



# TEACHING IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION

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## Introduction

Teachers in Brisbane Catholic Education schools are required by law to be registered to teach with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT).

In addition they are required to be accredited to teach in a Catholic school in Queensland.

Teachers of religion are also required to be accredited to teach religion in Queensland:

*Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school also includes accreditation to teach in a Catholic school. By fulfilling the requirements to teach religion in a Catholic school, a teacher is also fulfilling the requirements for accreditation to teach in a Catholic school.*

Casual/Relief teachers will not be required to be accredited.

As well as detailing the processes for gaining and maintaining:

1. Registration with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT)
2. Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic school and
3. Accreditation to Teach Religion in a Catholic school.

This document explains:

1. Who can teach religion in a Catholic school
2. The nature of *Continuous Professional Learning* for accreditation purposes
3. The need for a personal *Accreditation Register*.

## A. TEACHER REGISTRATION

Gaining professional registration is an important landmark in a teacher's career. It means the teacher has met the professional standards for entry into the profession in Queensland, and opens the way for continuing professional learning and development in the future.

Standards which must be met relate to qualifications and suitability to teach. To satisfy the requirements of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*, **criminal history checks** are conducted on all applicants prior to admission to the Register.

Anyone who wishes to teach in Queensland schools must be registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT).

### GAINING REGISTRATION

To apply for teacher registration all applicants need to complete the **Application for Teacher Registration form** online. Applicants will need to meet the **requirements of registration**. Applicants who do not meet the academic requirements may be eligible to **apply under s8(1)(a)(ii) and s9(1)(a)(ii)**.

Applicants registered in other Australian states and territories or New Zealand may choose to apply under the **mutual recognition** provision.

Very experienced teachers from other countries may be considered for full registration if they meet the professional standards for full registration and can provide supporting documentation.

See the QCT website for further details: <http://www.qct.edu.au/registration/index.html>

### RENEWING REGISTRATION

In order to remain registered all registered teachers must pay the annual fee. In addition, under the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*, all fully registered teachers must renew their registration every five years.

The period of full registration is five years from the day the QCT grants the registration. However, if a teacher held provisional registration and the teacher subsequently obtained full registration, the period of full registration is reduced by the period for which the teacher held provisional registration. For example, if a teacher was provisionally registered for two years, the initial period of full registration would be three years.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

For renewal of registration, teachers who demonstrate recency of practice must also have undertaken continuing professional development (CPD) as required under the *Continuing Professional Development Framework* of the QCT. Teachers must also demonstrate their continuing suitability to teach (a **criminal history check** will be conducted by the QCT).

*The CPD required* means that teachers will undertake CPD that demonstrates:

- + a balance across the following identified areas
- + employer directed and supported CPD
- + school supported CPD
- + individually identified CPD
- + a range of types of CPD activities and
- + completion of at least the minimum amount required.

The CPD will be of at least 30 hours per year for full time teachers, with reduced requirements for teachers not working full time (see Table 2 on the QCT website for pro-rata amounts).

QCT website: <http://www.qct.edu.au/registration/index.html>

The CPD completed will have regard to the *Professional Standards for Queensland Teachers*.

## **B. ACCREDITATION TO TEACH IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

### **GAINING ACCREDITATION TO TEACH**

1. Registered teachers will be granted accreditation to teach on the basis of evidence of at least twenty five hours of approved professional development over the previous five years in the areas such as Catholic schooling.

Teachers granted accreditation to teach may seek accreditation to teach religion by fulfilling the requirements listed under that category.

2. Registered teachers who do not fulfil the requirements noted in 1 (above) will be granted an “interim accreditation” until such time as they fulfil the requirements in 1 (above). Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Executive Director or nominee, will an interim accreditation period exceed five years.

Exceptions to the above arrangements will be at the discretion of the Executive Director or nominee.

It is the responsibility of those teachers granted interim accreditation to teach to ensure that they meet the requirements for full accreditation by the end of the year 2014.

Teachers granted interim accreditation to teach may seek accreditation to teach religion by fulfilling the requirements listed under that category.

### **RENEWAL OF ACCREDITATION TO TEACH**

Accreditation has to be renewed (except in circumstances approved by the Executive Director or nominee) every five years.

To renew accreditation to teach in a Catholic school for a further five years, teachers will need to have completed the approved professional development requirements of at least 25 hours over the five years. In effect, this minimum requirement could be met by: 25 hours of Tertiary Studies or participation in one full day (five hours, excluding breaks) in-service per year for the five years.

However, if more than 25 hours is achieved in the five year period, the excess cannot be accrued into a subsequent five year period.

## C. ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

### GAINING ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1. Registered Catholic teachers will be granted accreditation on the basis of evidence of:
  - their Catholicity
  - the equivalent of 4 semester units of tertiary studies in the areas of theology, spirituality, Catholic education, or Religious education;
  - their ability to apply theology and spirituality to the teaching of religion.

A teacher might meet this requirement by completing for example:

- ✚ 4 religion units within the B.Ed at the Australian Catholic University or
- ✚ Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology (Foundations) or
- ✚ 4 units of the Graduate Diploma Religious Education at the Australian Catholic University.

2. Teachers who hold Accreditation to Teach Religion Status, may gain accreditation on the basis of evidence of:
  - ✚ Accreditation to Teach Religion in that diocese
  - ✚ maintenance of renewal requirements and
  - ✚ Catholicity.
3. Teachers who do not fulfil the requirements noted in 1 & 2 above will be granted an "interim accreditation" until such time as they fulfil the requirements for accreditation.

Only in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Executive Director, or nominee, will an interim accreditation period exceed five years.

Exceptions to the above arrangements will be at the discretion of the Executive Director or nominee.

It is the responsibility of those teachers granted interim accreditation to teach religion to ensure that they meet the requirements for full accreditation by the end of the year 2014.

### RENEWING ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION

To renew accreditation to teach religion for a further five years, teachers will need to:

- (a) fulfil the requirement of at least 25 hours over the five years of 'participation in professional development activities that support and enhance the religious dimension of education in a Catholic School' (ie the same requirement of teachers who do not teach religion). In effect, this requirement could be met by 25 hours of tertiary studies or participation in one full day (five hours, excluding breaks) in-service per year for the five years.

**AND**

- (b) fulfil the additional professional development requirement of at least 25 hours over the five years focussed specifically on teaching religion in the classroom. Again, a school could provide this during a staff in-service day per year during the five year period.

If more than the required hours are achieved in the five year period, the excess cannot be accrued into a subsequent five year period.

#### **D. WHO CAN TEACH RELIGION IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL?**

Attention is drawn to the current diocesan regulation (May 1994) that states:

*"Only committed Catholic teachers teach the RE program.*

This is not meant in any way to denigrate the contributions of non Catholic teachers to Catholic schools. However, teaching religion is more than imparting knowledge and involves teaching with our whole being. An effective teacher of religion, therefore, will be living out their faith and this total witness will be the real teaching tool.

In ecumenical schools, teachers of the faith traditions of the school may be accredited to teach religion in that particular school.

From time to time temporary circumstances may arise where a particular school finds it necessary to request approval for a non catholic teacher to teach religion. In these cases, approval to teach religion in a Catholic school where granted by the Director of Employee Services to a non catholic teacher will normally discontinue once circumstances change and a Catholic teacher of religion becomes available.

#### **E. DOES ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION STATUS AUTOMATICALLY ENTITLE ACCESS TO A RELIGION CLASS?**

In addition to the current diocesan regulation above, reminder is given to the current Archdiocesan policy (May, 1994) that:

*The Principal ensures that teachers are selected who will effectively implement the religion program and contribute to the ethos of the school. In other words, religion classes are allocated on the basis of school needs and not merely accreditation status.*

## F. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

For accreditation purposes, Continuous Professional Learning can take many forms and occur at various locations:

It can, for example, take the form of:

- ✚ lectures and workshops
- ✚ professional reading groups
- ✚ professional learning days
- ✚ formal study.

It can be organised at:

- ✚ at an individual school level
- ✚ within a cluster of schools
- ✚ or centrally organised by Brisbane Catholic Education.  
(eg lectures/workshops by a visiting teacher or religion specialist)

The designers of programs to be delivered at these levels would need to ensure that the programmes focus on key areas such as the ethos of the Catholic School. Programs focusing on personal development and areas such as stress management would not meet the requirements in this area.

**Typical in-service themes for accreditation purposes could include:**

### TO TEACH

- spirituality of the teacher
- why Catholic schools?
- RE across the curriculum
- school as part of Church
- ethos of Catholic school
- history of Catholic school in Australia.

## **TO TEACH RELIGION**

- theological input on topics being taught in the teaching of religion programme
- spirituality of the religion teacher
- programming, assessment and reporting in religion
- evaluating a religion programme
- teaching methods in religion
- use of scripture in the teaching of religion
- christology, morality, sacraments
- religious education across the curriculum
- prayer and liturgy at school
- Catholic education and social justice

## **G. PERSONAL ACCREDITATION REGISTER**

Each teacher should ensure that their personal attendance register is maintained and validated. A *Teacher Log* is available on the Kweb.

## **H. BREAKS IN SERVICE**

If a teacher has a break of service of more than five years, they will need to begin a new five year renewal of accreditation period. However, if a teacher has accrued, e.g. ten hours of inservicing after two years, and has a break of service of five years or less, they can accrue these ten hours at the recommencement of their service.

## **I. CASUAL TEACHERS**

Casual teachers have been exempted from the need to be accredited. However, it is recommended that they gain and maintain accreditation so that they maximise their options for the future.

Casual teachers are employed on an intermittent basis to relieve teachers absent from duty or to meet a short term staffing need. Casual teachers are employed for a maximum period of five (5) days in respect to any one engagement.