

Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic school



Position Statement

Introduction

This position statement presents the collaboratively discerned views of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Catholic School Authorities regarding accreditation to teach in a Catholic school.

The *Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church* states that “the instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life” (803 # 2).

The position statement applies to all teachers including those with interim accreditation, permanent part-time teachers, and teachers on job share arrangements.

QCEC is committed to supporting Catholic School Authorities in their work of employing appropriate teachers who respect the history, beliefs and mission of Jesus and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Each Catholic School Authority is encouraged to use this position statement to frame employment policies and procedures which are socially just, equitable, inclusive and educationally sound, to suit its particular context.

This position statement should be read in conjunction with the position statement “Accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic school”, the position statement *Formation for staff members in Catholic schools in Queensland* and *A guide to develop a framework for staff formation in Catholic schools in Queensland*. These documents support Catholic School Authorities in implementing ongoing formation of staff and seek to ensure that all staff members participate in formation experiences to assist them to grow in understanding of their ministry as part of the mission of Jesus and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Definition

Accreditation is a process undertaken by Catholic School Authorities that recognises competency to teach in a Catholic school. It is a professional requirement undertaken by all registered teachers which requires evidence, acceptable to the Catholic School Authority, of annual participation in professional learning activities that support their understanding of the nature of the Church’s mission in the world, the identity and educational mission of the Catholic school within the mission of the Church, and their contribution as teachers to that mission. Over a five (5) year period, these activities are to total at least 25 hours. These activities should total a minimum of 5 hours per annum.

Rationale

To work in a Catholic school, registered teachers need to develop their understanding of the Catholic Church and its mission in the world, and the contribution they make to that mission. Catholic Church documents and other publications (see references) highlight the importance of Catholic school teachers to the development of each student’s academic, spiritual and physical needs and directing this development at creating a synthesis between faith, culture and life.

The Catholic school’s service is contextual requiring its teachers to provide age-appropriate Catholic messages for students that support their making sense of life in a clear and meaningful way. This accreditation position statement has been formulated on the basis that all teachers in Catholic schools

contribute to the religious life of the school community. Accreditation affirms the positive contributions of teachers in Catholic schools.

Position Statement

Those appointed to teach in Catholic schools in Queensland are accredited for their understanding of the nature of the Church's mission in the world, the identity and educational mission of the Catholic school within the mission of the Church, and their contribution as teachers to that mission.

Implications

- Each Catholic School Authority will develop and maintain a policy on the accreditation requirements required for teaching positions.
- Each Catholic School Authority ensures that teachers have access to opportunities which enable them to fulfil the minimum requirements as set out in their policy statement.
- Accreditation policies and procedures may vary across Catholic School Authorities in recognition of specific needs and conditions.
- While the determination of accreditation in one Catholic School Authority may not be sufficient for accreditation in other Catholic School Authorities, the work done for accreditation in each Catholic School Authority is recognised towards accreditation by all other Catholic School Authorities.
- It is the responsibility of the individual teacher to fulfil the Catholic School Authority's requirements for the school in which employment is sought. It is the schools' leadership responsibility to monitor and support the accreditation status and requirements of its teachers. However, it is also the responsibility of the individual teacher to maintain accurate records to support the accreditation process.
- These requirements will be reflected in selection criteria, position descriptions and contracts.
- Teachers could be accredited to teach in a Catholic school at point of employment and required to maintain accreditation through participation in annual professional learning activities that support their understanding of the Church's mission in the world, the identity and educational mission of the Catholic school within the mission of the Church, and their contribution as teachers to that mission.
- Catholic School Authorities may negotiate with applicants who do not meet these requirements to ascertain ways they can fulfil the requirements in an appropriate manner and timeframe. In general, teachers beginning in a Catholic school can receive interim accreditation for a maximum of five years until they can satisfy the Catholic School Authority's requirements for accreditation.

References

- *Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church*, book 3, can 803, 1983.
- *Congregation for Catholic Education, Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love*, Vatican City 2013.
- D'Orsa, Jim and Therese, *Catholic Curriculum: A mission to the heart of young people*, 2011.
- Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, November 2013.
- McGrath, John, *Befriending context and Tradition: Evangelisation and Catholic schools*, 2012.

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