



## DOCUMENT 3

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

#### SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 THE NSW INSTITUTE OF TEACHERS

The NSW Institute of Teachers is a statutory authority for the regulation and promotion of the teaching profession in NSW established under the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*.

The Institute supports quality teaching in all NSW schools. Its charter is to advance the status and standing of the teaching profession.

The Institute oversees a system of accreditation and recognition of teachers' professional capacity against professional teaching standards. It also provides a process for the profession to contribute to the development and implementation of initial teacher education and continuing professional development.

##### 1.2 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: INSTITUTE OF TEACHERS ACT 2004

The Institute has legislated responsibility to provide advice to the Minister on the approval of initial and continuing teacher education programs<sup>1</sup> that are relevant for the purpose of accreditation under this Act; see S.7 (3)(a).

An *approved course* means an initial teacher education course or program approved by the Minister under the professional teaching standards; see S.28.

Persons who complete an approved course and receive the relevant qualification may be provisionally accredited to teach in NSW primary and secondary schools; see S.30 (2)(b). Early childhood education programs which also prepare teachers for primary school teaching must be approved through the Institute.<sup>2</sup>

Approval of initial teacher education programs is based on the principle that graduates of these programs meet the professional teaching standards approved by the Minister for accreditation to teach in NSW schools; see S.19 (1) (a) and S.20 (a), (d), (f) and (g).

##### 1.3 PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE TEACHERS

The professional teaching standards articulate what teachers need to know, understand and be able to do. They have the potential to sustain teachers in their professional practice and ensure quality learning opportunities for students. The standards are a framework for whole of

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<sup>1</sup> Note that terminology related to the provision of initial teacher education is not consistent across Universities and other Higher Education Institutions. This document will use one term to cover others, as follows:

- program: course, course of study leading to a teaching qualification. A program includes core discipline units and curriculum specialisation units and professional experience;
- unit: unit of study, subject, course;
- professional experience: teaching practice, practicum (one of a number of supervised practical teaching experiences) and internship (a final teaching practice without in-class supervision), in a school or other setting for educational purposes;
- TEI: teacher education institution, university and/or other approved higher education institution;
- pre-service teacher: undergraduate, student teacher;
- program director: course convener in TEI.

<sup>2</sup> Note that graduates of current TEI programs are deemed to have met the Standards for Graduate Teacher key stage, until the Institute process is implemented in mid 2006. A process of mutual recognition between States and Territories is being negotiated.

career development and are mapped to four key stages in a teacher's career. The key stages are: Graduate Teacher, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment, and Professional Leadership.

The standards for a Graduate Teacher represent the standards expected of graduates of initial teacher education programs that enable graduates to teach in primary or secondary schools in NSW. A number of Graduate Teacher Standards can be met through the requirements for professional experience within these programs.

Graduates of an initial teacher education program will be accorded Graduate Teacher status and be eligible for provisional accreditation in NSW schools. Those people who do not meet the Graduate Teacher Standards are ineligible for provisional accreditation.

The standards for key stage: Graduate Teacher are described in the *Professional Teaching Standards* published by the Institute in 2005.

The approval process covers the full range of initial teacher education programs offered by a teacher education institution (TEI), focusing on primary or/and secondary education as well as specific learning areas, leading to teacher education qualifications. Early childhood education programs that lead to teaching in primary schools are included.

This *Policy and Procedures for Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs*, and supplementary documentation provided by the Institute, will:

- assist TEI program directors as they prepare an application for approval of initial teacher education programs;
- set out basic expectations of the NSW Institute of Teachers about the knowledge and skills of graduate teachers;
- identify inputs, processes and outcomes that are both transparent and equitable and are consistent with National Protocols and the Australian Qualifications Framework; and
- streamline and refine processes for program approval, and be integrated with internal and external quality assurance processes including the audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA).

#### **1.4 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The following policy principles underpin guidelines for approval of programs of initial teacher education in NSW:

- teacher educators and initial teacher education programs are an essential and important element of the NSW teaching profession. Part of the role of teacher educators is to work collaboratively with schools and the profession as a whole to meet expectations for graduate teachers as identified in the professional teaching standards;
- the Graduate Teacher Standards are an essential component of curriculum for all initial teacher education programs approved by the Institute; and
- all significant curriculum development processes, relating to initial teacher education programs of TEIs seeking approval from the Institute, include input from practising teachers.

## **SECTION 2: STRUCTURE FOR APPROVAL PROCESS**

### **2.1 QUALITY TEACHING COUNCIL**

#### **2.1.1 Role**

The Quality Teaching Council (QTC) of the Institute is the principal source of advice to the Institute on professional matters. The QTC will:

- approve the policy and procedures under which the Institute will provide advice to the Minister on the approval of initial teacher education programs;
- approve such supplementary documentation as it considers useful in relation to the Graduate Teaching Standards and other requirements for the approval of initial teacher education programs;
- monitor trends and developments in initial teacher education;
- commission research related to initial teacher education, where appropriate;
- monitor and respond to policies, practices and outcomes of evaluation of initial teacher education;
- appoint the Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC) to undertake the process of reviewing initial teacher education programs for approval under the policy established by the QTC;
- oversee the work of the ITEC;
- receive regular reports on the work of the ITEC, including programs to be proposed to the Minister for approval, and full reports on any program that the ITEC considers does not meet the policy for approval.

## **2.2 INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### 2.2.1 Role

The Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC) will carry responsibility on behalf of the QTC to:

- oversee the process of approval of initial teacher education programs;
- identify and manage ITEC panels to review applications for the approval of programs;
- monitor and moderate the process of approval of programs to support consistency of processes and outcomes;
- investigate and resolve identified areas of concern in relation to approval of programs;
- advise and support TEIs in relation to Graduate Teacher Standards and/or application for approval of an initial teacher education program;
- evaluate the impact and usefulness of the Graduate Teacher Standards for new scheme teachers during their first year of teaching for the purpose of reflecting on the initial teacher education experience;
- collect data and promote research with a local, national and international focus in relation to demonstration of Graduate Teacher Standards;
- make recommendations through the Chair of the Institute to the Minister for approval of programs;
- advise the QTC on its work in approving programs and broad matters related to initial teacher education.

### 2.2.2 Membership

The Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC) is appointed for the life of the Quality Teaching Council (ie, three years). The ITEC is appointed by the QTC. To ensure informed advice is provided to the Quality Teaching Council the ITEC comprises members with particular expertise, with regard to balance of interest, including:

- three nominees of the QTC;
- a representative of the NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee;
- a representative of a NSW university offering initial teacher education programs;

- at least one representative of the NSW Teacher Education Council;
- three practising teachers with understanding of professional experience in initial teacher education programs, ensuring breadth of representation; for example, primary, secondary, government and non-government, rural and socio-economic status;
- a representative of an employing authority;
- the Manager Initial Teacher Education (ITE), or another member of Institute staff, as executive officer.

The Chair of the ITEC is appointed by the QTC from the membership of the ITEC.

### 2.2.3 ITEC Panels

The ITEC appoints a number of panels for the purpose of assessing a TEI application for approval. Each panel includes:

- a school principal or school executive teacher;
- two external experts from equivalent initial teacher education programs;
- at least one practising teacher with appropriate expertise;
- an appropriate curriculum specialist with knowledge of the Board of Studies NSW curriculum;
- the Manager ITE, or another member of Institute staff, as executive officer.

The Chair of a panel is selected by the ITEC. There being a number of panels, it is expected that the role and responsibility of Chair will be shared among the stakeholders of the education community.

## **SECTION 3: POLICY FOR APPROVAL**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Initial teacher education programs will be approved on the basis that they meet the Graduate Teacher Standards of the Institute. Achievement of these standards by all graduate teachers will enable the Government to provide clear levels of professional accreditation, in line with practice in other professions. The approval process has regard to the fact that some Institute requirements are already part of TEI processes.

Where a national approval process for compliance with the MCEETYA National Standards Framework is introduced, the NSW Institute of Teachers would recognise such compliance by TEIs with respect to their programs.

Graduate Teacher Standards are to be embedded in both the TEI curriculum and professional experience undertaken by a pre-service teacher in the TEI initial teacher education program. The processes used to assess the achievement of the standards must be explicitly described.

Professional experience, in both breadth and depth, is a central aspect of an initial teacher education program. The approval process requires demonstration of high quality professional experiences.

Substantial program development and approval processes must include practising teachers nominated by the Institute.

A graduate of an approved program will be recognised formally as a Graduate Teacher by way of a letter and will be eligible to be provisionally accredited in New South Wales.

The nature of information provided by the TEI to the Institute must enable clear and transparent evaluation of i–ix below.

### **3.2 APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS**

A program will be approved, and graduates of that program accorded Graduate Teacher status, subject to evidence of the following:

The program

- i. satisfies the requirements set out in the Australian Qualifications Framework for the award level;
- ii. provides appropriate opportunities for all pre-service teachers to develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills and understandings needed to achieve the Graduate Teacher Standards.

The documentation

- iii. addresses the requirements of the *Policy and Procedures for Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs*, and reflects the General Principles underlying this policy;
- iv. provides clear and consistent evidence of a direct relationship between intended curriculum outcomes and processes, the Graduate Teacher Standards, and assessment criteria and processes;
- v. describes the range and diversity of professional experiences undertaken by a pre-service teacher, that are appropriate to the program, and that will enable them to meet the Graduate Teacher Standards;
- vi. outlines the mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and modification of the proposed program, its curriculum, delivery and assessment;
- vii. describes the partnership arrangements between the TEI and teachers and school in the delivery of the professional experience component of the program, and associated assessment protocols;
- viii. describes the nature of the involvement of the wider profession in the development of the program;
- ix. describes multiple sources of data or evidence to demonstrate achievement of the Graduate Teacher Standards by pre-service teachers.

Supplementary documentation will be provided by the Institute to assist a TEI in preparing an application for approval of an initial teacher education program.

In summary an application for approval will require:

- demographic details such as the program title, level of Award, length of program (full time/part time), terminology in use, eg program, course and unit, names of personnel involved in the development of the program and the nature of involvement;
- details about Faculty/ies, School of Education, Departments and other organisational units involved in delivery of the program, organisation of the Faculty/School, staff listing, regulations for the program and curriculum delivered;
- relevant handbooks such as the current Student Handbook, Professional Experience Manual and Guidelines, Faculty Handbook;
- details of the design and structure of the program (in diagrammatic form if appropriate) and how it relates to all aspects of an Award, including the set of units to be studied and professional experience to be undertaken during initial teacher education;
- an explanation of how the content of the program units enables graduates to meet the Professional Teacher Standards for Graduate Teacher, including aims, curriculum

outcomes and processes, resources, reading list, assessment policies and procedures and their relationship to the standards;

- specific planning details for professional experiences in recognised schools and other settings that will contribute to the learning of the pre-service teacher;
- a description of the range of specialisations provided in the program and area or areas of teaching that Graduates are being prepared to teach.

### **3.3 APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL**

- A TEI will make a separate application for each program, seeking approval for a maximum of 5 years.
- All programs are approved for a maximum of 5 years. During this period changes may impact on an approved program. Any changes that impact substantially on the inputs, processes and outcomes or structure of the program must be notified to the Institute. Where the changes are significant enough to require re-approval of the program, the documentary requirements for the re-approval process will be discussed between the TEI and the Manager Initial Teacher Education or another Institute staff member.
- A TEI should seek approval of a program at least six months prior to the proposed date of commencement of the program, or at least six months prior to approval lapsing.
- A TEI application for approval of the program must be based on this policy and its requirements for documentation.

### **3.4 APPEALS PROCESS**

Where a TEI is refused approval of an initial education program, the TEI may appeal the decision. The ultimate avenue of recourse for the TEI is the NSW Administrative Decisions Tribunal (ADT). The ADT reviews the administrative decisions of New South Wales Government agencies.

## **SECTION 4 THE PROCESS OF APPROVAL**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Minister has responsibility for the approval of initial teacher education programs. The NSW Institute of Teachers is responsible for the process of approval of initial teacher education programs through the Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC). This Committee manages panels for the purpose of reviewing each teacher education institution (TEI) program submitted for approval.

The process involves ongoing close collaboration between a TEI and the ITEC, from the initial approach to the final approval of a program which would normally involve a site visit. The process is designed to ensure a mutually satisfactory outcome is achieved.

The ITEC panel needs to understand the program, the context in which the program is to be delivered, and how the program meets the Graduate Teacher Standards.

### **4.2 STEPS IN THE APPROVAL PROCESS**

The following outlines the process for the approval of initial teacher education programs:

- i. Upon receipt of an application for approval with appropriate documentation the ITEC establishes a panel and nominates the Chair of the panel. The panel considers the detail of the application.
- ii. The panel consults and negotiates with the TEI to ensure that the program accords with this policy. As part of this iterative process the panel may seek further evidence.
- iii. The panel may undertake a site visit to the TEI, to consult with the program director, or nominee, for the purpose of viewing additional documentation if necessary, and meet with others where appropriate.
- iv. The panel prepares a report for the ITEC containing recommendations and any areas that require further consideration. A copy of the report is given to the TEI.
- v. The ITEC considers the report from the panel. Where the ITEC considers that further documentation or modification to the proposed program is necessary before approval could be granted, it will advise the TEI accordingly and afford an opportunity for the nominated issues to be addressed.
- vi. If the program is not recommended for approval the Manager, Initial Teacher Education will advise the TEI of the outcome, indicating any matters that require further consideration.
- vii. Upon completion of this process, the ITEC makes its recommendation to the Chair of the Institute who will advise the Minister on approval of the program.
- viii. The approval or non-approval of the program will be advised to the TEI in writing.

#### **4.3 CONTINUING ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROGRAM**

Program approval remains in force for no longer than five years. During this time the TEI provides a brief annual statement to the ITEC indicating achievements and issues of significance in delivery of the program. The executive officer of the ITEC will contact the TEI each year to request the statement. In the process of completing an application for the approval of a program, a program director should use the information provided in the *Policy and Procedures for Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs* and supplementary documentation published by the NSW Institute of Teachers.