a profession stemmed from a belief that teaching is significantly different to other professions. Three themes were evident here. Firstly, many considered teaching to be a vocation or calling that you pursued because you were either especially suited to it or you felt it was your life’s purpose:

“It’s a bit of a vocation, it’s a bit for the love of it . . . I think there is a kind of a magic element to teaching . . . you really have to have a bit of an intuition for teaching that probably can’t be taught. (Alison)

The vocational element was also reflected in the fact that teaching was considered to be a “very consuming” enterprise that allowed for “no life outside of school”. For example, Stephanie commented that, “I don’t think there’s ever a balance . . . teaching kind of consumes your life outside of work.” These comments were further extended by those teachers who felt that teaching was “a whole lifestyle” or “the main focus of my life”. Anthony commented that, “my life definitely revolves around my job and that’s not bad . . . a big part of it is embracing that as part of my life. It’s a vocation”.

Secondly, pre-service education was not highly valued amongst this group of teachers. Whilst tertiary qualifications in other professions were considered to be rigorous, demanding and valuable, a teaching qualification was considered to be easy to acquire and of little practical use. Five teachers in this study had completed accelerated pre-service programs within a year, and commented on the inadequacies of this process. Marcus felt that he was “just pushed through really quickly” and Cameron lamented the impractical nature of his course, “there’s a very limited exposure to the syllabus and there’s very limited exposure to actually learning what you are going to teach.” Teachers felt that their pre-service education was quite disconnected from their actual teaching careers. A common opinion was that you learned to teach “on the job” once you had finished studying, “I think I learnt most about teaching in, you know, the first term of teaching that I did.” These perceptions were common amongst both teachers who had done accelerated courses and those with more extended pre-service preparation.

Finally, the disconnection between prior work experience and school also made teaching different to other professions. Nine teachers in this study came to teaching as mature age entrants after working in other industries. Whilst their qualifications were valuable (especially in secondary schools), these teachers expressed strong
disappointment that their “real world” experience was not recognised. James’ comment highlights the frustration of being unable to have his extensive skill set recognised:

*Everywhere else I've been, it's easier to integrate into a workplace and for people to recognise the skills that you've got . . . There's no way of putting that information into the DEC because it doesn't tick the boxes.*

Thirteen teachers in this study had gone from school to university and back to school. This was considered a disadvantage by many of the teachers who had entered teaching later in life. Some teachers expressed strong views that this pathway into teaching was “ridiculous” and that teaching should only have a post-graduate entry option with compulsory “real world” work experience before entering teaching:

*The best teachers are the ones who've done something else because they're bringing to you another experience . . . They know that there's a world outside that works differently and they train the kids better for the life ahead.* (Tanya)

Teaching was seen as isolated from the ‘real world’ of work and industry on two levels – for those career-switch teachers who felt their prior work experience was not valued, and for those teachers who had never worked outside of the classroom. A teaching career was thus seen as disconnected from other careers.

**Section summary.**

This section has presented the argument that second-stage teachers have complex relationships with their identity as ‘professionals’. For many, articulating what they believed a professional teacher to be was very challenging. All teachers perceive themselves as part of the larger collective of teachers. For some, this was considered as being part of a ‘profession’, whilst for others teaching was simply a job. For others still, the substantial changes underway mean that teaching was in a state of transition, as it became a profession. The perceived substantial differences between teaching and other professions created further barriers to teaching being considered a ‘true’ profession. A discussion of these findings will be presented later in this chapter.

**Part two: Interview finding four – Career as engagement with policy and structure**

Part two of this chapter presents the final major findings generated from the interview data. This section is based on teachers’ interview responses that relate specifically to the New Scheme teacher system in NSW. The teachers in this study are part of a
unique cohort because they are within the first generation of teachers for whom teaching Standards and accreditation processes have been a compulsory part of working life. Except for Megan and Colleen (who had taught extensively overseas), they had never known a teaching career without these features. The interview responses outlined below can only represent one perspective on the situation, as the comparative views of their ‘Old Scheme’ colleagues are not part of this study. Second-stage teachers’ views will be outlined in the relation to the following six areas:

- Professional Standards for Teachers
- Undergoing the accreditation process
- Maintaining accredited status
- Navigating the new organisations (NSWIT and AITSL)
- Stratification of the profession (New Scheme and Old Scheme)
- Raising the status of teaching

Professional Standards for Teachers.
The teachers in this study were first asked to consider the Standards themselves. i.e., the NSWIT document based upon which teachers are accredited. These teachers were originally accredited under the ‘Professional Teaching Standards’ (NSWIT, 2004), and most were aware that this had since been superseded by the ‘NSWIT National Professional Standards for Teachers’ (NSWIT, 2012), which are based directly on the ‘Australian Professional Standards for Teachers’ (AITSL, 2011). Second-stage teachers were broadly supportive of the Standards, with many considering them to be a benchmark in making explicit their roles and responsibilities. The document was described as a “guide”, with an emphasis on normative notions of what teachers “should” be doing: “I think they’re a really good guide for what you should be doing and even what you should be thinking about or working towards.” Teachers accepted the need for and value in having explicitly written Standards, describing the document as “important”, “worthwhile” and “necessary”. Many also suggested that the Standards were most useful for beginning teachers, providing a “direction” and “something concrete to refer to” during the uncertain and challenging first phase of teaching. Second-stage teachers also felt that there were important limitations to the Standards. Many felt that the standards were too long and verbose, which detracted from their functionality as a tool for teachers. Megan described them as, “Too wordy. Too much. It’s got to be practical. If they’re wanting us to actually assess where we’re at and things, it needs to be tangible. It needs to be concrete.” The Standards were also felt to have significant gaps, especially where they over-emphasised teaching’s technical
dimensions whilst minimising its relational aspects:

I think it's just the bare basics of being in the classroom. I don't think it deals with your pastoral care, your interaction in the playground. That's the thing, the relationships and the rapport side of it . . . There's nothing about the human side. It's all about the mechanical side. (Elizabeth)

Alison felt that the Standards reduced teaching “into a tick box kind of list”, and this again over-looked many of the core aspects of teaching. Tanya thus felt that the Standards were “kind of just words, really . . . Lots of words that they like you to use, buzz words”.

Perhaps most importantly of all, the majority of teachers felt that implementation of the Standards had failed to bring about change because they don’t actually use them in their regular planning or practice:

It was really nice to actually stop and look at my lessons and my programs . . . And then, of course, we all just went back to work, you know? So that’s the problem. (Michelle)
My thoughts are that they [the Standards] are very nice when you’re sitting in some office, but that no one who’s actually teaching is probably giving much of a s**t about it when they are in the classroom. (Tristan)
I don’t know anyone who uses them to reference what they should do . . . I don’t know anyone who doesn’t see them just as a process to go through, to fill in boxes, tick the boxes. (James)

Whilst having the written document is seen as an important means for teachers to define their practice, the fact that teachers don’t actually use the Standards reflects the missed the opportunity to embed their use as a tool for enhancing the profession.

**Undergoing the accreditation process.**

The process of undergoing accreditation was considered to be a great opportunity to connect beginning teachers with their more experienced colleagues, “It helped me . . . to have those conversations with supervisors and experienced teachers . . . when there’s something you have to do, they’re a bit more lenient in giving you some of their time”. Many teachers felt that, without this compulsory requirement, beginning teachers would struggle to receive the necessary guidance, “it [accreditation] ensures that they are mentored in some way. If you didn’t have it, they wouldn’t be mentored.” Accreditation thus creates a legitimate space within which new teachers can seek support.
The overwhelming view of teachers about the process of accreditation was that it was a burden, evident in their use of terms such as “pressure”, “stress”, “annoying”, “cumbersome”, “a chore”, “onerous” and “a pain”. Rather than opportunity to learn or reflect, accreditation was simply a burdensome experience that had to be endured. Many teachers described how they had received little or no actual mentoring throughout the accreditation process. Jacqueline recalled how she and her fellow new scheme colleagues “were teaching the mentors what they needed to do as we were going through the process”, whilst Stephanie felt that “we were the ones kind of guiding them . . . the supervising teachers don't know as much as the people that are doing it.” Alison described her accreditation experience as “the blind leading the blind”. She also opened up the issue of the divide between old and new scheme teachers, a theme that often recurred:

I know there's a lot of teachers who are older and particularly head of departments, who just don't have any idea and don't really care. They don't have to do it, so they treat it with a probably unhealthy amount of skepticism.

(Alison)

Mentoring through the accreditation process was thus inefficient, with New Scheme teachers typically knowing more about the system than their mentors.

Despite their desire to be active participants of the system, second-stage teachers felt let down by the low expectations and lack of rigour in the accreditation process:

As long as they're not going to just approve any old thing that comes though. If it's just going to be you submit it and you're guaranteed it's done, then that's not going to help. (Tanya)

I think you could be the most incompetent teacher in the world and still cherry-pick enough decent examples to pass that. (Tristan)

The general perception was that “anyone who went for it got it”. As a minimum threshold, accreditation was considered to be a low barrier to cross. Ultimately, teachers disappointing experiences of the process have led many to write it off as simply another bureaucratic ‘box ticking’ expectation. Cameron described accreditation as “a joke”, reflecting that “you can just knock it over in a couple of days . . . no one’s every going to look at it ever again”. There was a sense of regret amongst some teachers that accreditation should involve a robust process, “it was just something that I had to do and you get on with it. And it shouldn't be like that. It should be tougher . . . It's a shame it's not better.” Claire summarised this view with her perception that accreditation was “just a pesky piece of paperwork” and that she could not see any benefit in going through the process, “it's seen as just this pesky little thing that we've
got to do, not like a career, like not a good thing, not a beneficial thing.”

Maintaining accredited status.

Similarly, despite optimism for the idea of a maintenance process for professional learning, teachers overwhelmingly described the current online system for logging hours as being difficult and cumbersome to use. Teachers were concerned about the expense of participating in the mandatory hours of professional learning and the impact this had on the school budget. Once they had done the minimum requisite hours, teachers also felt a disincentive to do further learning:

I do feel that there’s a financial burden on the school to pay for me to get hours and that now that I’ve got my hours, no more professional learning for me for a little while . . . It’s needs based on your accreditation hours, not what the school needs. (Kaitlyn)

Casual and temporary teachers found the maintenance process particularly constraining because the onus was on them to find and pay for their own learning, “how does a casual or a temp ever get seventy hours because no one’s going to pay for me to go to anything? So I can’t do it.” Several teachers had not logged any of their maintenance hours because they simply did not know how to do it, “I also don’t know how to maintain it, like I don’t think that’s ever been clearly shown. It’s all still a bit hit and miss and I don’t know what’s going on with it.” Elizabeth recalled how she had to find out about the maintenance process entirely by herself, even to the point where her (Independent) school told her she didn’t have to do it:

I was at conferences and they'd say, right, make sure you do your evaluation online and then this will be accredited hours. And I thought, what evaluation online? . . . And I kept going to the school saying, look at what I’ve got to do. Look at what I’ve got to do! And they’re like, you don’t have to do that. That’s a lot of work. You don’t have to do that.”

Ultimately, the maintenance process, much like accreditation, was perceived as lacking rigour and offering no real value to teachers.

I think that to get us to evaluate every PD we go to, I mean, I'll end up writing two lines. I know that no one actually looks at it. So, why are you getting me to do something that you're actually not going to monitor? (Megan)

Teachers felt that whatever they wrote on their maintenance report was not read closely by anyone, so could not see a point in investing time and effort in doing a good job. This frustration compounded the disappointment that teachers felt about accreditation.
Navigating the new organisations (NSWIT and AITSL).

The New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) was the main organisational body for these teachers to engage with. Many teachers took the interview as an opportunity to ‘vent’ their stories of frustration in trying to contact the Institute:

*Whenever I called them to ask information, they didn't know what to do.*

(James)

*Their website is the worst! It's so hard to navigate. It doesn't make sense. It's hard to get answers.*

(Amy)

*Even when I've rung and dealt with them, they don't email you back.*

(Megan)

These front-line interactions ultimately shaped how teachers perceived this new organisation that was meant to enhance the status of the profession. Karyn recounted a story of accidentally submitting her NSWIT maintenance report online before it was complete. She was disappointed that she still passed this regardless of this because it was obvious that no one had read her work. Michelle best summed up this frustration: “there’s these great policies, there’s these great ideas, but then what? There’s a joke. The teacher’s Institute is a fax machine and a receptionist, you know, and a nice magazine.”

These comments contrasted sharply with teachers’ views on the newer Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Teachers’ views of AITSL fell into three broad categories. Firstly, twelve of the twenty-four teachers in this study had never heard of AITSL:

*No, I've never even heard of that acronym . . . I've never heard of it. I've never seen the website.*

(Belinda)

*Never seen it. Never been on the site. Don't know a thing about it and school never talks about it.*

(Elizabeth)

*So, this is an institute? 'Cos obviously I haven't heard about it.*

(Michelle)

This was an unexpected finding as, unlike the NSWIT, AITSL have had a very active online presence, particularly through their website and social media presence on Twitter. Amongst those who were aware of AITSL, there was a sense that teachers were generally impressed. These teachers’ comments suggest that image is important. Having a functional, professional-looking website creates a vital first impression, perhaps most especially amongst digital-savvy generation Y teachers:

*I think the image of AITSL, because they're pro-active, they do often post on Twitter. I follow them and some of the posts and links are actually really good.*

(Cameron)
Teachers want more from these organisational bodies than simply monitoring the Standards:

*The resources that have now come out with AITSL have been phenomenal... They're starting to, as a body, be quite effective in actually moving pedagogy on.* (Cameron)

*In terms of their professional learning, absolutely, they [AITSL] appear to be, they're streets ahead of the Institute of Teachers.* (Tristan)

Interestingly, most of these teachers talked about how they had been connected with AITSL via a senior colleague. Given that teachers have no mandatory requirement to engage with AITSL, this kind of ‘grassroots’ transmission of information appears to be key in connecting to teachers.

Finally, teachers were broadly confused about AITSLs role and frustrated at the duplication between state and national bodies. Cameron, who considered himself to be “pretty savvy about organisations”, commented that “I actually don’t even know what the main difference is between AITSL and the NSWIT”. There was a desire for a national system that made it much easier for teachers to have their qualifications and accreditation status recognised interstate. This duplication was compounded for teachers in the Independent sector, who also had to gain additional accreditation through the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority [ISTAA]. Louise commented, “how does that [ISTAA] match up with the Institute of Teachers’ stuff? I don’t understand why there’s more than one. Just one. That's all you need. I think it's, again, shooting the profession in the foot”. Teachers are evidently highly sensitive to the overall balance of organisational structures impacting their work. Megan best captured this perception:

*There’s so many bodies weighing in. You’ve got the Board of Studies. You’ve got, you know, the Institute. You’ve then got this. And then there’s ACARA... It is a bit ridiculous. Bring it all in together and have a national register, for goodness sake!*

**Stratification of the profession (New Scheme and Old Scheme).**

Another unexpected finding was that New Scheme teachers had strong views on the teachers who were not part of the system – their ‘Old Scheme’ colleagues. Three key issues were evident in the data here. Firstly, New Scheme teachers felt that they were unique and set apart from their Old Scheme colleagues: “I think we're just a new breed who are still finding our feet. I think it is very, I think it has complicated things a bit. ‘Cos
there is that divide.” James described a sense of camaraderie with other New Scheme teachers, “there aren’t that many accredited teachers here . . . we know who we are because we sort of just have this common bonding experience of banging our heads against a brick wall.” Elizabeth described the divide as a significant “culture change”:

I think that will develop a culture change . . . I think from my graduation year onwards, there will be a different focus on what it means to be a teacher. It won’t be just, hey, I finish at three o’clock. It will be, actually, I’m a professional who has to, you know, apply these standards and provide evidence for it.  
(Elizabeth)

These comments suggest that, many New Scheme teachers are conscious of how they differ from their more experienced colleagues.

Secondly, many teachers in this study identified the perception of unequal treatment and expectations of the two groups of teachers as an issue. At its most basic level, Amy described this as a workload divide, “New Scheme teachers, we’re saying, we have to do it, why don’t you have to do it . . . It seems unfair that one group has to and the other group doesn’t.” Payment of the compulsory annual fee was another key point of tension:

“Why should I have to pay a hundred bucks and the person next to me doesn’t?” (Megan)

I resented that I have to pay $100 a year to this organisation that does nothing other than send me a letter asking for $100 every year . . . it’s not really like you get any benefit out of it. (Alison)

Michelle was clear that she felt no connection with the Institute as a New Scheme teacher, “no, no, not at all. It’s just another thing, another bit of paper that comes in. Another cheque I have to pay.” This feeling of division was thus exacerbated by teachers’ perceptions that they got nothing out of being part of the Scheme and it was simply another workload burden.

Finally, many of the teachers in this study had strong views about the perceived professionalism of their Old Scheme colleagues:

It does frustrate me when you see teachers that really aren’t, you know, up to date . . . they still get to teach without having to, you know, really show how they’re improving or how they’re reflecting on best practice because they’re not New Scheme teachers. (Tracey)

Others were frustrated that the Standards did not apply to more experienced teachers who “could’ve done with a little bit of a brush up on some professional aspects”.
Cameron summarised this as, “it’s more relevant for the teachers that aren’t doing it”. A few teachers in this study were aware that the DEC was planning to expand the system to all teachers. Tracey characterised this as needing to “close that gap” between the two groups. Again, the payment of fees was a sticking point: “they don’t think they should have to pay. They always talk about that. Oh, I’m not going to pay a hundred dollars to be told that I’m a good teacher because I’ve been doing it for twenty years.” Anthony commented that some teachers would consider retiring to avoid it, “a few people are saying things like, oh, I’m glad I’m getting out before this hits.” This may reflect an underlying rationale behind the system to remove teachers who are not supportive of these new policies and processes.

Raising the status of teaching.

The introduction of the Standards and New Scheme system was designed to “raise the status of teaching” and to “contribute to the professionalisation of teaching” (AITSL, 2011, p. 2; NSWIT, 2012a, p. 3). The teachers in this study were divided on whether or not they thought that the New Scheme system would ultimately achieve this. Optimistically, there was a general sense that accreditation “makes it [teaching] more professional” and provides an important sense of “professional recognition of what teachers do”. There was also a focus on external perceptions of accreditation as something “to show the outside world” and as “some kind of accountability”. Cameron drew the parallel that, “you have a [legal] bar exam, well, we have accreditation”. Elizabeth was perhaps the most optimistic of all teachers about the value of accreditation in raising the status of teachers:

Internally it will raise the status of teachers because . . . if you’re a New Scheme teacher coming in, you’re only going to stick with teaching if you are serious about it. However, I don’t think it will for those who are pre-04 who are going to have it imposed . . . it will raise the status because you’re actually going to have academically focused teachers as opposed to school holidays focused teachers.

For Elizabeth, this sense of optimism clearly only extends to New Scheme teachers. On the other hand, there was also a sense of pessimism and doubt about the long-term impacts of the scheme. Cameron felt that the system “sort of put a professionalism on teachers”, in a top-down manner, resulting in a system that was “predominantly image rather than actual effectiveness”. Tristan summed up accreditation as “we’ve all got bits of paper that say that we’re competent”, which in turn created a façade of professionalism that “enables bureaucrats to be able to say, yeah, like, we all do this stuff”. Fiona felt that the system would only really impact on
teacher professionalism when it prompted the “crusty, stale teachers” to leave. Louise gave the clearest articulation of why the current scheme would not ultimately raise the status of the profession:

Now we’ve got accreditation just like lawyers do and everything. It’s like, well, we don’t. It’s a mixed up, mashed-up, thrown out there too quickly before it was ready sort of system that has just turned people off.

The sense that the current scheme is inadequate and ineffective served to undermine any sense that teachers would ultimately benefit from the scheme.

Interestingly, whilst the teachers in this study broadly agreed on the need to raise the status of teaching, they felt that the biggest challenge in achieving this was in changing the low value and prestige that the public attributed to teachers work. Common attitudes included: “you just have holidays, you just work nine to three” and that teaching is “an easy profession that anyone can do”. There were also many reflections on teaching in comparison to other professions. Megan reflected on teachers’ wages: “you don’t go into teaching and nursing for money . . . whereas other people go consciously into professions because dental, finance, it’s a lot of money.” Colleen felt that the female-dominant nature of the teaching workforce contributed to its low status, “teaching and nursing, they come from a history of, they’re female vocations that people can dabble in and perhaps haven’t been given the status of being a profession”. Teachers also reflected on their daily interactions with both students and parents in their own school communities, with many feeling neither respected nor esteemed: “for some parents obviously we’re glorified babysitters”; “teachers are still sometimes just seen as caregivers”. There was also a widespread view that attitudes towards teachers had deteriorated, and particularly that “teachers don’t have the same level of respect from community members as they may have once had”. Many reported being “constantly questioned about what we do” and feeling that parents did not trust their professional knowledge and judgment. These attitudes all combined to diminish the status of teaching.

**Section summary.**

This section has presented the views and experiences of teachers in relation to the New Scheme policies and practices. These views ultimately shape the career cultures within which second-stage teachers make their career decisions. Teachers expressed, often at great length, their opinions about the Standards and the New Scheme system. However, these views were strongly coloured by their perceptions of how teachers were viewed by the broader Australian community. There was a consensus that efforts
to raise the status of teaching that focus solely on the practices of teachers alone would not succeed. Changes in societal attitudes and values take time, but are essential if the aim is to change teachers’ attitudes towards their profession. The next section will conclude the chapter by further discussing the interview findings presented here in relation to the existing literature.

Part Three: Discussion C – Second-stage teachers’ career cultures

The previous sections of this chapter have presented in-depth accounts of the final findings generated from interview data analysis. The chapter will now conclude with a discussion of these findings, making connections with the literature outlined earlier in the thesis and drawing some conclusions. This discussion seeks to answer the fourth research sub-question: How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion of being a ‘professional teacher’? The complex and contested concept of teaching as a ‘profession’ was closely examined in the preceding literature review. The data presented in this chapter shows how second-stage teachers make sense of their careers within the context of the broader collective of teachers and the shifting workplace culture surrounding teacher professionalism.

Turning to the third interview finding regarding career as membership of a group, the first conclusion that can be drawn is that second-stage teachers do not have a strong affinity with or ownership of the identity of “professional”. Many found it difficult to articulate what they thought being a professional teacher meant to them and their responses revealed the apparent absence of an accessible and relevant vocabulary to describe or understand the concept. Existing literature has noted the ways in which persistent school reforms have challenged the individual and collective professional identities of teachers and left an ongoing sense of ambiguity and uncertainty (Day et al., 2005; Day & Smethem, 2009). This study provides further evidence of this uncertainty. Second-stage teachers were uncomfortable discussing what it means to be a professional teacher, with hesitant responses such as, “I’m not quite sure what to say about that”, “oh, that’s a hard question” and “umm, well, I don’t know”. The fact that teachers often named relatively superficial aspects around appearance, such as “wearing a tie to work”, “wearing your name badge” and “looking nice”, highlights the lack of depth in their understandings around the concept of professionalism. There was
a lot of emphasis on “appearing professional”, but a limited understanding of how this related to behaving professionally.

This sense of uncertainty was further compounded by the fact that the teachers in this study did not appear to consider themselves to be part of a national teaching profession. Dow (2003) noted that a key challenge to the notion of teaching as a career was that it did not have a strong sense of itself as a collective profession on a national scale. The data in this study revealed many instances of this division between teachers. For example, Elizabeth had only ever taught in Independent schools and was “absolutely” sure she would stay within this system, “I think it would be hard for me to move into the state system now. I think that I am independent in a sense now”. Tristan felt that the work he did as a senior secondary teacher in a prestigious independent boys school was distinctive to teaching in other contexts, “teaching is a diverse field as well. I mean, teaching here is very different from primary teaching, from teaching in lots of other schools. The job is not the same”. Teachers who taught in the government sector often identified with the geographic region or network of schools with which they were associated. For example, Marcus and Cameron both identified themselves as being “South-Western Sydney teachers”. This sense of fracturing across different boundaries (sector, level, region, state) impacted upon the ways in which the teachers conceptualised teaching as a ‘career’ because it was not tied to any notion of a cohesive profession.

The key qualities nominated by second-stage teachers as necessary for professionalism strongly echo the features of “managerial professionalism” defined by Brennan (1996, 2009) and Sachs (2001). Second-stage teachers emphasised the importance of being “a hard worker” and “being accountable”, both of which were frequently translated as “keeping all your paperwork up to date”. Cameron summarised this as, “professional also means paperwork and I think our paperwork matches any of those other jobs”. There is a sense that the managerialist approach to professionalism, with its emphasis on meeting set criteria and documenting processes and achievements has become the dominant discourse to the near exclusion of all others. Yet whilst teachers knew they were accountable, they felt hampered in their efforts to act as professionals. Marcus described this as a lack of autonomy, “I don’t think that we are given . . . enough professional autonomy and I don’t think that we can necessarily make the decisions”. Megan described this as a lack of trust in teachers, “I think what would raise the status of the profession, I think we need to be tougher in terms of how we come back to parents and actually say, let us do our jobs and trust us”. Whilst
substantial research has shown that successful school systems focus on capacity building and trust rather than narrowly measured accountability (Masters, 2014; Sahlberg, 2007, 2010), second-stage teachers understood of their professionalism in limited, performative terms.

Second-stage teachers described the professional teacher as “someone who’s incredibly committed” and who approached their work with “passion” and “investment”. There was also a focus on the importance of being involved beyond the classroom across the whole school and into the wider community. These aspirations ran parallel with a commentary that depicted teaching as something that “consumes your life outside of work as well”. Professional teachers approached their work in a way that was “very consuming” and “a whole lifestyle”. This echoes Hargreaves and Goodson’s (1996) concept of “extended teacher professionalism”, as teachers’ roles and responsibilities have increased well beyond the classroom. Colleen described a culture of long work hours and excessive work practices as the norm in her school, “there are people that work fifteen hour days regularly and are in on the weekends regularly. I can’t get a car space out here after 7.30am and there’s cars out there still at 7.30pm”.

When teachers described professionalism, there was often a sense that it was an unattainable ideal beyond the grasp of the average teacher: “professionalism is being all the expected things of a teacher and having no faults, no failings and no sick days . . . so it is impossible. It is impossible. It is very, very difficult”. For some, the operational definition of teacher professionalism has become an aspiration to an impossible standard of perfection.

There is a danger in creating a work culture that defines professionalism by long work hours and a boundaryless workload. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) warned that such a view of professionalism could be used to exploit teachers with an unreasonable and unsustainable increase in the intensification of their work (p. 20). Connell (2009b) has described the boundless and inexhaustible nature of teaching as a labour process, with schools being “one of those hungry institutions that can eat up the lives of their staff” (p. 11). She asks, “what kind of labour process is it, that to perform very well means burnout?” Second-stage teachers’ notion of professionalism as “having no faults” and “no life outside of school” thus leaves teachers vulnerable to the risks of burnout and exhaustion. The concept of professionalism as requiring exceptional levels of commitment, dedication and time is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term.
Day (2002) has argued that school reforms have fundamentally changed the operational definition of teacher professionalism. This study provides evidence of the ways in which second-stage teachers have incorporated some aspects of the Standards into their understanding of teacher professionalism. The four skills nominated by teachers in this study as defining professionalism reflect Standards one, two, six and seven: developing positive teacher-student relationships ("know students and how they learn"), familiarity with the curriculum ("know the content and how to teach it"), learning as an ongoing process ("engage in professional learning") and sharing knowledge and skills with other teachers ("engage professionally with colleagues") (AITSL, 2011). The mantra of teachers as "lifelong learners" and the centrality of teacher learning in school life have long been heralded as essential teacher dispositions (Coolahan, 2002; Fullan, 2007a). The teachers in this study appear to have whole-heartedly embraced this concept. This is most obviously reflected in the fact that they were recruited for the study through a voluntary professional learning organisation (TeachMeet). It has been established that teacher professional learning is one of the key influences in teacher identity formation (Mockler, 2011a, 2011b). However, there is a relative absence of another key marker of professionalism – reflexivity. Four participants used the word “reflective” in their interviews, and only two of these were in relation to professional practice. Michelle described a professional teacher as “someone who’s quite self-examining, you know, reflective of what they do” and Megan nominated “reflective practice” and “being abreast of all current research” as key aspects of her professionalism. Interestingly, all of these teachers were from the older age cohort represented in this study (40-49), suggesting that this could reflect a generational difference as well. Others have noted the absence of reflexivity and the intellectualism associated with it from the current discourse around teacher professionalism (Connell, 2009a; Ryan & Bourke, 2013). This study highlights the extent to which the discourse around teacher professionalism has moved away from reflexivity and the value of teacher judgement and towards more readily visible, concrete and measurable aspects of teachers’ work.

Successful government reports at the turn of the century noted low teacher morale as a key problem within the Australian education system, exacerbated by poor public perceptions of teaching as a low-status profession (Crowley, 1998; Dow, 2003; Ramsey, 2000). Almost half of the teachers in this study considered teaching to be a profession, but this was coupled with their discouragement at the low status and negative community attitudes towards teachers. Teachers felt that the public viewed them as “glorified babysitters” and “just a teacher”, compounded by a perception of
teaching as “an easy job” because “you just have holidays, you just work nine to three”. There was also a sense of being “the whipping boy for everything that goes wrong in the community” and a perception that respect and trust for teachers had declined over time. This negativity pervaded the views of those teachers who otherwise held very positive attitudes towards teaching as a profession. Current policy reforms have focused on teacher attitudes and behaviours. It is not enough for teachers themselves to believe they are professionals if other key players (particularly parents and governments) continue to treat them as somehow lesser than other professions.

Second-stage teachers reiterated that teaching was unique compared to other professions. Some viewed teaching as being a “vocation”, something you do “for the love of it” because you have a “passion”. This view somehow made teaching lesser than other professions. Teacher professionalism was defined by the fact that it did not visibly look like those other professions. This was evident in comments such as, “when you talk about lawyers and things like that . . . people see them as professionals ‘cos they go to work in their suits”. Thus this image of a professional was still very much a corporate, male with a suit and briefcase, and teaching does not comfortably fit within this mold. Another defining feature of other professions is their rigorous and esteemed tertiary qualifications. The second-stage teachers in this study held their pre-service qualification in low regard. Many felt that teaching was something you learn “on the job” and that pre-service qualifications have a limited value because good teaching requires an un-learnable “magic element” or “intuition”. This view of teaching is exacerbated by an ongoing concern about the declining entry standards for pre-service teachers (Dinham, 2013; Ingvarson et al., 2014; Leigh & Ryan, 2008). The baseline view of teacher professionalism is established in the earliest pre-service experiences and there was a frustration amongst the teachers that “teacher training isn’t rigorous enough” and many people were “just doing it ‘cos it’s the easy option”. This view is not new. Connell (1985) noted the widespread view that teacher training was “no use at all” and that the qualification was “not a convincing enough professional preparation to settle much about teachers’ methods or outlooks” (p. 160). Lortie (1975) noted that, “teachers do not perceive their preparation as conveying something special – as setting them apart from others. Eased entry is the psychological as well as logical opposite of shared ordeal” (p. 160). This view of pre-service teacher education is a persistent and intractable problem that establishes the tone of teacher professionalism as somehow ‘less than’ from the beginning.
Mayer (2003) has argued persuasively that modern teaching careers need to be considered as part of “portfolio careers” and will only be sustainable for some if they are “positioned within the context of a more flexible working life” (p. 15). The vision of teaching as “part of a broad and diverse career profile” (Dow, 2003, p. 103) was challenged by the strong perception amongst teachers in this study that teaching was disconnected from the “real world”. There was a perception that a teaching career was difficult to combine or incorporate into other careers. For those with prior career experience, they felt that schools made it “difficult to integrate into a workplace and for people to recognise the skills that you’ve got”. This was compounded by a perception that those who had only ever worked in schools and never experienced life outside of the classroom could not bring any “real world” experience to their teaching. This view of teaching as disconnected and isolated ultimately diminished teaching as a career and as a profession.

The final interview finding related to teachers experiences of engaging with the current policies and structures that govern their careers. It can be concluded from this study that second-stage teachers are broadly supportive of the Standards; they provide a “guide”, are “important”, “worthwhile” and “necessary”. They are particularly helpful for giving beginning teachers “direction” in the difficult early days of teaching. Numerous government reports have identified the development of written standards as fundamental to improving both the professionalism and quality of the teaching workforce (Crowley, 1998; Dawkins, 1990; Dow, 2003; MCEETYA, 2003a; Ramsey, 2000; R. Smith, 1989). Standards, it is argued, are necessary for supporting teachers to evaluate their own practice and apply their own professional accountability techniques (Ingvarson, 2002a). However, second-stage teachers felt that the current Standards were limited by the fact that they are “too wordy”, contain too many “buzz words” and are not sufficiently “tangible” or “concrete”. The Standards emphasise the technical “mechanical” side of teaching, but ignore the human “pastoral care”, “relationships” and “rapport” that are fundamental to teaching. Other scholars have noted how Standards documents tend to minimise the role of teacher professional judgement, reflexivity and intellectuality in favour of a narrow range of measurable behaviours (Connell, 2009a; Evans, 2008). It is of interest that the second-stage teachers in this study emphasised that the Standards ignore the personal, human relationship dimension of teaching, and saw that this is a key limitation.

In a recent AITSL evaluation report, John Hattie suggested that “the success, or not, of the Standards influencing teacher quality will be largely a function of the success of
their implementation" (AITSL, 2014b, p. 5). The second-stage teachers in this study were clear that, in practice, they largely ignore the Standards and see their use as "just a process to go through, to fill in boxes, tick the boxes". On this measure, the implementation of the Standards may be judged as unsuccessful, given that these second-stage teachers in general see them as a document tied to a bureaucratic processes rather than a tool for enhancing the profession. Goepel (2012, 2014) has described how the UK teaching standards were introduced without a strong professional body to advocate for teachers and have been implemented as an accountability measure, resulting in "tick-box professionalism". In contrast, the US Standards have slowly gained credibility and acceptance from teachers through a gradual, consultative implementation and by keeping them separate from performance management processes (Darling-Hammond, 2008; S. M. Johnson, 2008). Despite their enthusiasm for the idea of Standards, second-stage teachers have largely dismissed the Australian Standards as an irrelevant administrative document.

Second-stage teachers agreed that accreditation creates a legitimate space within which new teachers can seek support from their older colleagues through compulsory formal mentoring. However, in practice this only happened for those with ongoing, full-time positions; such mentoring was difficult to access for those casual or part-time beginning teachers. Schuck et al. (2011) have noted that new teachers value collaborating with a more experienced teacher to co-program and co-teach even more highly than the feedback and advice of formal mentoring (p. 12). This approach may also be easier to implement for the majority of new teachers without permanent positions. Young teachers (aged 25 or less) make up the majority of beginning teachers and less than 50% of young teachers are employed in permanent or ongoing positions (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 44). Devos (2010) has warned that formal mentoring programs can be misused to shape new teacher identities within performative school cultures, fostering prescriptive norms for what it means to be a ‘good teacher’. Through accreditation, the Standards may be used to create a one-size-fits-all cookie-cutter approach to defining the ‘good teacher’.

Although they complained that accreditation was “annoying”, “cumbersome” and “a chore”, second-stage teachers were more frustrated that the process itself lacked rigour and care, lamenting that “it should be tougher” and “it’s a shame it’s not better”. They felt that almost anyone could pass accreditation regardless of the quality of his or her teaching. The report was something that “you can just knock it over in a couple of days” and the Institute would “just approve any old thing that comes though”. Thus
instead of the Standards being used to “give visibility and status to those who exemplify them” (Elmore, 1996, p. 19), the current accreditation process reduces them to “a pesky piece of paperwork”. Part of the problem with accreditation stems from the fact that the Standards and accreditation system has been established as a one-size-fits-all program. The original intent was to produce multiple sets of national standards to achieve multiple needs (MCEETYA, 2003a). Whilst generic standards are an important first step in outlining what constitutes ‘teachers’ work’, they are unable to articulate teachers’ skills and knowledge in specific curriculum areas or specific schooling levels (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007). Gannon (2012) argues that generic standards are typically only used to bureaucratise, managerialise and regulate the profession and in over-relying on them, “the teaching profession risks obscuring many of the essential elements of good teaching” (p. 59).

Second-stage teachers were equally frustrated with the process for maintaining their accredited status. The confusing online system of recording hours of professional learning was another administrative burden that, again, was perceived to lack rigour and purpose, “I'll end up writing two lines. I know that no one actually looks at it. So, why are you getting me to do something that you're actually not going to monitor?” Other teachers also admitted that they did not know how to use the system and had yet to attempt to meet the requirements. These attitudes reflect the ways in which the collaborative and potentially transformative nature of professional learning does not align with the managerial, performative dimensions of the maintenance system (Hardy, 2008; Owen, 2014). The maintenance system may ultimately shape professional learning into just another administrative requirement, rather than a stimulating part of teaching work. Much of this professional learning is also very expensive to participate in. For those with permanent school positions, this was viewed as a “financial burden” on the school to help New Scheme teachers meet the required number of hours. Professional learning for some became “based on your accreditation hours, not what the school needs”. The casual or temporary teachers felt excluded from the system because “no one’s going to pay for me to go to anything” and the burden was on them to cover the cost. Mockler (2013) has described how the NSW system of achieving 50 hours of ‘Institute-registered PD’ and 50 hours of ‘teacher-identified PD’ has re-defined professional learning towards “those activities whose hours can be easily documented and demonstrated as ‘evidence’” (p. 39). The teachers in this study were aware that the maintenance system was directing them towards certain types of professional learning over others.
Second-stage teachers were generally confused about AITSLs role and frustrated at the duplication between state and national bodies:

“I actually don’t even know what the main difference is between AITSL and the NSWIT.” (Cameron)

“I don’t understand why it’s a state-based system and not a national-based system... I don’t understand why there’s more than one [body]. Just One. That’s all you need.” (Louise)

MCEETYA originally produced a national Standards framework in an explicit effort to develop a national system and to “take up the challenge of producing, educating and training a truly ‘Australian teacher’” (MCEETYA, 2003a, p. 4). Despite AITSLs inception in 2010 as a national body for teachers, the NSWIT (and now in its new guise as BOSTES) has continued to run a State-based system. Ingvarson (2013) has noted that AITSL is not a truly independent body and “bears little resemblance to certification agencies in other professions” (p. 10). AITSL has also been asked to develop a “nationally consistent” rather than “national” system of certification, leading to multiple certifying bodies. None of these bodies are true professional agencies, Ingvarson argues, because state governments have been unwilling to entrust the profession with responsibility for regulating itself. The post-Standards creation of the AITSL Performance and Development Framework (AITSL, 2012b) suggests that the Standards and certification processes are being misshapen into a performance management and bonus pay scheme. Neither the NSWIT nor AITSL have become sufficiently powerful or autonomous organisations capable of representing and advocating for all teachers.

Second-stage teachers, as part of the ‘New Scheme’ cohort, perceived that they were a distinct, “new breed” compared to their ‘old scheme’ colleagues. This was expressed as a feeling that “there is that divide” created because “you’re not all on the same page”. There was a sense of camaraderie amongst new scheme teachers because of their “common bonding experience” working through the Standards and accreditation processes. The teachers perceived that this was very slowly creating a “culture change” between the groups as the new scheme gradually replaced the “old fuddy duddy mentality” held by the old scheme about accountability and needing to “prove” one’s teaching abilities. To date, there is no literature that directly considers New Scheme teachers or an apparent distinction with their ‘old scheme’ colleagues. However, the evidence does suggest that there are generational changes at play here. In 2013, just under two-fifths (39.79%) of Australian teachers were aged 39 or under (Willett et al., 2014, p. 21), compared with almost three-quarters (74.56%) of New
Scheme teachers (see chapter four for details). Hargreaves (2003) has characterised the coming changes in the demographic composition of teachers as “a defining moment in educational history”, with the retirement of the vast Baby Boomer teacher cohort (p. 2). Other researchers have also documented evidence of a “generational collide” (Lambert et al., 2016), “generation gap” (Edge, 2012) or “intergenerational tensions” (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009) between different age cohorts of teachers currently in schools. The second-stage teachers in this study seemed aware of this distinction and some seemed proud to consider themselves as change-agents who could improve the profession.

Second-stage teachers were divided in their views about whether the New Scheme system would ultimately raise the status of teaching. Some were optimistic about the long-term impacts of the scheme, with accreditation providing “professional recognition of what teachers do” and the opportunity to “have proven that you’re a good teacher”. There were two caveats to this enthusiasm. Firstly, improved rigour was essential and accreditation could only be valuable “as long as they’re not going to just approve any old thing that comes through”. Secondly, some felt that this “culture change” would only happen for those who started after 2004 and who had always been part of the system. Raising the status would be a long, slow process: “I don’t think it will happen initially and I don’t think it will happen for the older crowd. I think it will just be New Scheme teachers onwards.” This “young new cohort of apparently change-inclined teachers” represents a tremendous opportunity for policymakers and educational reformers to make long-term changes within the teaching profession (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 982). In a recent survey of more than 4,000 teachers, AITSL (2014a) noted that 78% of teachers had a “positive” attitude towards the Standards (p. 27). However, 37% reported little or no knowledge of the Standards (p. 16) and 45% reported no engagement with the Standards (p. 18). Thus the early evidence suggests general support for the Standards, but varying degrees of knowledge and practical use of the Standards.

Other second-stage teachers were more pessimistic about the long-term impacts of the New Scheme system. Some felt that the professionalism achieved through the New Scheme system was “predominantly image rather than actual effectiveness”, with the end result being a cohort of teachers who “all got bits of paper that say that we’re competent”. The sense that the current scheme is inadequate and ineffective served to undermine any hope that it would raise the status of teaching. The current scheme is limited because it is a “mixed up, mashed-up, thrown out there too quickly before it was
ready sort of system that has just turned people off”. Ample existing literature has already identified the negative impact of continuous school reforms on older, experienced teachers' morale and sense of professionalism (Hargreaves, 2000; Seddon, 1997; Whitty, 2000). These second-stage teachers, who have only ever known teaching work under the New Scheme system, have already identified a sense that teachers have been given the “image” of professionalism, rather than authentic professionalism. This echoes Ball’s (2003) observation that performative school reforms are simply “the objective facade” that masks deeper changes to what it means to be a teacher (p. 217). The New Scheme system appears to have ignored or misunderstood the core role of teacher identity and the fact that, ultimately, teachers “construct their own ideas of ‘how to be’, ‘how to act’ and ‘how to understand’ their work and their place in society” (Sachs, 2003b, p. 135).

Finally, second-stage teachers felt that the biggest challenge in raising the status of teaching lay not with the teachers themselves, but rather with the broader public’s attitude towards teaching. Second-stage teachers perceived that they were not valued by parents (“for some parents obviously we’re glorified babysitters”) and not respected by the broader community (“people’s attitudes to teaching is not very positive. It’s always, you just have holidays. You just work nine to three”). James summarised this with the observation that: “I don’t think that the community’s attitude is that teaching is that much of a profession. It’s really what you do after you’ve had babies.” There has long been a concern that public attitudes towards teaching need to change. In the government report ‘A Class Act’, Crowley (1998) argued that the implementation of Standards “would help teaching to reverse community perceptions that teaching is a low status job not worthy of the term profession” (p. 26). Whilst we have had teaching Standards in NSW for just over a decade now, the public status and esteem of teaching has not increased and, if anything, has declined. A recent Sydney Morning Herald article reported NSW Education Minister Adrian Piccoli’s comments on the choice of teaching as a profession: "there is this joke, I couldn’t get into physiotherapy so I went into teaching. That is just unhelpful for that person and it's unhelpful for the profession" (Bagshaw, 2015). Problems with teacher education courses, including declining entry standards and an oversupply of teachers in certain areas, have been consistently identified as key factors working against the twin aims of raising teacher quality and status (Australian Government, 2007c; Dinham, 2013; Ingvarson et al., 2014). Whilst there was a diversity of opinions on the spectrum from optimistic to pessimistic about this, teachers felt that the ultimate challenge lay not only with
changing the culture within the profession, but with changing the broader public perception of the role and value of teachers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has presented significant findings from Strand C of this study and discussed these findings in relation to the broader literature. This chapter has sought to address the career cultures of second-stage teachers in NSW by answering the fourth research sub-questions: How do second-stage teachers’ understandings of their career align with the notion being a ‘professional teacher’?

The findings of this study suggest that there are two main ways in which the notion of the ‘professional teacher’ influences second-stage teachers’ careers. Firstly, career as membership of a group. Second-stage teachers have complex relationships with the identity of the ‘professional’. The Standards do not appear to have made it any easier to be clear about what exactly a professional teacher is. The teacher population is fragmented across so many different boundaries that it is difficult to for teachers to feel connected to a unified broader Australian collective of teachers. The second-stage teachers in this study considered teaching in one of three main ways: as a profession, as developing towards becoming a profession or as a job/occupation. The substantial differences between teaching and other professions created further barriers to teaching being considered a true profession.

Secondly, career as engagement with policy and structure. Second-stage teachers are broadly supportive of the Standards, but typically ignore them in their daily practice. Teachers welcomed the opportunity to use accreditation to connect with their more experienced peers, although actual experiences of doing so were mixed. Second-stage teachers are greatly disappointed that the accreditation process lacks rigour and that it appears that almost anyone can pass regardless of the quality of their work. New Scheme teachers felt they were distinct “new breed” set apart from their old scheme colleagues. Whilst some were optimistic that the New Scheme would raise the status of teaching, this came with the caveat that improved rigour was necessary and the scheme needed to be applied to all teachers. Others perceived that the professionalism achieved through the New Scheme system was “image” rather than actual professionalism. They felt that the greatest challenge in raising the status of teaching lay not with teachers but with the broader public’s attitudes towards teachers.
This completes the presentation of the findings from the individual data strands within this thesis. Chapters four, five and six have addressed the research sub-questions that relate to each separate data set. The next chapter will expand on this through a mixed methods synthesis of these findings.
Chapter 7: Synthesis of findings

This chapter marks the culmination of the findings and discussions section of the thesis. The three preceding chapters have presented the findings from each separate strand of the study and interpreted these in light of the existing literature on teachers’ careers. Thus far in the thesis, four research sub-questions have been addressed, and the findings generated for these are summarised in table 7.1. Using the inferences developed from each individual data strand, chapter seven seeks to generate “meta-inferences” as interpretations and conclusions arising from a synthesis of all three strands (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 266). In doing so, the aim is to “create an understanding on the basis of all results, a whole that is bigger than a simple set of isolated conclusions made on the basis of different findings of a study” (p. 288).

As detailed in chapter three’s research methodology outline, this study’s convergent design will conclude with a process of integrating the results to compare data sets. The aim is to interrogate each set of data against the others and, in particular, to re-interrogate the interview data in light of the policy and demographic data. Combined findings from strand A (policy document analysis), strand B (secondary demographic data) and strand C (semi-structured teacher interviews) will be presented in two ways. Firstly, a joint display will combine all data analysis into a single display table, with highlighted cells indicating substantial areas of intersection between the data sets. A discussion of this display will help to answer research sub-question five: How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other? Secondly, a side-by-side comparison will generate a series of inferences to the main research question: What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers? The meta-inferences drawn from across all strands will also be used to develop a revised conceptual framework of second-stage teachers’ careers. The combined results highlight the similarities and differences between the data strands and provide “opportunities to confront multiple meanings and constructions” of the key phenomenon (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 287). These inferences were generated using abductive reasoning. Bazeley (2013) notes that abductive approaches are commonly applied in mixed methods studies and that abduction “offers a plausible interpretation rather than a logical conclusion derived from premises” (p. 336). This approach was fully discussed earlier in chapter three.
Table 7.1. Summary of the findings from the research sub-questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Key findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Strand A: Policy document analysis** | Teachers’ careers are being:  
Standardised  
Professionalised  
Monitored  
Reformed  
Developed  
Performed |
| Research sub-question 1:  
*How are teachers’ careers portrayed and constructed within current policy documents?* | Key demographic features of New Scheme teachers in NSW:  
Population (27% of NSW teachers are New Scheme)  
Gender (76% female, 23% male)  
Age (75% aged 39 or under)  
School location (60% metropolitan)  
School sector (67% government)  
Teaching role (95% are classroom teachers)  
Leave of absence (12% currently on leave)  
Employment status (55% permanent) |
| **Strand B: Secondary demographic data** | Interview finding 1: Entry pathway into a teaching career  
Destiny (n=9)  
Direction (n=10)  
Accident (n=3)  
Family (n=2)  
Interview finding 2: The evolving journey of a teaching career  
Horizontal (traditional classroom) (n=6)  
Diagonal A (differentiated/expanded) (n=3)  
Diagonal B (hybrid teacher/leader) (n=3)  
Diagonal C (teacher developer) (n=4)  
Vertical (principal) (n=4)  
Exit (n=4) |
| Research sub-question 2:  
*What is the demographic context in which second-stage teachers’ careers are taking place?* | Interview finding 3: Career as membership of a professional group  
Yes, teaching is a profession (n=11)  
Becoming, teaching is transforming into a profession (n=5)  
No, teaching is a job/occupation (n=8)  
What is a professional teacher?  
How is teaching unique to other professions?  
Interview finding 4: Career as engagement with policy & structure  
Professional Standards for Teachers  
Undergoing the accreditation process  
Maintaining accredited status  
Navigating the new organisations (NSWIT & AITSL)  
Stratification of the profession (New Scheme & Old Scheme)  
Raising the status of teaching |
Joint Display

Whilst the interview findings comprise the core of this thesis, synergistic effects are created when all three data sets come together. This meta-analytic step provides the opportunity for the interview data to be interrogated in terms of the contextual dimensions of policy and demography. Figure 7.1 presents a joint display of the findings from across all three data sets. The four key interview findings have been placed across the horizontal axis. The findings from both the policy document and demographic data have been placed on the vertical axis. Each cell has been shaded to indicate the nature of the intersection between the different findings. This shading was determined through a constant comparative process of analysing each cell for specific examples in the data where there was an overlap of theme or idea (Bazeley, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). As per the written key, the different forms of shading indicate whether the intersection of datasets is best characterised as: (a) silence/neutral overlap; (b) agreement/convergence; or (c) tension/divergence. Each overlap was scrutinised for whether or not there was a strong argument that the datasets agreed, disagreed, or were silent on a given data point.

In figure 7.1, it can be seen that there are many more areas of silence or neutral overlap arising from the demographic data than the policy data. Whilst the demographic data is important as a unique feature of this study, these areas of silence suggest that this data is comparatively less important than the policy document data in helping to make sense of the interview findings. This display makes explicit how the methods are ‘mixed’ in the research and helps to answer research sub-question five: *How do the findings emerging from each strand relate to, converge with and/or diverge from each other?* Appropriate data extracts will now be drawn out and discussed to interpret the relationships between the different findings.
**JOINT DISPLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW FINDINGS ➔</th>
<th>Entry pathway into a teaching career</th>
<th>The evolving journey of a career</th>
<th>Career as membership of a professional group</th>
<th>Career as engagement with policy &amp; structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**POLICY DOCUMENT DATA ➔**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standardised</th>
<th>Professionalised</th>
<th>Monitored</th>
<th>Reformed</th>
<th>Developed</th>
<th>Performed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ➔**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School location</th>
<th>School sector</th>
<th>Teaching role</th>
<th>Leave of absence</th>
<th>Employment status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**KEY**

- = silence/neutral overlap
- = convergence/agreement
- = divergence/tension

**Figure 7.1. Joint display of the findings from all three data sets**
Entry pathway into a teaching career.

Interview analyses identified four pathways that explained how second-stage teachers came to their teaching careers: career as ‘destiny’, ‘direction’ into a career, an ‘accidental’ career or a ‘family’ career. The policy themes of ‘reform’ and ‘perform’ converge with the interview data here. There is a longstanding concern over declining entry standards for Australian pre-service teachers (Dinham, 2013; Leigh & Ryan, 2008). Recent research has shown that less than half of the applicants for undergraduate teacher education courses in 2012/13 had entry scores above 70 and that teacher education degrees had the highest percentage of students entering with entry scores below 60 (Ingvarson et al., 2014, pp. 64–65). Recent policy changes aim to gradually reform entrance to teaching, with a focus on formative ways of measuring pre-service teacher ‘quality’. From 2016, NSW pre-service teachers will need to pass a literacy and numeracy assessment before their final-year professional experience (NSWDEC, 2013, p. 8). Undergraduate entrants to teaching will also be required to meet minimum achievement levels in their final secondary school exams. This, however, does not capture the 30% of primary and 50% of secondary teachers who enter via postgraduate pathways (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 33). Almost two-thirds of the teachers in this study took one of the vast array of postgraduate pathways into teaching, including through online distance education, intensive/express courses and scholarship placements. The abundance of different ways into teaching continues to make it challenging for governments to monitor the quality and consistency of entrants to teaching.

The second-stage teachers in this study overwhelmingly held their pre-service qualifications in low regard. Opinions ranged from this being a benign step necessary to gain entry to the classroom, to active frustration that it was a waste of time. The five teachers in this study who had completed accelerated pre-service programs within a year all commented on their frustration that they were “just pushed through really quickly” and they felt that their training was inadequate. Several teachers expressed the view that teaching was largely learnt “on the job”. Others noted the oversupply of teachers in many areas, “they really are letting so many teachers through . . . there’s so many of them at Uni. And they’re just doing it ‘cos it’s the easy option. It’s not what they really want to do”. How second-stage teachers launch their teaching careers, whilst intimately tied up in their personal career histories, is also strongly influenced by their pre-service experiences.
Three demographic variables also intersect here: gender, age and school sector. Teaching as both a career ‘direction’ and ‘accidental’ career were quite evenly distributed between males and females. However, eight of the nine teachers who identified teaching as their ‘destiny’ were female, as were the two teachers who chose teaching for ‘family’ reasons. In this study, males were more likely to enter teaching either because if offered a defined career direction or through unintentional circumstances. Females were more likely to report that they had always wanted to be teachers (including if they entered later in life) or that teaching was perceived to be manageable with their family commitments. This confirms existing research that the decision to enter teaching is gendered (Raggl & Troman, 2008). Males are more likely to enter teaching when they are dissatisfied with a current career or if they cannot enter their first preference tertiary course (Richardson & Watt, 2005), and are more likely to be motivated by teaching’s employment opportunities and conditions than more intrinsic motivators (Department of Education Science and Training, 2006).

All ages were represented across the different pathways, except for the family pathway. The two teachers who entered teaching as career changers later in life were both aged 40-49. Whilst career changers, motivated by reasons of direction or destiny, came to teaching at many different ages, those who were motivated by family reasons may be more likely to do so after 40. In relation to school sector, one third of the teachers in this sample had taught in more than one sector, providing further evidence of a growing sectoral mobility amongst some teachers (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003). The two teachers who came to teaching for family reasons had both taught exclusively in the government sector. Albeit this finding arises from a very limited data sample, this could suggest that those motivated to enter teaching as a family career may perceive the government sector as offering a more family-friendly work environment than the non-Government sectors.

The evolving journey of a teaching career.

A major theme within the interviews was that second-stage teachers’ career aspirations spanned across six possible trajectories that teachers may shift between (discussed later in this chapter). Three intersections with policy analysis are evident here. Firstly, in seeking to ‘standardise’ teachers’ careers, the policies have emphasised a stage-based, uniform approach to teaching based on the Standards. However second-stage teachers envisioned a much wider range of trajectories that were more complex and diverse than the career stage model encapsulated within the Standards’ structure. This
may mean the Standards may need to be interpreted and applied in the broadest and most generic ways possible to capture this diversity. It is therefore of interest that the second-stage teachers in this study did not perceive the Standards as being at all relevant to their career plans. In fact, the accreditation process had led many to dismiss the Standards as “a pesky piece of paperwork” and “a tick box kind of list”. Secondly, the policies also focus on teachers’ ‘development’ through continual improvement of classroom practice. Yet the teachers in this study described a considerably broader vision of career development that extended beyond the classroom, including many aspects of their lives, strengths and interests that shaped how they could grow in their careers. Thus one challenge for policy makers is to create scope within these policies that take account of teachers as complex individuals changing across the span of their careers and to recognise the human person behind the label ‘teacher’. At its best, teacher professional learning needs to support both the essential ongoing work of teacher professional identity formation (Mockler, 2011a, 2011b) and to facilitate the opening up of new roles and career pathways for teachers (Donaldson et al., 2008; Owen, 2015).

Thirdly, current policies also require teachers to ‘monitor’ themselves in the workplace, including through writing evaluations for each professional learning activity and meeting mandatory requirements for participation in certain types of learning across 50 hours. The second-stage teachers in this study found this to be cumbersome and limiting, and particularly difficult for temporary and casual teachers to achieve. Inevitably, such policies re-orient professional learning towards, “those activities whose hours can be easily documented and demonstrated as ‘evidence’” (Mockler, 2013, p. 39). The teachers in this study placed a high value on professional learning, but did not feel that the current requirements improved their professional standing or career development. NSW teachers must now also declare their status as ‘active’ at the start of each year, and there are explicit new policy guidelines for taking leave and returning to teaching before losing accredited status. This is of interest as secondary data analysis in this study shows that twelve percent of New Scheme teachers were on a leave of absence. The SiAS survey shows that approximately one quarter of all male and half of all female teachers have “interrupted” or “discontinuous” teaching careers (McKenzie et al., 2014, p. 81). Within a climate of closer monitoring, these policies may increasingly influence the timing and flexibility with which teachers make career decisions, particularly within the common career pattern of teachers moving in and out of the workforce.
Figure 7.1 shows that six demographic variables also overlap here. Current data records that label 95% of new scheme teachers as ‘classroom teachers’ may not accurately capture the diverse range of actual roles that teachers both have and aspire to have. Within this study’s data set, males and females are evenly represented across five of the six trajectories. Although two males were currently in Diagonal A (differentiated/expanded) roles, no males in this study saw themselves pursuing these roles long-term. Instead, they were stepping-stones into the Diagonal C (teacher developer) trajectory that would ultimately lead them out of the classroom. This finding echoes existing US research into differentiating roles concerning risk factors that may ‘entice’ teachers out of the classroom permanently (Fiarman, 2007; Rinke, 2009).

Whilst it could have been assumed that teachers in metropolitan areas would have more opportunities for role diversification, trajectories do not appear to be bounded by geographic location. In fact, teachers in this study who had taught in rural/regional areas noted that they often experienced a greater range of roles because there was less staff to share them across. There was a general spread of ages across each trajectory, with two exceptions. None of the youngest teachers (20-29) aspired to horizontal teaching roles. This could suggest a generational shift, as younger teachers are less inclined to see themselves remaining in the classroom (Behrstock-Sherrat & Coggshall, 2010; Coggins et al., 2010). None of the older teachers (40-49, 50+) aspired to either diagonal B or diagonal C roles with a broader focus beyond the classroom. This could suggest that these particular trajectories suit the career aspirations of those in the early and middle years of their working lives, but are unappealing for older teachers. Further, the temporary teachers in this study aspired to horizontal, diagonal A or exit trajectories, whilst only those with permanent roles aspired to diagonal B, diagonal C or vertical trajectories. Thus the ways in which a teacher imagines his or her future career pathway may be shaped or limited by how secure their current employment is. The full range of trajectories may only be available to those fortunate enough to secure permanent employment early on in their careers, and this may have flow on effects for teacher career decision-making and attrition.

**Career as membership of a professional group.**

Teachers in this study were divided between those who felt that teaching was already a profession, those who felt teaching was changing to become a profession and those who felt that teaching was simply a job/occupation and not a profession. Three policy themes intersect here. Current policies examined explicitly aim to “contribute to the professionalisation of teaching” (NSWIT, 2012a, p. 3). However, interview data in this
study revealed that teachers were unclear on what exactly a ‘professional’ teacher was meant to be. When discussing the notions of teachers as professionals, these teachers typically focused on relatively superficial aspects of appearance, organisational skills and the importance of “keeping all your paperwork up to date”. One-third of the teachers in this study felt that teaching was in fact not a profession. Responses ranged from considering teaching to be “just one of those community jobs that has to happen” to teachers being “glorified babysitters”. Some felt that professional was “just a word” that you could put in front of any job to amplify its importance. However, across the policies examined there is an insistent mantra around the concepts of professional and professionalism. It is of interest, therefore, that this group of teachers appeared to have such a limited understanding of or engagement with these concepts.

Further, current policies position teachers’ careers as part of a wider ‘reform’ agenda and aim to “deliver system-wide reforms targeting critical points in the teacher ‘lifecycle’” (COAG, 2008, p. 4). The desire for reform was echoed by the twenty percent of teachers in this study who felt that the New Scheme system would help transform teaching into a profession. These teachers argued, however, that teaching would not be a true profession until all teachers had to abide by the same Standards and procedures. There was a sense of frustration towards older teachers and a perception that “so many teachers that have been doing it for twenty, thirty years just do not grasp what professional actually means in the current day”. There was also a sense that New Scheme teachers were a “new breed”, who could disrupt and challenge old attitudes towards professionalism. The interview data suggests that current policy aims to ‘professionalise’ and ‘reform’ teachers’ careers are to some extent being undermined by an apparent division between the teachers inside and outside of the New Scheme system. The teaching Standards are positioned as a core part of the reform agenda. Whilst the teachers in this study were generally supportive of the idea of Standards, they did not appear to see a strong connection between the Standards and their professionalism. Indeed, teacher professionalism appeared to be the product of exceptional individuals rather than the majority, captured in Fiona’s comment that: “professionalism is being all the expected things of a teacher and having no faults, no failings and no sick days . . . so it is impossible”. For the teachers in this study, the Standards rated somewhere between irrelevant and irritating. There is thus a contested relationship between teachers’ perceptions of their professionalism and the current teaching Standards and policy aims.
The different views on teaching as a profession were represented evenly across all demographic variables, with one exception: whether or not teachers had worked in another field prior to teaching. All eight of the teachers who felt that teaching was a job/occupation had all held careers elsewhere before teaching. Of the eleven who felt that teaching was a profession, nine had not held any other job outside of teaching during their working life. Thus appears that teachers’ attitudes towards their professionalism may be influenced by their personal experiences of workplace culture and behaviour beyond the school environment.

**Career as engagement with policy and structure.**

The final interview finding established second-stage teachers’ perceptions of the current policies and structures shaping their careers. This intersects with all six themes that emerged from policy analysis. Second-stage teachers’ disappointment with the practical implementation of the New Scheme system contrasted with both the ‘reform’ and ‘performance’ agendas evident within the policy documents. Although teachers agreed with the need to raise the status of teaching, many perceived that the professionalism created was “predominantly image rather than actual effectiveness”. Teachers identified the negative public attitudes towards teachers’ work as an even larger barrier to raising the status. An external perception of teaching as “you just have holidays, you just work nine to three” and teachers as “caregivers” was seen as not being altered by the mere existence of a Standards framework. A reform agenda that focuses solely on teachers’ attitudes and behaviours cannot be expected to shift ingrained cultural attitudes towards teaching. The policies’ performative push towards a “performance and development culture” is further undermined by second-stage teachers’ disillusionment with the New Scheme system, and their perception that it lacks rigour and depth and that anyone can pass the process regardless of the quality of their work. An accreditation process that reduces the Standards to a performative “tick the box” act without any substantive purpose beyond accountability may ultimately serve to undermine the policy goal of professionalising teachers’ work.

Finally, demographic data analysis revealed that just over one-quarter (27.33%) of the NSW teacher population are part of the New Scheme system. Therefore although the policies talk broadly about the teaching population as a whole, in NSW to date the new Standards, accreditation and maintenance policies have only applied to a relative minority of teachers. The result appears to have been a gradual and uneven approach to policy and this has led to the apparent creation of the New Scheme and Old Scheme
teacher sub-groups. The attitudes of this first generation to develop their careers under the New Scheme system may shape how future policy changes are implemented and interpreted within schools. Interestingly, the views of teachers with casual/temporary employment were different to those with permanent positions. Casual/temporary teachers spoke of how difficult they found it to both gain accreditation and then maintain this without the benefits of a consistent, ongoing relationship with a school that would facilitate accreditation and cover the costs of participating in (often expensive) professional learning. This is of importance because the vast majority of teachers commence their careers in casual or temporary roles (NSWIT, 2014, p. 10), with just 12% of teachers aged 30 or under in permanent employment (Willett et al., 2014, p. 109). Again, these early experiences of securing employment and finding a school environment that aligns with your professional aspirations have impacts on teacher retention and career decision-making (Buchanan, 2011; S. M. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

**Revised conceptual framework**

An initial, emergent conceptual framework of second-stage teachers’ careers was developed during the literature review process to outline the key constructs being studied and the presumed relationships between them. This original framework was useful in helping to decide which settings, processes and theoretical constructs were the most important and therefore which data was required. This framework was discussed at the conclusion of the literature review in chapter two, and is reproduced again in figure 2.2 below. In alignment with Miles, Huberman and Saldana’s (2014) view that conceptual frameworks should evolve as a study progresses, this framework was gradually revised, developed and extended during the process of data collection/generation and analysis. Based on the key findings of this study, a revised framework is presented in Figure 7.2. In both frameworks, the complexity of second-stage teachers’ careers is captured across three levels, with arrows indicating the high degree of interconnectedness within and between the levels.

In the initial framework, micro level contextual factors included the creation of career stage models and internally defined versus externally defined career trajectories, with some literature identifying new alternatives. In the revised framework, teachers’ entry pathways into teaching and their personal career stories are acutely important in shaping how they launch their teaching careers. The diversity of trajectories envisioned
by second-stage teachers suggests that there is a complex multiplicity of ways in which second-stage teachers imagine their future careers. At the meso level, the initial framework positioned teacher career development within the school reform and teacher quality agendas. It also incorporated the literature into teacher attrition and career decision-making. In the revised framework, the issue of teaching as membership of a professional group has come to the fore, bound up in teachers’ engagement with current polices including teaching Standards and the accreditation process. Lastly, the macro level elements in the initial framework addressed both the demographic issue of teacher supply and demand and the broader social context wherein the world of work is rapidly changing. In the revised framework, specific demographic variables are more closely highlighted. The particular elements within the policy discourse that impact on teachers’ careers also come to the fore. The revised conceptual framework addresses this study’s main research question by providing a more complete understanding of the key contextual factors that influence second-stage teachers’ careers in NSW.
Figure 2.2. *Initial, emergent conceptual framework of the contextual factors influencing second-stage teachers’ careers*
Figure 7.2. Revised conceptual framework of the contextual factors influencing second-stage teachers’ careers
Inferences to the main research question

This chapter will conclude by outlining several inferences that answer the main research question: What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers? These meta-inferences are based on the collected data from all three strands of the study. The first inference drawn from this thesis is that second-stage teachers aspire to a diverse and complex range of career futures, with six particular trajectories evident within the data. This was discussed earlier in chapter five, and is illustrated in the reproduction of figure 5.2 below. The six trajectories that second-stage teachers aspire to are depicted in figure 5.2, with the arrows indicating the potential for flexible shifting between roles. The trajectories identified here are not pre-determined pathways, but rather different teaching roles that teachers aspire to move into, out of and between throughout their careers. For some teachers, this included periods of timeout from teaching, making the career appear interrupted or disjointed from a traditional continuous career viewpoint.

These trajectories could also be understood as ranging along a continuum that extends from depth- to breadth- focused roles. Whilst depth roles are relatively closer to the minutiae of classroom life compared to breadth roles, neither end of the spectrum was considered superior to the other; rather, they provide the opportunity for teachers to work to their different strengths and interests. Moving along the continuum, each role gradually reduces deep, direct classroom involvement and shifts towards an increasingly broader focus on education beyond the classroom. In order from deepest to broadest, the trajectories are:

- Horizontal (traditional classroom teacher)
- Diagonal A (differentiated/expanded)
- Diagonal B (hybrid teacher/leader)
- Vertical (principal)
- Diagonal C (teacher developer)

The sixth trajectory identified was the exit trajectory, incorporating those teachers who took a more transient, short-term approach to their careers and planned to leave within the next five years. Whilst teachers can exit teaching at any point, the evidence in this study suggest that they are more likely to do so from a horizontal trajectory. The findings of this study align with Rolls and Plauborg’s (2009) argument that researchers need to “re-conceptualise the term career trajectories in such a way that it reflects the complexity of contemporary career patterns” (p. 26). The trajectories described here attempt to meet this challenge and are an original contribution to the knowledge base.
Figure 5.2. Second-stage teachers’ aspirational career trajectories
The evidence presented in this study suggests that the career trajectories envisioned by second-stage teachers are more complex and diverse than the linear, lock-step career-stage model which appears to be a core concept underpinning the Professional Standards for Teachers (NSWIT, 2012). Additionally, second-stage teachers in this study articulated a broader vision of ongoing professional learning that intertwined with their personal/self-development, their career development and their goals beyond improving their classroom practice. Current policies do not appear to take account of this human, personal dimension of teachers with evolving lives. This would appear to exacerbate the fundamental disjunction evident between second-stage teachers’ career aspirations and current policy rhetoric. This may reflect the fact that these policies were developed as part of a broader school reform agenda.

Furthermore, none of the younger teachers in this study (20-29) aspired to a horizontal classroom role. Diagonal B and C trajectories, offering diversity and engagement beyond the classroom, were more likely to be favoured by those in their younger (20-29) or middle (30-39) career years. Older teachers (40-49, 50+) aspired to either horizontal, diagonal A or vertical roles. Albeit from a limited data set, this provides further evidence of possible generational differences in teacher attitudes towards their careers (Behrstock-Sherrat & Coggshall, 2010; Coggins et al., 2010; Lambert et al., 2016). Only those teachers with permanent, ongoing positions aspired to trajectories beyond the traditional classroom roles; the absence of secure employment limited the range of roles that these teachers felt they could aim for. This suggests that teacher career aspirations may be affected by the increasing rates of casualisation of the teaching workforce (Willett et al., 2014). Beyond age and job security, other demographic factors (such as gender or school location) do not appear to have a strong influence on second-stage teacher career aspirations.

The evidence presented in this thesis demonstrates that the current policy focus on retention/attrition is overly simplistic and that that “the question of teacher attrition has been under-problematised” (Buchanan, 2009b, p. 2). A sole focus on the number of teacher exits ignores the important within-career issues and dynamics that shape teacher career decisions. Instead, the focus needs to shift to consider what today’s teachers desire to get out of their teaching career. The diversity of career aspirations envisioned by second-stage teachers in this study supports the conclusion drawn by Cochran-Smith et al. (2012) that "‘stayers’ and ‘leavers’ are not homogeneous groups, as is sometimes assumed in research and policy. Rather, there are multiple variations of practice-coupled-with-career decisions” (p. 844). This thesis extends on the recent
works of Clandinin et al. (2015) and Schaefer (2013) to argue for the need to re-frame the debate away from 'retaining' teachers in the classroom towards 'sustaining' teachers in the education profession more broadly through the complex, imperfect processes of career “identity shifting and shaping” (p. 271). This places the focus on understanding teachers’ decisions to stay, leave or move within the broader perspective of career decision-making and identity development. Recent longitudinal studies of teachers' careers have noted the relationship between personal identity and professional identity (Lindqvist et al., 2014; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016). Teacher career decisions are best understood in the context of individual identity-making processes, as individual frames of reference, backgrounds and life histories are inseparable from teacher career decisions.

Analysis within this thesis identified three main contextual factors that influence second-stage teachers’ careers. The first factor is the importance of professional cultures amongst teachers. The evidence in the study suggests that there is general confusion and disagreement about what makes a 'professional' teacher as opposed to any other kind of teacher. There is a conflict between the ways in which second-stage teachers understand their professionalism and the ways in which teacher professionalism is portrayed and constructed within current policies. The teachers in this study did not see a great relevance between their careers and the current institutional context; many planned their careers regardless of the policy and structural context, not because of it. One-third of the teachers in this study did not feel that teaching was a profession. ‘Professional’ was considered by some to be “just a sort of emotional adjective that you stick before teacher”. There was a widespread perception that current reforms have created a façade of professionalism without the underlying authenticity. Current professionalism was perceived as “predominantly image rather than actual effectiveness”. Policy objectives are thus undermined by a perceived absence or lack of understanding of genuine and legitimate teacher professionalism.

The next contextual factor that influences second-stage teacher careers is the current status of teaching. Teachers perceived that changing teacher attitudes and practices alone is insufficient because of negative community attitudes towards teaching. They felt increasing pressure from parents who “always seem to want more”; teachers were “just seen as caregivers”. Second-stage teachers also argued that teaching was unique compared to other professions. Some felt that teaching was a “vocation” or calling that required “an intuition” that could not be taught. Teaching for many was also “a whole lifestyle” because of the huge workload and the fact that it “consumes your life outside
of work as well”. Unlike many other professions, teaching has relatively low barriers to entry and a teaching qualification was considered to be easy to acquire and of little practical use. There was a strong sense that teaching was disconnected from the “real world”, particularly for those who brought substantial prior work experience when making the career switch into teaching. This sense of division between teaching and the ‘real world’ is a strong impediment for those who approach teaching as one of many parts with their “portfolio career” across their work lifespan (Mayer, 2006; Smethem, 2007).

The final contextual factor found to influence second-stage teachers’ careers is the practical implementation and enactment of recent policy agendas. Over the past decade, the NSW system has stratified teachers into two groups – ‘New Scheme’ and (by default) ‘Old Scheme’. This has created perceptions of unequal treatment between those who have to meet ongoing mandatory requirements and those who do not. The attitudes of these New Scheme teachers will be highly influential over the next few years as the system is extended to all teachers by 2018. The evidence in this thesis suggests that the current generation of second-stage teachers have not fully understood or embraced the range of policies pertinent to their careers. The greatest weakness of the New Scheme system is a perception amongst teachers that it lacks rigour and depth. The way it was implemented has seen the Standards reduced to “just a process to go through to fill in boxes” and “a pesky piece of paperwork”. Current policies have become something to either ignore or resist. Although the process of becoming accredited requires a lot of work, teachers were disappointed that the actual scrutiny was not more demanding. A common perception was that “anyone who went for it got it” regardless of the quality of their practice. Casual and temporary teachers found the system particularly difficult to navigate without an ongoing relationship with a school to provide both the mentoring and financial assistance necessary for participation in professional learning. Requirements for ongoing professional learning as part of the monitoring system were generally seen as burdensome and lacking relevance. The current policy context is thus not aligned with second-stage teachers’ lived experiences of having a teaching career.
Chapter summary

In summary, this chapter has brought together all three data strands to generate inferences across the thesis as a whole and has presented a more complete conceptual framework for understanding second-stage teachers’ careers. It has culminated in several inferences that answer the driving research question: What are the career trajectories and aspirations for second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers? The next and final chapter will bring this thesis to its conclusion, summarising the key findings of the study in the light of its limitations. It will also suggest how the study may contribute to the literature and consider possible implications for future research, policy and practice.
Chapter Eight: Conclusions

This thesis has used the ‘career’ as a useful conceptual lens through which to analyse a particular group of teachers’ work patterns and goals. Based on a wide review of the literature into teacher career trajectories, Rolls and Plauborg (2009) have argued that further research is needed to “re-conceptualise the term career trajectories in such a way that it reflects the complexity of contemporary career patterns” (p. 26). This thesis was undertaken to respond to that challenge by mapping the diverse career landscape for second-stage teachers in New South Wales, Australia. In this unique and important study, teachers’ career experiences and aspirations have been interrogated and the contexts surrounding the modern teaching career have been closely examined. This chapter will reiterate the key conclusions drawn in chapter seven, identify how the research aim was fulfilled and note the significance of the findings. This chapter will also consider the limitations of the study and the implications that follow for future research, policy and practice.

Restatement of the aim and objectives

The aim of this study was to describe, interpret and explain the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in NSW. Through this in-depth investigation, the goal was to create a conceptual framework that better captured the complexity and diversity of career patterns for these teachers. This included an exploration of the diversity of ways in which teachers’ careers are constructed and made sense of, both by teachers themselves and by those shaping the organisational contexts within which they work. A convergent parallel mixed methods design was used, wherein both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in parallel, analysed separately and then merged. The study included data in the form of policy documents, workforce statistics and semi-structured interviews. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Analyse how teachers’ careers are conceptualised in current policy documents;
2. Construct a demographic picture of the NSW second-stage teacher population;
3. Gain an understanding of how second-stage teachers perceive their careers; and
4. Connect the above three lines of inquiry by looking for patterns of convergence and divergence between how teachers’ careers are
constructed within policy documents and how teachers understand and make sense of their careers.

Re-statement of inferences to the research question

This thesis initially posed several smaller research sub-questions, the findings for which were presented in the previous chapters and summarised earlier in table 7.1. This study was led by the driving research question: *What are the career trajectories and aspirations of second-stage teachers in NSW and what contextual factors influence their careers?* Drawing on a synthesis of the findings from across all strands, several inferences to this question were discussed in chapter seven, and are restated again below.

The second-stage teachers in this study aspire to a diverse range of career trajectories, and these trajectories are more diverse than the linear, lock-step career-stage model defined in the Standards. The five possible trajectories identified in this study could be understood as ranging along a continuum that extends from depth- to breadth- focused roles. Each trajectory along this continuum gradually reduces deep, direct classroom involvement and shifts towards an increasingly broader focus on education. A sixth 'exit' trajectory was also identified of those who planned to leave teaching within the next five years (see earlier figure 5.2). The trajectories identified here are not pre-determined pathways, but rather different teaching roles that teachers aspire to move into, out of and between throughout their careers. For some teachers, this includes periods of time away from teaching, making the career appear interrupted or disjointed from a traditional continuous career viewpoint. Teacher age and security of employment affect the different trajectories that teachers aspire to, however other demographic elements (such as gender or school location) do not appear to have a strong influence within this sample. The current policy focus on retention/attrition is overly simplistic and ignores the significant within-career issues that shape teacher career decisions. In general, there appears to be a fundamental disjunction between second-stage teachers' career aspirations and current policy rhetoric.

Three main contextual factors influence second-stage teachers' careers. The professional culture amongst second-stage teachers is complicated by confusion and disagreement about what makes a 'professional' teacher. One-third of the teachers in this study did not feel that teaching was a profession. There was a widespread perception that current reforms have created a façade of professionalism without the
underlying authenticity. Furthermore, teachers perceive that the current status of teaching is strongly influenced by negative community attitudes towards teaching. Policies that focus on teacher professionalism need to also acknowledge this broader social issue. Second-stage teachers argued that teaching was disconnected from the ‘real world’, and thus potentially difficult to incorporate into a portfolio approach to career emerging across the work lifespan. Finally, the practical implementation and enactment of recent policy agendas in NSW has divided teachers into two, at times conflicting, groups of New and (by default) Old Scheme teachers. The New Scheme system appears significantly weakened by a perception that it lacks rigour and depth. Unfortunately, the second-stage teachers in this study largely saw it as a bureaucratic administrative process rather than as a tool for career development. The current policy context is therefore not aligned with second-stage teachers' lived experiences of having a teaching career.

Limitations of the study

Like all research, there are several important limitations to this study’s overall strength and utility. The size and scope of the study were constrained by the limited resources I had as a solo researcher without funding. The policy context is constantly changing and other policies, which were released in 2014/15 after completing data analysis, were not included in the document analysis. Whilst NSW is an important context, this study is restricted in making broader claims about Australian teachers. In addition, the secondary data obtained from the NSWIT was far less than what was initially requested, thus limiting the scope of these findings. Reflecting upon my evolving skills and thought processes throughout the study, there are three aspects I would do differently. Firstly, I would consider using Bacchi’s (2009) ‘what is the problem represented to be?’ framework to add another dimension to the policy analysis. Secondly, given the limitations of the available workforce data, I would expand the quantitative component of the study through the use of a survey. Finally, I would develop a simpler interview schedule with fewer and broader questions to establish a better balance between being guided by the participant and covering all relevant topics.

Contributions to the literature

The findings in this study support the ‘teacher career cycle’ model (Huberman, 1993) and the ‘teacher professional life phase’ model (Day et al., 2007) by offering an in-depth analysis of teachers in their fourth to tenth year of teaching. The findings also
challenge Huberman’s model by suggesting a greater degree of diversity than is evident within his career cycle. The findings expand the knowledge base about second-stage teacher careers by offering the first contribution to this field from an Australian perspective (J. H. Berg et al., 2005; Donaldson et al., 2008; S. M. Johnson, 2009; Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2009). The demographic data presented in this study is the first time such data has been collected or published, resulting in new knowledge about the New Scheme teacher workforce. The findings presented here help to reduce the oversimplification of the teacher retention/attrition issue, and reveal the contextual complexity of teacher career decision-making that extends beyond the intention to ‘stay’ or ‘leave’. The findings also speak to literature on the Australian policy context and to existing research that aims to challenge current policy-driven conceptions of teacher professionalism (Brennan, 2009; Connell, 2009a; Gannon, 2012; Mars, 2012; Mayer, 2006). Teacher policy evolves at a rapid pace in Australia and this study contributes to the important effort to keep up to date with an understanding and evidence-based critique of these policies. The data generated in this study provides the additional evidence of teachers’ voices and aspirations that appear largely absent within current policy discourse.

**Implications for future research**

As a result of this study, further research could be conducted into second-stage teachers in Australia more broadly and in other diverse contexts. For example, what are the career trajectories of second-stage teachers in countries similar to Australia (e.g., Canada, England) or in “high-performing” countries (e.g., Finland, Hong Kong)? This additional research would help test the universality of the second-stage phenomenon. Longitudinal studies that follow second-stage teachers over a sustained period, perhaps exploring whether their career aspirations become realities, would also be valuable. This study further suggests that additional research into New Scheme teachers would be valuable, particularly ongoing research to track the implementation of the *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* policy (NSWDEC, 2013). The large gaps in the available data on the Australian teacher workforce suggest that the current *National Teacher Workforce Dataset* project (Willett et al., 2014) is a valuable task, with more work still to be done in this area.
Implications for policy and practice

The findings of this study will be of interest to policy makers focused on the long-term sustainability and wellbeing of the Australian teacher workforce. Concern about retaining effective teachers is well established (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003) and there continues to be ongoing anxiety about the “epidemic” problem of teacher attrition (Gallant & Riley, 2014). This study supports the argument that teachers cannot easily be labeled as ‘stayers’ or ‘leavers’ (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012, p. 844) and that a deeper understanding of teacher careers suggests that the focus should shift from ‘retaining’ teachers in the classroom to ‘sustaining’ them in the education profession more broadly (Clandinin et al., 2015; Schaefer et al., 2012; Schaefer, 2013). This study adds further research weight to the cluster of studies suggesting that teaching needs to evolve beyond its current classroom-bound definition to best support second-stage teacher career development (Margolis, 2008; Peske et al., 2001; Rinke, 2009, 2011; Rippon, 2005; Smethem, 2007). These findings may also be relevant to the government administrators tasked with the challenge of expanding the New Scheme system to all NSW teachers, as they suggest that the current policy context is not well aligned with second-stage teachers’ experiences of having a teaching career, and this ultimately affects their attitudes towards teaching as a profession and as an attractive career.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, this thesis has argued that second-stage teachers aspire to a far broader and more complex range of career trajectories than those assumed within the teaching Standards document and practices. Professional cultures amongst teachers, the current status of teaching and the practical implementation and enactment of recent policy agendas combine to shape the career context for second-stage teachers in NSW. For the reader, it is hoped that the arguments presented in this study have challenged the ideas and images surrounding the term ‘career trajectory’. The findings of this study suggest that the next significant phase of change in the NSW policy context will have important implications for teachers’ career aspirations and professional identities. Through listening to teachers’ voices and understanding their career aspirations, the data presented in this study and other comparable research should ideally make a valuable contribution to the development of future teacher career policies.
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Appendices

Appendix A

The URL (Uniform Resource Locator) web page addresses for the document sample, as accessed during data collection in 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>URL</th>
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Appendix B
Ethics Approval (Project No. 2013/340; Approval date: 17/5/2013)

Monday, 20 May 2013

Dr Susan Colmar
School Development & Learning; Faculty of Education & Social Work
Email: susan.colmar@sydney.edu.au

Dear Susan

I am pleased to inform you that the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved your project entitled "Retaining the first generation of professionally accredited teachers: A mixed methods study of second-stage teachers' career attitudes and goals".

Details of the approval are as follows:

- **Project No.**: 2013/340
- **Approval Date**: 17/05/2013
- **First Annual Report Due**: 17/05/2014
- **Authorised Personnel**: Colmar Susan; Johnston-Anderson Natalie;

Documents Approved:

<table>
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<td>Questionnaire Items</td>
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<td>25/03/2013</td>
<td>Interview Questions</td>
<td>Interview Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/03/2013</td>
<td>Advertisements/Flyer</td>
<td>Advertisement to recruit participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/04/2013</td>
<td>Participant Info Statement</td>
<td>Participant Information Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/04/2013</td>
<td>Participant Consent Form</td>
<td>Participant Consent Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/05/2013</td>
<td>Safety Protocol</td>
<td>Safety Protocol - Signed</td>
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</table>

HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the approval date stated in this letter and is granted pending the following conditions being met:

**Condition/s of Approval**

- Continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.
- Provision of an annual report on this research to the Human Research Ethics Committee from the approval date and at the completion of the study. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of ethics approval for the project.
- All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.
- All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
• Any changes to the project including changes to research personnel must be approved by the HREC before the research project can proceed.

**Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities:**

1. You must retain copies of all signed Consent Forms (if applicable) and provide these to the HREC on request.

2. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Dr Stephen Assinder
Chair
Human Research Ethics Committee

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), NHMRC and Universities Australia Australian Code for the Responsible Conduction of Research (2007) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.
Appendix C

Recruitment notice on NSWIT website

Attention accredited teachers!

Do you wish to contribute your thoughts and experiences regarding how accredited teachers perceive their careers? A research project is currently underway that seeks to give teachers a voice about the factors influencing their teaching careers in the current context.

The project is being conducted by teacher Natalie Johnston-Anderson for her PhD thesis, under the supervision of Dr Susan Colmar and A/Prof Dianne Bloomfield at the University of Sydney. The project is in no way affiliated with the Institute or its work.

We are seeking teachers who have achieved accreditation at ‘Professional Competence’ with the NSW Institute of Teachers and who are in their 4th to 10th year of teaching to participate in an interview (approx. 45 minutes) and a short follow-up questionnaire. The interview will be conducted at a time and place of your convenience. You will remain anonymous in the final project report.

If you are interested in participating or would like further information, please email Natalie at n.johnston-anderson@sydney.edu.au. Thank you for considering this opportunity and we look forward to hearing from you!
Appendix D

Recruitment email to TeachMeet participants for interviews

To: Teach Meet contact list

Subject line: Attention accredited teachers!

Dear Colleague,

You are receiving this email because you have previously registered to attend a TeachMeet session. My name is Natalie Johnston-Anderson and I am a teacher. Like you, I enjoy engaging with my teaching colleagues through TeachMeet.

A research project is currently underway that seeks to give teachers a real voice about the factors influencing their teaching careers in the current context. The project is being conducted for my PhD thesis, under the supervision of Dr. Susan Colmar and Associate Professor Dianne Bloomfield, and has full ethics approval.

I am currently seeking primary and secondary teachers from all sectors who have achieved accreditation at ‘Professional Competence’ with the NSW Institute of Teachers and who are in their 4th to 10th year of teaching to participate in an interview (40 mins - 1 hour) and a short follow-up questionnaire. The interview will be conducted at a time and place of your convenience and take place sometime during the next three months. The interview is entirely confidential and you will remain anonymous in the final project report. All participants will receive a $20 Westfield gift voucher as a token of appreciation.

This project is your opportunity to contribute your thoughts and experiences about how you, as an accredited teacher, perceive your career. As part of the first generation to undergo compulsory accreditation, we are in a unique cohort of teachers. I am seeking your professional support to better understand your perspective on a contemporary career in teaching.

If you are interested in participating or would like further information, please email me at n.johnston-anderson@sydney.edu.au. Please forward this invitation to any of your teaching colleagues who you think may be interested. Thank you for considering this opportunity and I look forward to hearing from you!

Kind regards,
Natalie Johnston-Anderson

NATALIE JOHNSTON-ANDERSON | Primary Teacher / Doctoral Candidate / Pre-Service Tutor
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E n.johnston-anderson@sydney.edu.au | W http://sydney.edu.au/education_social_work/
Appendix E

Participant Information Statement

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?
You are invited to participate in a study about teachers’ careers. The study is particularly interested in second-stage teachers – those teachers who are in their fourth to tenth year of teaching and have achieved accreditation at ‘Professional Competence’ / ‘Proficient Teacher’ level with the NSW Institute of Teachers. This part of the study aims to:
• Determine how second-stage teachers perceive their teaching careers
• Establish the range of attitudes and goals teachers have regarding their careers
• Investigate what impact, if any, the Professional Teaching Standards are having on teachers’ career trajectories

The study is also interested in comparing teachers’ perspectives on their careers with the perspective portrayed in the current policy documents surrounding teacher accreditation and professional development.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?
The study is being conducted by Natalie Johnston-Anderson and will form the basis for her degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney, under the supervision of Doctor Susan Colmar and Associate Professor Dianne Bloomfield.

(3) What does the study involve?
This part of the study involves participating in an audiotaped interview with the researcher. The interview will take place on school grounds outside of formal school hours (after 3.30pm). You may choose to either have the researcher come to your school to conduct the interview OR you may choose to arrange with the researcher to meet at a mutually convenient time and location.

Dr Susan Colmar
Senior Lecturer
Program Director School Counselling/
School Psychology MTeach

Room 805
Building A35
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 9351 6265
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 2606
Email: susan.colmar@sydney.edu.au
Web: http://www.sydney.edu.au/
Retaining the first generation of professionally accredited teachers:
A mixed methods study of second-stage teachers’ career perceptions and goals

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The interview will take the form of a discussion about your teaching career to date, any future career goals you have, and how you balance your teaching career with the other aspects of your life. Following the interview, you will be asked to complete a short follow-up questionnaire. There are no anticipated risks to you in participating in this study and you do not require permission to participate from your school Principal or employer.

(4) How much time does the study take?

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour to complete. The interview will be undertaken on a specific day and time of your choice, as negotiated between you and the researcher. Following the interview, you will be asked to complete a short follow-up questionnaire in your own time, to be returned in a stamped, addressed envelope provided to you.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary – you are not under any obligation to consent. If you do consent, you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with The University of Sydney or the school/s in which you teach. You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researcher will have access to information on participants. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from the study. However, your participation may help to improve our understanding of how teachers view their careers and what their aspirations are for a career in teaching. To thank you for your participation, we would like to offer you a gift voucher to the value of $20 as a token of our appreciation.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are free to disclose (or not disclose) to anyone that you are participating in this study.

(9) What if I require further information about the study or my involvement in it?

When you have read this information, Natalie Johnston-Anderson will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please contact Doctor Susan Colmar (susan.colmar@sydney.edu.au) or Associate Professor Di Bloomfield (di.bloomfield@sydney.edu.au).

(10) What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact The Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on +61 2 8627 8176 (Telephone); +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep.
Appendix F
Participant consent form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, ........................................................................[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project

TITLE: Retaining the first generation of professionally accredited teachers: A mixed methods study of second-stage teachers' career perceptions and goals

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have both been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.

3. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential. I understand that any research data gathered from the results of the study may be published however no information about me will be used in any way that is identifiable.

5. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher, the University of Sydney or the school/s in which I teach.
6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

7. I consent to:
   - Audio-recording  YES ☐ NO ☐
   - Receiving Feedback  YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback” question, please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

**Feedback Option**

Address: ______________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________

..................................................................................
Signature
..................................................................................

..................................................................................
Please PRINT name
..................................................................................

..................................................................................
Date
Appendix G

Safety protocol

SAFETY PROTOCOL

This research involves one-on-one interviews with school teachers. The researcher (Natalie Johnston-Anderson) will be conducting the interviews alone. The Supervisor (Dr Susan Colmar) considers that the safeguards provided in this safety protocol are sufficient to manage the safety risks. Risk management strategies have been discussed between the researcher and the Supervisor, and both parties are clear as to the procedure.

Prior to commencing, the researcher will discuss interview techniques and safety and perform practice interviews with the Supervisor, including how to respond to difficult or unpleasant reactions.

Interview participants will be given the opportunity to nominate the time and location of the interviews. Possible locations are:
- At the school in which the teacher works (outside of teaching hours, after 3pm)
- In a conference room in the Faculty of Education (building A35) on campus
- At a mutually agreed upon public location (eg, a café or library)

The researcher will inform both the Supervisor and the Associate Supervisor (A/Prof Dianne Bloomfield) of the time and location of each interview. The researcher will communicate prior to commencing the interview and after the interview is completed. The researcher will carry a mobile phone for use in the event of an emergency.

Should anything untoward happen, or the researcher becomes uneasy for any reason, the interview will be terminated immediately and the interviewer will leave. The Supervisor will be contacted as soon as practically possible.
Steps to ensure the researcher’s safety include:

- Conducting the interview in a public space
- Ensuring that an exit route is clearly known
- Ensuring that the door is not locked after entering the interview room
- Conducting interviews in daylight hours or in the early evening

The researcher will dress appropriate to the research context and culture. This means wearing professional attire, such as would be suitable in a school or university setting.

Transport to and from the interviews will be by car, either the researchers own car or the EDSW Faculty car.

This safety protocol has been agreed and accepted by the researcher and the Supervisor.

Supervisor’s Signature

DR SUSAN COLMAR ______________________
Please PRINT name

7/5/2013__________________________________
Date

Researcher’s Signature

NATALIE JOHNSTON-ANDERSON____________
Please PRINT name

7/5/2013__________________________________
Date
Appendix H

Interview guide

INTERVIEWEE DETAILS

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Introduction:

- Thank you for your time and participation.
- My purpose today is to find out your experiences and thoughts about your teaching career and to give teachers a voice on the issues that matter to them.
- I am a primary teacher. I am also currently completing my PhD on second-stage teachers – those in their 4th to 10th year of teaching, including myself.
- The interview will be audio recorded. All responses are confidential and anonymous.
- Participant Information Statement & Participant Consent Form – sign for ethics.
- Approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.
- Do you have any questions before we start?

Career – Background

*These first questions focus on your background and teaching experiences to date.*

1. To begin, tell me briefly about your teaching career up to this point in time.
2. When you started out in those first few years of teaching, what goals or plans did you have for your career?
3. Can you think of any 'significant moments' or 'critical incidents' in your career that have really shaped your thoughts about teaching or your career choices?
4. Think about your life and commitments outside of work. Eg. Family, relationships, responsibilities, hobbies, etc. How have commitments outside of work influenced your teaching career in the past and up to now?
5. How do you think that commitments outside of work might influence your teaching career in the future?
Teaching Standards

These next questions focus on the Professional Teaching Standards. As a teacher accredited at ‘Professional Competence’, you will have had many experiences working with the Standards.

6. What are your thoughts about the NSWIT Professional Teaching Standards (the actual standards themselves)? Why?

7. What do you think about the accreditation procedures associated with the Standards? Why?

8. How do the NSWIT, its Standards and accreditation processes influence your attitude towards your career? Why?
   [Prompt: Do they help you to make career choices? How do you ‘use’ them? Do you think they help to raise the status of the profession? Is there a divide between old and new Scheme teachers? Do you feel connected to the NSWIT?]

9. In 2010, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was formed. For the first time, Australia now has a national body overseeing teaching in every state and territory. Have you seen the AITSL Standards and policies?
   [Prompt: Have you seen the AITSL website? Have you seen AITSL on Twitter?]

10. What are your thoughts or opinions about AITSL (as distinct from the NSWIT)?

I am interested in exploring this word “professional” as part of my research. It’s repeated many times in these documents.

11. What does being a “professional” teacher mean to you?
   [Prompt: Do you think of yourself as being a “professional” teacher?]

12. At the present time, do you feel that teaching is a true “profession”? Why or why not?
   [Prompt: Does this label of “professional” apply to teachers? Do you think of yourself this way]

Professional Roles and Activities

These next questions focus on the kinds of professional roles and activities you might engage in.

13. Are you interested in pursuing a promotion or a leadership role? Why/Why not?

14. What do you think attracts people to a promotion role?

15. What do you think inhibits people from applying for a promotion role?

16. Recent US research suggests that many of today’s teachers are looking for differentiated roles – school-based, non-traditional classroom teaching roles. Eg. Specialising (ESL, behaviour, curriculum, assessment etc.) or taking up a different role without a full-time teaching load. There is a sense that traditional classroom teaching doesn’t offer a sufficient diversity of roles or opportunities. Is this something you have considered? Would you be interested in pursuing a differentiated role? Why/Why not?

17. US research also suggests that many of today’s teachers are seeking to have careers in ‘education’ in its broadest sense, beyond a traditional career in just ‘classroom teaching’.
   Is this something that you have considered? Does this idea resonate with you? Why/Why not?
The NSWIT mandates that teachers must engage in and register 100 hours of professional learning for every five-year block of accreditation.

18. What kinds of professional learning do you most like to engage in? Why?
19. Which kinds do you least like to engage in? Why?
20. How much autonomy do you have when it comes to choosing the professional learning that you engage in? [Prompt: Who is responsible for this? You? The system? Your principal?]
21. You were recruited for this study through the Teach Meet professional learning forum. What is it that attracted you to Teach Meet?

Career – Future
These final questions focus on the future and where your teaching career might go next.

22. Ideally, where would you like to take your teaching career from here?
   [Prompt: Have you set any goals or plans for your future teaching career (next 5-10 years?)]
23. Do you intend to make teaching your lifelong career? Why/why not?
24. If teaching were to be your lifelong career, what factors would support this?
25. If teaching were to be your lifelong career, what factors would hinder it?
26. Presently, who do you feel is in control of your teaching career? Would you like this to change? [Prompt: To what degree is your teaching career structured for you? To what degree do you structure it yourself?]

Conclusion
Is there anything further that you would like to discuss?
Do you have any questions that you would like to ask?
### Appendix I

Spreadsheet of interview participant details

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