

A new way forward for *Teaching Science*:

A report on the future of the *Teaching Science* journal

Dr Rachel Sheffield, Julie-Anne Smith, Geoff Quinton,
John Glistak, Professor David Treagust

Aim

The Executive of the Australian Science Teachers Association is considering strategic options for the future of their journal, *Teaching Science*. ASTA Executive asked the research team to initiate the work around this; the first stage being a 'landscape survey' of some of the factors that need to be considered when reviewing the future of the publication and achieving maximum benefit to the members of the state and territory science teachers associations.

Research Questions

1. How do members of the state and territory Australian Science Teachers Associations use the journal, *Teaching Science*?
2. What do members of the state and territory Australian Science Teachers Associations, including the ASTA Executive, see as the future of the journal?
3. What are the recommendations that will 'future proof' the journal for the future of ASTA?



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Instruments

1. Submitted manuscripts to *Teaching Science* — collated information.
2. Survey. Using the Qualtrics survey, an online survey was created. The link was provided to all members of the state and territory science teachers associations through the ASTA Executive. It was then distributed to members by each of the STAs.

Results

There were 220 respondents to the survey of which 78% were secondary teachers and 12% were primary teachers. The respondents had a range of experience with 25% having over 26 years' experience, and 43% with between 11–25 years' experience.

Seventy seven percent of the respondents stated they read *Teaching Science*. So of 23% who did not read the journal, their main responses were: (a) scan and discard — not relevant (25%), (b) didn't know it existed (20%), (c) do not receive it or not regularly (20%), and (d) too busy (20%).

When asked about the usefulness of *Teaching Science* articles they reported that articles about professional knowledge were very or extremely useful 50% of the time, while articles about classroom knowledge and science content knowledge were very useful or extremely useful 42% of the time.

With regard to what papers they would like to see in the journal in the future, 66% wanted more papers that focused on practical classroom knowledge, while 41% wanted more papers that explored science content knowledge.

When asked how the respondents would prefer to receive *Teaching Science* in the future, 52% preferred an online and paper-based version; 35% preferred an online version only, while 13% were happy with the paper-based version.

Summary findings and recommendations

1. **Online journal.** The overwhelming response was that the journal needs to move online. It is suggested that the journal has both a print version and an online version.
2. **Practitioner papers and research papers.** There was significant response about increasing the number of papers from practicing teachers, and that they be engaging and hands-on. It is hoped that this will encourage more teachers to share their practices.
3. **Increasing access.** Encourage a wider readership by ensuring that all members of any state or territory science teachers association have access to either the online and or the paper version, depending on their membership.
4. **Section the journal.** Several respondents commented on the lack of primary science education papers and they requested that other types of papers be included in the journal.

The October 2017 ASTA Council Meeting received the full report, which can be found on the ASTA website, and has approved the above recommendations.

Work has already commenced to implement these recommendations during the course of 2018.

Annual Conference of the Science Teachers' Association of Tasmania (CONSTAT)

Theme: *Game Changers and Change Makers*

When: Friday 23rd March (Field trips and on-site excursions in the North West of Tasmania followed by the CONSTAT 2018 Conference dinner)
Saturday 24th March, 2018 (Conference Proceedings)
STAT AGM will also be held on Sat 24 March.

Where: Hellyer College, 41–43 Mooreville, Burnie, TAS 7320