



JULY 2008

**UPDATE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS**

**For distribution to ALL TEACHER EDUCATORS and ADMINISTRATION STAFF working with initial teacher education programs and students, including those in Central Administration and in other Faculties where relevant**

The Initial Teacher Education team at the Institute of Teachers draws your attention to the following matters and will be pleased to clarify further any matter raised here.

**1. Assessment of transcripts and determination of prerequisites for admission to primary and secondary graduate entry programs**

- The Institute of Teachers' Supplementary Documentation *Graduate Teacher Standards 1.1.1-1.1.3 Subject Content Requirements* describes the prerequisites for admission to primary or secondary graduate entry initial teacher education programs.
- The Institute of Teachers' subject content requirements and a new accompanying document *Clarification of Secondary Second Teaching Area* set out the specifications for assessment of transcripts.
- The above documents are available on the Institute website. Applicants may assess their own transcript/s using the self-assessment form provided online. An institution may recommend that applicants undertake a self-assessment before application, but an applicant's self-assessment cannot substitute for a teacher education institution (TEI) assessment decision.

**2. Graduates eligible for provisional accreditation as a teacher in NSW**

- All graduates of initial teacher education programs approved by the Minister through the Institute of Teachers' approval processes will be eligible for provisional accreditation to teach in NSW schools.
- The assessment of transcripts of relevant undergraduate and appropriate postgraduate Awards is the responsibility of program conveners in teacher education institutions.
- Applicants to a graduate entry program are NOT expected to contact the Institute of Teachers or the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) for assessment of transcripts.
- The 'one-stop-shop' agreed to by the Director-General of Education and Training means that all graduates of an Institute approved program will meet the requirements for provisional accreditation requirements and eligibility to teach in NSW government schools.

**3. Advice to potential applicants for Graduate Entry programs in 2008 and before, and 2009 and beyond**

*Pre 2009*

- In 2008 and earlier, DET provided an opportunity for all applicants to check its subject content requirements on the DET website; in addition DET provided 'prescription advice' letters.
- Currently enrolled students may seek prescription advice from DET in 2008.
- Where an applicant who enrolled in 2008 or earlier does not meet the DET subject content requirements they may not be eligible for employment.

*2009 and beyond*

- For 2009 applicants, DET as an employer is NOT providing letters of 'prescription advice'.

- The Institute of Teachers' subject content requirements are prerequisites for admission to a graduate entry initial teacher education program.

*International applicants seeking to undertake a graduate entry initial teacher education program*

- For international graduate applicants, a teacher education institution is required to establish that the applicant has qualifications equivalent to an Australian Bachelor degree (Australian Qualification Framework [AQF] Award) in addition to subject content requirements. The Institute understands that all teacher education institutions (central administration) have online access to the Australian Government National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) Country Education Profiles that provide advice on equivalence of international qualifications with AQF qualifications. Determination of equivalence of overseas qualifications will be required as well as subject content requirements prior to admission to an initial teacher education graduate entry program.

**4. Advice on TEI websites related to Institute and DET processes**

Some potential applicants sourcing information on TEI websites about teacher education programs have reported incorrect or out of date information. The Institute has been directed to statements that are old, or new but not accurate. Program conveners will need to ensure that advice related to Institute and DET procedures is as discussed in points 1-3 above. Institute staff is happy to discuss appropriate wording with you.

**5. Timeline for programs submitted by 30 April 2008**

The Institute acknowledges the many programs submitted by 30 April 2008 deadline for approval. In line with *Document 7: Steps in the Process and Indicative Timeline* the Institute has checked original documentation and established a large number of ITEC Panels for ITEC approval. The Institute is confirming panel meeting dates with institutions concerned.

**6. Additional Executive Officers in the process of review and assessment of programs**

The Institute has trained several additional staff - retired teacher educators and school principals - to assist in the process of review and assessment of programs, by undertaking the role of executive officers. These staff will shadow Institute staff on a panel before undertaking this role fully.

**7. Workshop on assessment of qualifications/transcripts for subject content requirements as prerequisites for admission**

Issues raised in the Institute Workshop held 9/5/08 on assessment of qualifications as prerequisites for admission to undergraduate and graduate initial teacher education programs are provided here. The Institute requests early advice on whether TEI staff sees a need for a further workshop.

**8. Professional Experience**

The Institute acknowledges a number of responses to the *Professional Experience Consultation Paper*. A report on the responses received is being prepared for the Institute's Quality Teaching Council together with an amended draft for consideration for endorsement.

**9. Notification to the Institute of changes to a program as per Policy requirements**

As per the Institute's *Policy and Procedures for Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs* (3.3) p7, the Institute is preparing advice to ITEC on the requirements for notification of changes to a program and their impact on a program's inputs, processes and outcomes or structures.

**10. Clarification of HSC Band 4 in English and Maths**

TEIs have sought clarification of the prerequisites for admission to a primary or secondary undergraduate initial teacher education program. The following advice has been provided to UAC.

**Primary programs**

**English** –Higher School Certificate minimum Band 4 in Standard English OR minimum Band 4 in English as a Second Language OR minimum Band 4 in Advanced English.

**Mathematics** –Higher School Certificate minimum Band 4 in General Mathematics OR completion of Mathematics (2 Unit).

### Secondary programs

**English** –Higher School Certificate minimum Band 4 in Standard English OR minimum Band 4 in English as a Second Language OR minimum Band 4 in Advanced English.

## 11. UAC advice from NSWIT

The Institute has advised UAC of these prerequisites for admission (above) to undergraduate and graduate entry initial teacher education programs and other special government policies. The information is to be published in the section Special government policies/Education courses at the front of the *UAC 2009 Guide*.

## 12. Changes and additions to the Institute website occur regularly

Changes and additions to the Institute website occur regularly, for example when a new program is approved or re-approved by the Minister, web advice will be updated. Where this occurs, the file date on the top left hand side of the first/front page will be updated.

### i Changes to information on the Institute website section 'Initial Teacher Education' at

<http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Initial-Teacher-Education.html> as follows:

- [Initial Teacher Education Committee](#) – a change to ITEC membership and ITEC meeting update for 19 May 2008.
- [Approved programs](#) - updated list of approved programs, including new and continuing programs being assessed, and programs no longer offered.
- [Application for Approval](#) - clarification to Document 5 (see below), and new documents Document 5A and Document 5B (see below):

Two clarifications have been inserted into **Document 5: Graduate Teacher Standard Subject Content Requirements dated June 2008** to establish a common understanding. This document is now online:

- page 5 Primary English Key Learning Area, Column 4 Relevant areas of academic study for admission to a graduate entry program, reference is made to 'language studies' as a dot point. This dot point was intended to relate to English language studies. The text now reads 'language studies (English)'.  
○ page 13 (Secondary English), page 14 (Secondary Mathematics) and page 43 (Secondary Music) respectively, in Graduate Teacher Standard 1.1.3, in Column 3 'Unit content', read the word 'Syllabuses' rather than 'Syllabus'. The Institute wishes to ensure that English, Maths and Music Methods lecturers/tutors in these secondary curriculum areas will meet Graduate Teacher Standard 1.1.3 by considering issues related to ALL Stage 6 English, Maths and Music syllabuses.

Teacher education institutions have sought advice to clarify the intent of units prescribed in a Secondary Second Teaching Area. The ITEC supported the following which is now online:  
**Document 5A: Graduate Teacher Standard Subject Content Requirements for a Secondary Second Teaching Area.** This document should be used in conjunction with *Document 5*.

**Document 5B: GTS SCR Assessment of Transcript Prerequisites for Admission Proforma.**  
This form may also be used as an assessment form for applicants prior to contact with an institution. A teacher education institution may wish to refer to it.

### ii) Changes to information on the Institute website section 'Teaching in NSW' at

<http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Teaching-in-NSW.html> This section of the website is for potential applicants to initial teacher education programs.

The following files have been updated recently (the date appears on the top left hand side on the front page of the file):

- [Information for potential teachers](#) – information on the eligibility requirements for employment and accreditation as a teacher in NSW schools. This is useful for graduates, undergraduates and interested school students.

- [Subject content requirements](#) (abridged) – the *Graduate Teacher Standards Subject Content Requirements (abridged)* version now includes reference in the Primary English Key Learning Area to 'language studies (English)'. The document *Graduate Teacher Standards Clarification of Requirements for a Secondary Second Teaching Area* clarifies the Secondary second teaching area and should be read in conjunction with *Graduate Teacher Standard Subject Content Requirements (abridged)*.

The document *Assessment of Transcript Prerequisites for Admission Proforma* may be used by a potential applicant to undertake a self-assessment of undergraduate and appropriate postgraduate studies as prerequisites for admission to a graduate entry initial teacher education program, based on the Institute's *Graduate Teacher Standards 1.1.1-1.1.3 Subject Content Requirements (abridged)*. An institution may recommend that an applicant undertakes a self-assessment before application; however, an applicant's self-assessment cannot substitute for an institution decision.

- [Approved Programs \(abridged\)](#) - updated list of approved programs and new programs being assessed.

### 13. Formation of ITEC Panels

Each ITE program is reviewed and assessed by an ITEC Panel comprising 2 teachers (1 practising and 1 executive), 2 teacher educators (external experts from equivalent programs) and 1 curriculum specialist (with knowledge of Board of Studies curriculum requirements). Many programs prepare teachers for specific teaching areas and require teacher educators with specific expertise. **THE INSTITUTE NEEDS YOU!**

#### Initial Teacher Education programs @ 30 June 2008

- 16 teacher education institutions (TEI) offer programs in NSW and ACT
  - 3 are private providers/ registered non self-accrediting higher education institutions
- 3 other non self-accrediting institutions are planning to offer programs in 2009
- 178 programs are currently transitionally approved in NSW
- 51 programs are being assessed in 2008 before delivery in 2009

#### ITEC Panel participation @ 30 June 2008

- 30 ITEC Panels have been formed
- 145 teachers have expressed interest in Panel participation
- 90 teacher educators have expressed interest in Panel participation
- curriculum specialists are drawn from BOS, DET, CEC, AIS. In addition the Professional Teaching Council has been invited to nominate members with expertise.

#### The Institute invites you to participate in an ITEC Panel.

All teacher educators are invited to submit an Expression of Interest form for Teacher Educators in ITEC Panel Assessment (Document 14) found on the Institute's ITE website at <http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/ITEC-Panel-Assessment.html>

### 14. Queries

The Initial Teacher Education team at the Institute of Teachers will be pleased to clarify any matter raised in this ITEC Newsletter.

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## ASSESSMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Information on assessment of qualifications as prerequisites for admission to undergraduate and graduate initial teacher education programs offered by universities and other approved higher education institutions in NSW and ACT. **The following items were raised at the Institute's Workshop on Qualifications Assessment on 9 May 2008:**

### Item 1

Status of DET pre-2008 prescription advice letters

#### Background

Department of Education and Training (DET) prescription advice letters relate to an assessment of the applicant's qualifications in terms of the Department's employment requirements. The Institute's Subject Content Requirements differ from the Department's former employment requirements, significantly in some areas. Towards the end of 2007, DET prescription advice letters stipulated that the advice applied in relation to graduate entry programs commencing in 2008. Some students may present with DET prescription advice letters dated pre-2008 when seeking admission to graduate entry programs from 2009 onwards.

#### NSWIT advice

TEIs will need to assess the qualifications of applicants who are seeking admission to graduate entry programs commencing after 1 January 2009 in terms of the Institute's Subject Content Requirements.

TEIs may need to explain to some applicants that requirements have changed since the Department's prescription advice was provided to them.

### Item 2

Transitional Approval and the meaning of the need for students to transfer across to an approved program

#### Background

The Transitional Approval arrangements for all existing ITE programs, agreed to by all deans/heads of education, include the necessity for students who are first enrolled in a transitionally approved program from 2007, prior to that program's re-approval, to complete all program requirements within ONE year of the minimum full time length of the program. Students who are not 'on track' to meet these requirements will need to transfer to a program that has been approved through the Institute's ITE approval processes.

#### NSWIT advice

TEIs will need to alert part-time students and full-time students who have taken leave of the impact of these Transitional Approval arrangements and the potential for them to have to transfer across to new or revised programs at some point.

However, for many part-time students existing programs will have been revised to meet the Institute's Standards. In this case, the students are not formally transferring but completing a re-approved program.

These arrangements will impact on those students who are undertaking a program that will significantly change to meet the Institute's requirements (eg changing structure or moving to a longer duration) but there are existing precedents for students having to transfer because of such circumstances.

### Item 3

Enquiries from already trained teachers wanting to 'retrain' in another area, namely Primary to Secondary, Secondary to Primary and Early Childhood to Primary

#### Background

The Institute has fielded a large number of calls from already trained teachers who are seeking to undertake additional higher education studies to be viewed as fully qualified teachers in another subject or teaching area. Teacher employers are responsible for determining the teaching duties of teachers and recognising any additional training undertaken in relation to undertaking different teaching duties. However, the DET would use the Institute's Subject Content Requirements as the basis of their advice to their teachers and for teachers to be employable across major employers the Subject Content Requirements provide the benchmark.

### **NSWIT advice**

Answering these enquiries involves:

- (i) analysing the qualifications teachers possess;
- (ii) identifying the discipline and pedagogy units and professional experience they have completed;
- (iii) identifying the discipline and pedagogy units they will need to complete to satisfy the Subject Content Requirements in the subject/teaching area they are seeking; and
- (iv) identifying what additional discipline and pedagogy units and professional experience they need to undertake. Teachers can satisfy the requirements through enrolment and completion of non-award or single unit studies.

### **Item 4**

Returning teachers with old three year Diplomas of Teaching

#### **Background**

Trained teachers who have a three year Diploma of Teaching (Primary), (Early Childhood/Infants) or (Secondary) who are seeking employment in NSW for the first time do not satisfy the minimum requirements for employment as a teacher as described in the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*. For these teachers to be able to be employed in schools they would need to possess as a minimum a bachelor degree, and preferably a teaching degree or bachelor degree plus graduate entry ITE qualification. A number of Bachelor of Education 4<sup>th</sup> year 'upgrade' programs exist, largely in primary teaching, but for these programs to lead to eligibility for provisional accreditation, they would need to address the Graduate Teacher Standards and Supplementary Requirements.

#### **NSWIT advice**

The Institute is working with the TEIs offering a 4<sup>th</sup> year 'upgrade' program to ensure that graduates have satisfied the Graduate Teacher Standards and would therefore be eligible for provisional accreditation.

### **Item 5**

Teachers from the United Kingdom with SCITT, GTP and QTS – advising these applicants as to what program to undertake

#### **Background**

The general view of teacher registration and accreditation authorities and Teaching Australia (for skilled migration applicants), is that SCITT, GTP and QTS do not provide these applicants with qualifications for employment/registration/provisional accreditation. These UK teachers need to be advised on admission to an appropriate and approved ITE program.

#### **NSWIT advice**

Applicants who have recognised bachelor degree should be admitted to an approved graduate entry ITE program.

Applicants who do not have a recognised bachelor degree should be advised to seek admission to an approved undergraduate ITE program and seek advanced standing. TEIs would be able to apply their own policies on advanced standing.

### **Item 6**

The scheduling of 'bridging units' or 'concurrent study' where applicants do not immediately satisfy the Institute's prerequisites for admission to a graduate entry ITE program

#### **Background**

The Institute's Subject Content Requirements allow applicants for graduate entry ITE programs who do not satisfy the Institute's prerequisites for admission to a graduate entry program to undertake concurrent study or appropriate bridging units and/or satisfactory performance in approved tests in literacy and/or numeracy, before graduation.

#### **NSWIT advice**

Whilst the emphasis is on satisfying the Institute's requirements prior to graduation, an issue for TEIs to consider is the most appropriate timing of 'appropriate bridging units' or 'concurrent study'. For example, an applicant having to undertake additional discipline units in Mathematics may be advised to undertake these units prior to the scheduled Mathematics curriculum studies unit. TEIs need to determine how many units these students can feasibly undertake in the available timeframe through either bridging units (undertaken prior to commencement of the program) or concurrent study (undertaken alongside a normal load).

There is also a need for TEIs to monitor the students' completion of bridging or concurrent units to ensure that before program completion (and graduation) these prerequisites for admission have been satisfactorily completed.

#### **Item 7**

Assessment of transcripts of students commencing a graduate entry program mid-2008

##### **Background**

The Institute's Subject Content Requirements apply for admission to graduate entry programs from 1 January 2009 onwards. The DET employment requirements applied for applicants for 2008 admission to graduate entry programs. These DET employment requirements are no longer accessible from the DET website.

##### **NSWIT advice**

DET Teacher Recruitment Unit staff can assist in providing advice on the DET's former employment requirements if necessary.

Some TEIs took their own policy decision to adopt the Institute's Subject Content Requirements at the end of 2007 for applicants for 2008 graduate entry programs ahead of the required schedule.

#### **Item 8**

Implications for TEIs of the Institute's new policy on English language proficiency for employment as a teacher in NSW

##### **Background**

Early 2008, the Minister approved the Institute's new policy on English language proficiency for employment as a teacher in NSW. Teacher employers are to required to apply the policy in making decisions about teacher employment applicants who have language backgrounds other than English. The required level of proficiency is set as a minimum overall result of 7.5 in IELTS, with a minimum of 8.0 in speaking and listening and minimum of 7.0 in reading and writing.

##### **NSWIT advice**

The Institute notified all TEIs of the new English language proficiency requirement for employment and advised that TEIs may wish to review the standards they have set for entry into ITE programs, particularly graduate entry programs. In reviewing entry standards in the light of this new point of employment requirement, TEIs would need to be mindful of the scope for these applicants to improve their English language proficiency through the duration of the ITE program and to have access to information on English language assistance provided by the TEI.

#### **Item 9**

Assessment of overseas degrees

##### **Background**

A number of applicants for graduate entry ITE programs may present with overseas qualifications that have not yet been assessed by either the DET, or another teacher employer, or by NOOSR in relation to a skilled migration application (ie the applicant may not be the principal visa holder). TEIs need to check the status of the overseas qualifications.

##### **NSWIT advice**

TEIs should access information from the relevant NOOSR Country Education Profile. If in doubt, TEIs can consult with Institute staff. Once the status of the qualification is confirmed (ie whether it is equivalent to an Australian bachelors degree) TEIs then need to undertake an assessment of the contents of the degree to ascertain whether the applicant has met the Institute's Subject Content Requirements. If in doubt, TEIs can consult with Institute staff.

#### **Item 10**

Development and assessment of degree transcripts

##### **Background**

There are issues in ensuring and verifying that an applicant for a graduate entry ITE program has satisfied the Institute's Subject Content Requirements for admission, where degree transcripts state that unspecified credit has been granted.

##### **NSWIT advice**

TEIs need to take steps to ascertain the basis on which unspecified credit has been granted and if necessary, require the applicant to submit additional information, including other testamurs, transcripts and statements that enabled the applicant to gain the unspecified credit within the degree.