



Catholic Education Office  
DIOCESE OF BATHURST



ACCREDITATION POLICY TO WORK, TEACH  
AND LEAD IN SYSTEMIC CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

# INTRODUCTION



This Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead in Catholic Schools policy has been written in the context of the Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of NSW and the ACT *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads (2007)*. In this document the Bishops challenged educational leaders and staff to dedicate themselves to ensuring that our schools:

- Are truly Catholic in their identity and life
- Are centres of the new evangelisation
- Enable our students to achieve high levels of Catholic religious literacy
- Are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals.

To a certain extent we can be guided in our response to these challenges with reference to a range of components across each of the four key areas within our *Quality Catholic Education Framework (QCE)*. The critical factor however, is the staff in our schools: *"Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of man's most excellent and creative activities, for the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings. The personal relations between the teacher and the students, therefore, assume an enormous importance and are not limited simply to giving and taking. Moreover, we must remember that teachers and educators fulfil a specific Christian vocation and share an equally specific participation in the mission of the Church, to the extent that it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose"* (*The Catholic School on the Threshold of the third Millennium, 25*).

I am confident that the implementation of this Accreditation Framework will enable us to more fully respond to the call to work, teach and exercise leadership in Catholic education so that we can achieve our specific purpose of providing high quality Catholic education to the students in our care.

## **Mrs Jenny Allen**

Executive Director of Schools



# ACCREDITATION POLICY TO WORK, TEACH AND LEAD IN SYSTEMIC CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

*With Jesus Christ as our inspiration and guide,  
we are called to provide high quality Catholic education in the Diocese of Bathurst.*

## INTRODUCTION

This policy has been formulated on the basis that all staff in Catholic schools contribute to the faith of the school community. Further, teachers in Catholic schools, through their teaching and witness to their faith, create 'a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life.'

**Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) 1977, n.37**

## CONTEXT

In their pastoral letter *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads* (2007) the Bishops of NSW and the ACT challenged educational leaders and staff to dedicate themselves to ensuring that our schools:

- are truly Catholic in their identity and life
- are centres of the 'new evangelisation'
- enable our students to achieve high levels of Catholic religious literacy
- are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals.

In this context, the Catholic Education Office and Catholic school communities have a responsibility to provide appropriate initial and ongoing education in faith and theology, as well as formation for all staff, for all have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel as witnesses (CCE, 1977, 1988). This proclamation of the gospel comes through living a life that is in accord with Christian principles.

Under the recent *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* with subordinate legislation *Institute of Teachers Regulation 2010* the NSW Institute of Teachers has been established as a statutory authority, articulating a NSW Professional Teaching Standards Framework. In 2012 the National Professional Standards for Teachers were approved for use in NSW. The Seven Standards and their descriptors identify what is expected of teachers within the three domains of teaching, Professional Knowledge, Practice and Engagement. Within each of these domains/standards four career stages of Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead were developed to provide benchmarks to recognise the professional growth of teachers throughout their careers. The completion of relevant programs and qualifications is one way (though limited) of promoting competency and faith/theological education with a Catholic perspective, especially in relation to STANDARD 2: *Teachers: Know the content and how to teach it.*

This policy proposes a framework series of five levels of faith education and qualifications for all staff, teachers, teachers of Religious Education, and school leaders. It recognises that many employees bring to their communities an array of gifts and a depth of faith, spirituality and knowledge that far exceeds the minimal requirements of an accreditation structure.

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## EXPLANATION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this policy **Senior Leadership Positions** are defined as the School Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator.

**Accreditation** is defined as the process of officially recognising that a person has met the standards required to continue to work, teach, teach Religious Education and lead in a Catholic school.

**Currency** is defined as the ongoing renewal and maintenance of accreditation for all staff new and existing through continuing studies and or professional development.

## RATIONALE

From 2012, the Catholic Dioceses of NSW have agreed to implement a set of common minimum standards, for all who work in Catholic schooling and agree to recognise the accreditation standards of each Diocese provided that any accreditation meets at least the minimum agreed standard. The Diocese of Bathurst in keeping with all NSW Dioceses in accepting this also reserves the right to add further accreditation requirements if deemed necessary.

The Diocese of Bathurst recognises:

- The importance of all teaching staff in Catholic schools holding a Religious Education qualification or in the case of those who will never be required to teach Religious Education or assume a leadership role, a Catholic Studies qualification or equivalent
- The need to have an agreed framework for accreditation
- The need to focus the accreditation process on higher levels of accreditation for school leaders
- The need for ongoing renewal and maintenance of accreditation through continuing studies and or professional development
- The need for all employees to meet minimum accreditation requirements.

## AIMS

In this context, the framework has the following aims:

1. To ensure that all teaching staff appointed to Bathurst Diocesan Schools receive accreditation appropriate to their expected level of responsibility.
2. To establish an accreditation framework of five levels of competency and appropriate qualifications for all support staff, teachers, teachers of Religious Education and leaders in Catholic schools.
3. To identify the minimum accreditation requirements for staff not required to teach Religious Education.
4. To ensure that all staff, especially those responsible for delivering Religious Education, receive a certificate of accreditation that is recognised by the other NSW Dioceses.

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## OVERVIEW

There will be five categories of Accreditation:

1. **Accreditation A** – Accreditation to Work in Catholic Education (support staff and CEO staff)
2. **Accreditation B** – Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School (all teaching staff, including those who may not be teachers of Religious Education)
3. **Accreditation C** – Accreditation for Leadership in a Catholic School (Coordinators and leaders at Middle Management level)
4. **Accreditation D** – Accreditation to Teach Religious Education (all RE teaching staff)
5. **Accreditation E** – Accreditation for Senior Leadership (Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Coordinators)

- In Categories A and B staff currently employed in 2013 will gain automatic full accreditation at that level
- In categories C,D and E, for staff currently employed in 2013 at one of these levels, full accreditation will be granted to those staff who meet the requirements. Provisional accreditation will be granted to those who do not meet the requirements. However, to successfully apply for a position in another school at Category C, D or E, staff will need to demonstrate that they meet the requirements for that category (or undertake to do so within two years)
- There will be an obligation to maintain ongoing currency of accreditation. Individual staff members are responsible for maintaining their currency requirements
- School based records of currency at each level will form part of the annual school compliance check
- All obligations will be noted in relevant contracts
- Currency requirements fulfilled for higher categories of accreditation will meet the requirements for earlier accreditation categories.



# CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION

## CATEGORY A : ACCREDITATION TO WORK IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Commencing in 2014, all new CEO staff and school support staff employees who have direct and immediate contact with students, parents and teaching staff are required to participate, at a minimum, in a one-day (or equivalent) Orientation Program to acquaint them with the vision and mission of Catholic schools within the context of the evangelising and catechising mission of the Catholic Church. This would normally be conducted at the beginning of a school year for all new permanent staff (part-time and full-time).

Aspects of this program may include but are not limited to:

- orientation to the diocese
- discussion of the Vision and Mission Statement for Catholic Schooling in the Diocese of Bathurst
- Catholic Education – Jesus as the centre and foundation
- An introduction as to what it means to be employed in a Catholic workplace, including an understanding of the various school charisms within the diocese.

Typically, the staff to attend the Orientation Program would include:

- CEO staff
- school secretaries
- teachers' aides/assistants
- Aboriginal Education Workers
- lab assistants
- library assistants
- grounds staff and cleaners (during school hours) who have direct contact with students
- canteen staff
- counsellors
- bursars

**Currency:** It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of all staff, new and existing.

All staff, including support staff, are expected to attend a minimum of **fifteen hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days.

This level of currency is for all who will not progress beyond this level of accreditation.

**Transitional arrangements:** Full accreditation is granted to staff currently employed in 2013.

**Category A Accreditation and currency requirements are tracked at each school for school based staff and at the CEO for CEO staff.**

# CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION

## CATEGORY B:

### ACCREDITATION TO TEACH IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

All newly appointed teachers, both part-time and full-time, temporary and permanent, are required to participate, at a minimum, in the equivalent of a two-day formation program so as to obtain Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School. This category incorporates the requirements of Category A. Aspects of this program may include but are not limited to:

- Mission of the Catholic Church and School
- Catholic Life and Culture
- Pastoral Care
- Scripture, Prayer and Liturgy
- Christian Leadership
- Catholic Social Teaching
- Integration of Catholic curriculum.

**Currency:** It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of staff. All teachers are expected to attend a minimum of **thirty hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days.

**Transitional Arrangements:** Full accreditation is granted for teachers currently employed in 2013. This accreditation process will be managed at the school level.

**Category B Accreditation** for new teachers employed from 2014 is granted upon application to the Catholic Education Office.

**Currency requirements are tracked at each school.**



# CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION

## CATEGORY C:

### ACCREDITATION FOR LEADERSHIP IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Category C Accreditation requirements apply to:

- Pastoral Care/Curriculum Coordinators
- Heads of Department/Subject Coordinators
- Year and Welfare Coordinators
- Primary and Secondary School Coordinators
- Any other equivalent roles in middle management

Coordinators and Middle Managers (one, two and three points) must be qualified teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School.

In order to be accredited for Category C, participants must have demonstrated strengths in one or more of the following areas in regard to the way in which they have undertaken their teaching vocation:

- Permeation of Catholic values
- Pastoral care, community building and social justice
- School, parish and parents in partnership
- Prayer, liturgy and spiritual life of the school

**Alternatively**, Coordinators and Middle Managers can meet their accreditation requirements through the successful completion of two units of postgraduate study within Religious Education/Theology/Catholic Leadership courses or fulfil the requirements of Category D.

**Currency:** It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and/or spiritual development of staff. It is expected that all Coordinators and Middle Managers will complete a minimum of **forty-five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days (30 hours) and additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership (15 hours). This may include formal tertiary study if specifically related to RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation, e-conferences, social justice programs) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

**Transitional Arrangements:** Teachers currently holding middle leadership roles in 2013 will automatically gain full Category C accreditation if they meet the requirements for this level. *Provisional* accreditation will automatically be granted to those staff holding middle leadership roles in 2013 who do not meet the requirements for this level. This accreditation will be processed at the school level.

**Category C accreditation** is granted upon application to the Catholic Education Office for staff appointed to middle leadership positions from 2014.

**Currency requirements are tracked at each school.**



# CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION

## CATEGORY D:

### ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Teachers of Religious Education must be qualified Catholic\* teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School. In order to be accredited as a teacher of Religious Education, teachers must have completed, at a minimum:

- a major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of six approved units of study for students commencing their undergraduate studies from the beginning of 2013); or
- a degree in Theology or allied disciplines at a Catholic tertiary institution; or
- a postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of four postgraduate units of study); or
- CEO approved postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of four postgraduate units of study); or
- a CEO approved qualification in Religious Education/Theology from an endorsed provider (minimum of four postgraduate units of study).

Upon individual application, teachers may also be accredited to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools if they have previously been accredited to teach Religious Education in another State or Territory of Australia.

**Currency:** It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of staff. It is expected that all teachers of Religious Education will complete a minimum of **forty five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days (30 hours) and additional professional development in RE/Theology (15 hours). This may include formal tertiary study if specifically related to RE/Theology. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

**Transitional Arrangements:** Teachers currently teaching Religious Education in 2013 will automatically gain full Category D accreditation if they meet the requirements for this level. *Provisional* accreditation will automatically be granted to those staff teaching Religious Education in 2013 who do not meet the requirements for this level. This accreditation will be processed at the school level.

**Category D accreditation** is granted upon application to the Catholic Education Office for staff employed from 2014.

**Currency requirements are tracked at each school.**

*\*If the teacher is other than Catholic then the Principal will appoint a mentor to support them in their teaching of Religious Education. This mentoring process will be fully managed at the school level.*

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# CATEGORIES OF ACCREDITATION

## CATEGORY E:

### ACCREDITATION FOR SENIOR LEADERSHIP IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Senior leaders in Catholic schools must be qualified Catholic teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School. Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Coordinators, are considered to be senior leaders.

To be eligible for senior leadership positions employees must, at a minimum:

- be accredited for Leadership in a Catholic School (Category C)
- be accredited to teach Religious Education (Category D)
- have completed **a minimum of four units** of study at a postgraduate level in Religious Education/Theology/Catholic Leadership at a Catholic tertiary institution or as part of an **approved** program of study at a secular tertiary institution. The units would be in addition to any subjects covered to achieve Accreditation D.

**Currency:** In addition to these requirements it is expected that all senior leaders will complete a minimum of **seventy-five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. This may include relevant formal tertiary study. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days, participation in approved conferences, and additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

**Transitional Arrangements:** Staff currently in senior leadership positions in 2013 will automatically gain full Category E accreditation if they meet the requirements for this level. *Provisional* accreditation will automatically be granted to those staff in senior leadership positions in 2013 who do not meet the requirements for this level. This accreditation will be processed at the school level.

**Category E Accreditation** is granted upon application to the Catholic Education Office for staff appointed to senior leadership positions from 2014.

**Currency requirements are tracked at each school.**



# ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK

## Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Bathurst

### OVERVIEW

Category	Target Group	Minimum Requirements	Currency	Provisional Accreditation
<b>CATEGORY A</b> Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School	Support staff, eg. school secretaries, teacher's aides/assistants, lab and library assistants, grounds-people and cleaners	Catholic/committed to Catholic ethos 6-hour Orientation Program	15 hours over 5 years	N/A
<b>CATEGORY B</b> Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School	All teachers	Catholic/committed to Catholic ethos 12-hour Catholic Teacher Formation	30 hours over 5 years	N/A
<b>CATEGORY C</b> Accreditation for Leadership in a Catholic School	Directors of Learning & Teaching/Curriculum Coordinators, Heads of Department/Subject Coordinators, Year and Pastoral Care Coordinators, Primary School Coordinators	Catholic/committed to Catholic ethos 2 Units Postgraduate RE/Leadership	45 hours over 5 years	4 years maximum
<b>CATEGORY D</b> Accreditation to Teach Religious Education	Teachers of Religious Education	Catholic 6 Units Undergraduate (RE/Theology); or 4 Units Postgraduate RE/Theology	45 hours over 5 years	4 years maximum
<b>CATEGORY E</b> Accreditation for Senior Leadership	Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Coordinators	Catholic Accredited for Leadership and To Teach RE Minimum 4 Units Postgraduate study in Catholic Leadership/Theology	75 hours over 5 years	4 years



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