



Continuing Professional Learning and Program Accreditation Policy

Purpose

This policy provides the framework for the continuing professional learning and development of ACT teachers required for registration purposes, the recognition of providers of accredited professional development programs and the accreditation of such programs.

Legislative reference

The *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010* (the Act) defines the relationship between ACT teacher registration/approval and the continuing professional learning and development of the ACT teaching profession. Sections 6 and 11 of the Act articulate the ACT Teacher Quality Institute's (TQI) role in the promotion and recognition of the professional learning and development of teachers. Section 38 of the Act imposes professional learning obligations on teachers approved under the Act and empowers TQI to issue directions on professional learning obligations for approved teachers.

The *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Regulation 2010* specifies the annual amount of professional learning and development required for renewal of registration/approval under the Act. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (Continuing Professional Learning and Development for Approved Teachers) Directions 2014 (*Notifiable Instrument NI2014-53*) specifies in detail the directions issued under s.38 of the Act requiring teachers to record and reflect on a minimum of 20 hours of professional learning per year (or 100 hours over a period of five years) as prescribed by Regulation, the character of the professional learning and development prescribed, and the minimum proportions of the total hours of professional learning which must be drawn from accredited and teacher-identified activities.

Application

This policy is relevant to:

- all ACT teachers with TQI registration or a permit to teach and their schools and employers. The Act specifies that teachers may be delivering education services in schools, working in the assessment of student participation in education services or working in the administration of education services. See section in this Policy titled 'Policy for Recognition of Providers'.
- Recognised Providers of Accredited teacher professional learning programs in the ACT including schools and teacher employers (Recognised Provider information is detailed in this policy titled 'Policy for Recognition of Providers').

Scope

This document provides statements of TQI policy in relation to:

- professional learning and development for registration renewal
- recognition of providers of teacher professional learning programs and
- accreditation of teacher professional learning programs.

This policy is supported by:

- *TQI Professional Learning and Development Committee (PLaD) Guidelines*
- *TQI Handbook to Continuing Professional Learning Program Accreditation.*

Teacher Professional Learning - definitions

TQI seeks to recognise and encourage the engagement of teachers in high quality professional learning. Under section 51 of the Act, ongoing professional learning is one of the requirements for renewal of teacher registration/permit to teach in the ACT and is defined as covering the continuing professional learning or development required by TQI. It incorporates:

- quality professional learning activities based on individual, team, school, system or employer priorities
- professional reflection on and evaluation of professional learning activities.

TQI's approach to the recognition of teacher professional learning connects the four career stages of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and the *Australian Professional Standard for Principals* to professional growth and is a key means by which members of the profession deepen their knowledge and improve their professional practice to respond to student learning needs.

Categories of Professional Learning

TQI supports the provision of professional learning that is broad, flexible and innovative and has identified two categories of professional development to assist teachers in the renewal of their registration/permit to teach. Both are equally important in supporting teacher professional learning and growth:

- TQI Accredited teacher professional learning programs
- Teacher Identified professional learning.

TQI Accredited teacher professional learning programs are designed and delivered by Recognised Providers and must meet the assessment criteria outlined in section of this of this policy titled 'Policy for the Accreditation of Programs'. They include evaluation and professional reflection by teachers.

Teacher Identified professional learning must align with the Professional Standards, be relevant for teachers and improve teacher professional knowledge, practice and engagement, and must respond to student learning needs. It includes professional reflection by teachers.

Policy statement – Teacher professional learning

It is a legislative requirement that teachers **complete and reflect on** a minimum of 20 hours of professional learning for renewal of registration/permit to teach. The teacher nominates which 20 hours of professional learning from the calendar year preceding renewal they submit to meet this requirement, including the associated professional reflections, for sharing with professional delegates.

- The 20 hours must be mapped against the Professional Standards, with teachers encouraged to engage in professional learning from each of the Professional Standards across a five-year period.
- The 20 hours must include a combination of Accredited Programs and Teacher Identified activities and a balance between the two is advocated.
- A formal academic study or action research Teacher Identified activity is recognised as contributing up to 10 hours of the required hours for registration renewal.
- All other Teacher Identified activities are recognised as contributing up to five hours per activity of the required hours for registration renewal.
- While the teacher registration period is from 1 April in one year to 31 March the following year, the TQI requirement for registration/permit to teach renewal is 20 hours of professional learning completed and recorded in the calendar year preceding the renewal.
- All professional learning activities nominated and submitted for registration renewal must be verified by a professional delegate as defined in the section of this policy titled 'Verification'.
- Pro rata professional learning arrangements apply for teachers whose initial registration commences part way through the year. Teachers who register on or after 1 July are required to complete 10 hours from either category; those registering after 1 October are required to complete five hours from either category. These arrangements reflect the adjustments for payment of part-year teacher registration application fees.

- TQI automatically recognises 5 hours of teacher identified professional learning when a teacher moves from Provisional to Full registration or submits a module for Certification as Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher. This recognises the professional learning that occurs for teachers when evidencing their practice against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. This professional learning does not require verification and teachers are not required to reflect on this learning.

Verification

Except for professional learning automatically applied to a teacher's profile for moving to Provisional to Full registration or for submitting a Certification module for assessment, professional learning submitted by a teacher to meet the requirements for renewal of registration/permit to teach under the Act must have been verified by a delegate approved by TQI. TQI will approve delegates from:

- a Recognised Provider
- a school
- the management of a school system.

Approved delegates in schools verify teacher PL through a professional learning conversation with the teacher before the end of each school year. The teacher's PL record from the TQI portal can provide valuable supporting information for the professional conversation including their:

- learning goals linked to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* or *Australian Professional Standard for Principals*,
- professional reflections on PL activities undertaken, and
- data and graphs about their PL records.

Teachers have the option to print this information to share with verification delegates in the professional conversation.

The professional learning verification conversation can be incorporated into existing professional conversations or professional planning discussions that teachers participate in as part of their normal engagement in a school or workplace.

The conversation may occur before or after the required 20 hours PL for registration purposes has been achieved by the teacher. The verification delegate confirms that this conversation has taken place by updating the teacher's record on the TQI portal.

For teachers who are not attached to an employer/school, there are several verification options available:

- With the agreement of a school, a teacher can be added to the school list for PL purposes. With this option the access to the casual teacher's submitted PL records and the verification process is the same as for all other teachers at the school, or
- Teachers can request to have their PL Summary verified through a professional conversation with a TQI officer.

Extenuating circumstances

Where a teacher experiences extenuating circumstances beyond their control which prevent them from meeting the 20 hours required for renewal of registration in any one year, the teacher must contact TQI as early as possible before the end of the school year to propose a professional learning variation plan. The variation plan must set out how the teacher proposes to complete the balance of their required hours. TQI may request verifiable supporting documentation, depending on the nature of the extenuating circumstance.

Quality Assurance Audit

Teachers are responsible for the accuracy of their professional learning records. Records of professional learning will be randomly selected for quality assurance audits by TQI and teachers may be required to substantiate claims made in them by providing verifiable evidence.

Policy statement - recognition of providers

TQI seeks to develop partnerships with organisations in support of the engagement of teachers in high quality professional learning and development. Once confirmed by TQI as a Recognised Provider such organisations are able to apply to have professional learning programs Accredited. Under section 77 of the Act, Recognised Provider approval is dependent on TQI assessment to determine the educational and management capacity of the provider for program accreditation purposes.

ACT Recognised Providers can be:

- an ACT Public, Catholic or Independent school
- the Education Directorate
- the Catholic Education Office
- the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT
- ACT education unions
- Registered Training Organisations (RTO)
- education institutions with a CRICOS number
- an individual or organisation with professional learning provider or program accreditation from a teacher registration body in another Australian jurisdiction
- a member of an ACT or Commonwealth Government training panel
- an association registered with the ACT Office of Regulatory Services
- an organisation on the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission Register.

Other organisations may apply to become a Recognised Provider and will be asked to provide additional information during the application process in relation to insurance cover, policies for statutory obligations relevant to professional learning and an overview of their teacher professional learning functions and programs.

Delegates

Recognised Providers must nominate and maintain delegations for staff administering professional learning functions on the TQI portal.

Declarations

The Recognised Provider and program accreditation applications include compulsory questions and declarations, including that the applicant has read and understood key information prior to making the application and that the information provided is true and correct.

Policy statement - accreditation of programs

An application to have a professional learning program Accredited by TQI may only be made by a Recognised Provider. TQI recognition of a provider does not guarantee that each program submitted by the provider will be accredited.

Accredited Programs must be a minimum of two hours' duration. Any one day accredited program can claim a maximum of five hours. All online/virtual deliveries can claim a maximum of 10 hours for any one program. The program accreditation process is based on a quality assurance framework which includes the following criteria:

Standards based	Developing professional knowledge, practice and engagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As outlined in the <i>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</i> and <i>Australian Professional Standard for Principals</i>
Relevant	Supporting student learning, engagement with learning and wellbeing. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Linked to student learning and school needs, based on current research, aligned to Australian curriculum frameworks, addresses school, system and employer priorities, designed for adult learners.
Collaborative	Enhancing teacher and leader quality and agency. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through professional collaboration, collective inquiry, professional reflection with peers and experts; enhancing professional learning communities.
Future focussed	Promoting teacher and leader innovation and feedback for next practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In response to current and emerging challenges; prompting research, innovation and skill development to broaden repertoire.

Applications for program accreditation can be made at any time. The initial assessment of complete applications for program accreditation may take up to 20 working days. Programs will be accredited by TQI for a period of one year with the possibility of a one year renewal dependent on TQI program evaluation.

Programs Accredited in another Australian jurisdiction

TQI may recognise a program which has been accredited by a teacher registration/accreditation body in another Australian jurisdiction, subject to:

- TQI being satisfied with the education and management capacity of the provider
- The provider giving TQI the requested provide and program details in the requested format.

Register of Accredited programs

Section 71 of the Act and section 19 of the TQI Regulation require TQI to keep a public register of all accredited teacher education programs. TQI will meet this obligation by providing a searchable online register available from the Teacher Portal and the TQI public website which will contain the following:

- details about the Accredited Program
- information on the accreditation status of programs – whether they are currently Accredited, conditionally Accredited, suspended or cancelled.

Programs that are denied initial accreditation by TQI are not included on the register.

Suspension or cancellation of accreditation

TQI may suspend or cancel the accreditation of a program if:

- evaluations indicate that the program does not meet the accreditation criteria or
- the Recognised Provider does not have the educational and management capacity to deliver Accredited Programs

and the provider has been unable to rectify the problem.

If a professional learning program is denied accreditation, the provider will be notified in writing of the reasons for the proposed refusal to accredit and inviting a written response to TQI within 14 days.

Right of appeal

A decision to deny program accreditation or renewal of accreditation is a reviewable decision under the Act. In the first instance, a Recognised Provider who is dissatisfied with a decision by TQI should seek reconsideration by TQI.

If still dissatisfied, the Recognised Provider may appeal to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal for a review of the decision. TQI will give the provider concerned notice whenever it makes a reviewable decision.

Record keeping

To permit quality assurance audits, teachers should retain relevant professional learning records for a period of 18 months after the date the activity was completed. Recognised Providers should retain attendance records for Accredited Programs for a period of 18 months after the date the activity was completed.

Privacy

TQI has issued a Territory Privacy Principle 5 (TPP 5) notice for the collection of personal information, in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2014*.

The notice is available online and outlines:

- when personal information is collected and how it is used
- when personal information may be disclosed and the legislative authority for that disclosure
- the impact if you do not consent to supplying TQI with the information requested
- what to do if you believe that TQI has not handled your personal information correctly

To request a copy of the TPP 5 notice in another format, please contact TQI.

Policy information

Approved by

The ACT Teacher Quality Institute Board.

Approval date

Current policy approved by the TQI Board on 28 February 2023.

Publication of policy

This policy will be published on the TQI Portal and website and made available in printed format on request. The version of the policy on the portal can be regarded as the policy in force at that time.

Review and changes to policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years from the date of approval, or earlier if required. All changes to the policy are approved by the TQI Board.



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