



Teacher Capability

Promoting Excellence in Teaching

(Previously *Great teachers = Great results*)

A response to the Queensland Government's teacher capability program tailored to the needs and circumstances of Catholic schooling.



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A Catholic sector response to promote excellence in teaching

Purpose

This document outlines the Catholic sector's response to the Queensland Government's Teacher Capability program (previously *Great teachers = Great results*) to promote excellence in teaching and enable Catholic schooling authorities and schools to make decisions that best suit their local communities.

Background

The Queensland Government released (April 2013) its *Great teachers = Great results* paper focused on professional excellence in teaching and to boost school autonomy.

With a new Queensland government elected in 2015, the program was continued for non-state schools as *Teacher Capability*.

The AITSL *Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework* identifies the processes considered necessary to build an effective performance and development culture within all schools and the Australian *Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders* promotes the central role of professional learning in improving teacher and school leader knowledge and practice.

Promoting excellence in teaching

QCEC supports the notion of providing recognition for and promoting teacher capability and seeks to develop strategies that support teachers to further improve practice across their schools and enhance teachers' expertise and effectiveness.

The following QCEC proposal underlines the Catholic schooling sector's commitment to the broader reform agenda to recognise teacher quality as the single greatest in-school influence on student learning.



Teacher Capability funding will be directed to school-based projects that promote professional excellence in teaching and support school decision-making. The funding will be used to:

1. improve teaching and learning
2. recognise and promote the development of high performing teachers
3. promote and support great teachers especially in the areas of early years, students with disability, learning difficulties and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, family and community engagement
4. promote partnerships across schools, authorities, sectors and providers to enhance and provide professional excellence
5. develop excellence in mentoring and coaching
6. develop aspiring leaders.

Context for funding

The Queensland Government will provide \$98 million funding to the non-government school sector over the first four years of this initiative commencing in 2014-15.

The use of the funding should be aligned with the *School Renewal Program* and *Teacher Performance and Development Framework* to support both school initiatives and the development of professional excellence.

Some examples of projects could be to:

- build the capacity/guidelines for effective community engagement practices that lead to constructive collaboration
- understand and enhance the Catholic identity of a school within the context of its operation
- investigate best practice in evidence-based assessment of teacher performance and development
- develop whole of school approaches in areas such as classroom management, student behaviour management and development, student safety and wellbeing, and staff health and wellbeing
- use data informed analysis to inform improvements to teaching and learning.

Principles for promoting professional excellence in teaching

1. Governance of Catholic schools in Queensland and their 19,000 teachers and staff is grounded in two basic principles.

The first principle of the common good is characterised by promoting a spirit of co-operation rather than competition, along with effective communication and individual responsibility.

The second principle of subsidiarity states that decisions should be taken as close to the local level as appropriate and /or feasible.

These two principles guide the diverse governance structures evident across the 22 different Catholic schooling authorities (including the five dioceses) to provide principals, staff and school boards with considerable decision-making ability to implement curriculum, design pedagogy, determine staffing structure, design facilities and manage finances. This flexibility allows school authorities and their schools to respond to local context and needs, operate efficiently and be inclusive of parental/community engagement.

2. These two principles ensure collaboration and teamwork in schools and that the projects will vary significantly across schools depending on context, school size, and curriculum organisation.
3. These principles also underpin a process whereby each school authority consults with their schools to determine the focus of actions and report these to QCEC annually through an initial report template supplied by QCEC.



Reporting and accountability for Teacher Capability

1. The initial report will:
 - a) summarise the projects which the school/authority determines, in the context of its operations and capacity, to deliver the objectives of the *Teacher Capability* program
 - b) outline practicalities of timelines and expected outcomes to provide a framework for ensuring the successful completion of the programs/activities.
2. Each school authority will meet its accountability obligations through an annual report to QCEC summarising the outcomes achieved.
3. A process for sharing best practice will be developed by QCEC.

Administering the Teacher Capability funding

Each schooling authority in Queensland will be allocated a share of the available funds based on the previous year's FTE teaching staff. This amount will contain an allowance of up to 1.5% of received funding for administration of the program.





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