

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What support does the Institute provide for new scheme teachers?

The Institute has developed policies, processes and materials that are designed to support you as you progress through different stages of your career.

As a new scheme teacher working towards accreditation at Professional Competence you have access to a set of materials developed to assist you in the accreditation process. These materials - *The Professional Teaching Standards*, *Information for New Scheme Teachers* and *Advice for Casual, Temporary and Part-Time Teachers* - are posted to all new scheme teachers. These are also accessible via the Institute's website.

If you are a returning teacher who needs to be accredited at Professional Competence you will find two documents *Accreditation at Professional Competence for Returning Teachers* and *Information for Returning Teachers* on the Institute's website. These materials are written with your context in mind.

Your school will also have a copy of the *Teacher Accreditation Manual*. This manual outlines the policies and processes concerning accreditation. It also contains accreditation support documents including the *Evidence Guide* and a copy of the *Professional Teaching Standards*. You will find the *Evidence Guide* useful as it describes what the Standards look like in practice, in the classroom and wider school context. It is also available as a stand alone document on the website.

Exemplars of evidence and Accreditation Reports are available on the website. These are designed to help you and your school as you compile the annotated evidence that will accompany your Accreditation Report.

You receive further support from the Institute once you have achieved Professional Competence. The Institute has a register of quality assured professional development courses designed to support achievement and maintenance of the Professional Teaching Standards. These courses are offered by a range of providers and information about them is available on the Institute's website.

The Institute also has a range of publications developed specifically to support and inform new scheme teachers. The publications are 'The Digest' which is a review of key messages from research on a single topic; 'The Knowledge' which provides insight of current issues in education and 'The Spray' in which two commentators offer their views on a single issue in education. Links to these publications are emailed to accredited teachers and are also available on the Institute's website.

### What else does the Institute do?

The Institute establishes professional teaching standards, monitors accreditation decisions and assures the quality of initial and continuing teacher education courses and programs. These are core activities for all professions.

### Who has to be accredited?

All new scheme teachers must be accredited. You are a new scheme teacher if you are:

- employed as a teacher in NSW for the first time after 30 September, 2004
- returning to employment as a teacher following a period of at least 5 years during which time you were not employed to teach in NSW.

### Who has to pay the accreditation fee?

All new scheme teachers are liable for payment of the annual fee. The fee applies equally to all new scheme teachers whether they are employed to teach on a full-time, casual, part-time or temporary basis.

The fee is payable from the date you are available to teach, regardless of whether you are employed.

The Regulation does not provide discretion to waive or refund part of the fee on the basis of whether you worked for whole or part of the year, or based on the extent of work you undertook.

Teachers who have not paid their fees who decide to withdraw from accreditation and hence employment as a teacher, are required to pay any outstanding fees.

All Australian States and Territories, with the exception of the ACT require teachers to be registered or accredited and to pay an annual fee.

### **Do I have to pay the fee?**

The payment of the accreditation fee is mandatory for new scheme teachers. It is a condition of your accreditation that the annual fee is paid.

### **Who prescribed the fees?**

The requirement to pay fees is set out in the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*. The Bill introducing the Act was supported by both the Government and Opposition.

The annual fee is established by Government Regulation

Being set by Regulation, fees cannot be changed without legal process.

### **Is the fee tax deductible?**

The accreditation fee may be claimed as a tax deduction. The fees are also exempt from the GST.

### **I taught in NSW prior to October 2004. Do I have to be accredited?**

If you taught prior to 1 October 2004 and your last day of teaching was not more than 5 years prior to your date of accreditation, then you do not have to be accredited.

If you believe that you are an existing teacher you may write to the Institute requesting that your accreditation be annulled. Supporting evidence, such as a payslip, group certificate or statement from the school where you were employed, must be included with any such request to the Institute.

You should also provide a copy of this evidence to your teacher accreditation authority

### **I have not taught in NSW and do not plan to do so or want to do so shortly. Do I have to be accredited?**

No you do not have to be accredited. You need to inform the Institute in writing within three months of receiving initial advice of your accreditation that you have not taught and wish to *withdraw from accreditation*. The Institute will then cancel your accreditation and the invoice. If you advise the Institute later your accreditation will be cancelled but the fee will remain payable in full.

If your accreditation is cancelled you may not teach in any NSW school.

If, in the future, you decide to teach in NSW, you will need to re-apply to the Institute to be accredited.

Teachers who fail to re-apply for accreditation upon returning to work are in breach of the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*.

### **I have taught in NSW but am no longer doing so. Do I have to pay the accreditation fee?**

You should *withdraw from accreditation*. You need to contact the Institute in writing giving the last day that you taught. If you advise the Institute before fees are invoiced for the relevant year, no fee will be payable for that year. If you advise the Institute later, the annual fee remains payable in full. You should ensure that any prior year fees are paid in full.

### **What happens if I knowingly provide false information to the Institute?**

The *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* provides significant penalties for persons knowingly providing false information or misrepresenting their accreditation.

When you provide information or make a declaration to the Institute this information must be correct. Similarly, it is an offence if you are a new scheme teacher to be employed to teach unless you are accredited.

### **How is the Government supporting the Institute?**

The Government has allocated \$20m over 4 years to support the establishment of the Institute.