

Teacher Accreditation, Formation and Professional Learning for Catholic Identity and Mission

Policy



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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the position of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools in relation to Teacher Accreditation in Catholic Schools and Teacher Participation in ongoing spiritual and religious formation, and Professional Learning to support the Catholic identity and mission of schools.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Catholic schools and Catholic Education Offices in South Australia.

3. Policy

Teachers play a crucial role in the ways the Catholic identity and mission of Catholic schools are realised and developed. To this end, teachers in Catholic schools:

- are called to be able to witness to faith
- need to have a sound understanding of Catholic beliefs and practices
- need to be able to facilitate authentic dialogue between faith, life and culture in their engagement and teaching with students and the school community.²

Teachers are required to:

- be accredited to teach in a Catholic school in SA
- participate in ongoing spiritual and religious formation
- participate in ongoing professional learning in Catholic studies.

4. Requirements

4.1. Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school in SA

All teachers who gain employment in South Australian Catholic Schools are required to have accreditation to teach in South Australian Catholic Schools ('Accreditation') within the first five years of initial employment in a Catholic school in South Australia.

- Accreditation requirements include:
 - full South Australian Teacher Registration
 - completion of CESA Accreditation Induction Modules
 - the undertaking of Higher Education in Catholic Studies: four semester length units of approved Catholic Studies including Scripture and theology.

² NCEC Framing Paper for Religious Education in Catholic schools, 2018 p.15

- Accreditation applies to permanent and fixed-term contract (i.e. replacement and temporary) teachers.³
 - Accreditation is not mandated for teachers employed on a casual basis (e.g. TRTs). However, they are encouraged to seek Accreditation.
 - Accreditation requirements for non-permanent (contract) teachers apply from 1st January 2023. Accreditation is required within five years of the date of initial employment in a Catholic School after 1st January 2023, not including breaks in service between contracts.
 - Accreditation also applies to all other employees with a teacher registration in leadership and educational roles in Catholic schools and Catholic Education Offices in SA.
- The Accreditation Induction Modules are provided annually for all teachers commencing employment in South Australian Catholic Schools, and are undertaken in the teacher's first year as close to the commencement date as possible. These complement the induction provided by the schools. The scope of the modules includes:
 - the purpose and Catholic identity and mission of Catholic Schools
 - vocation, roles and responsibilities of the Teacher in a Catholic School
 - information about CESA, including role and pertinent policies of SACCS, CEO teams and services
 - Professional responsibilities and other legal responsibilities as a teacher in a Catholic school.
- For permanent teachers employed in a Catholic school in SA prior to 1st January 2023, Accreditation is required within five years of initial employment in a Catholic school; this reflects the previous *Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School policy* (2011).
- Teachers with Accreditation are required to access ongoing professional learning in Catholic Studies.⁴
- The Accreditation of teachers that is issued by interstate Catholic Education jurisdictions can be recognised as being equivalent after consideration by CESA's Catholic Education Office.

For early career teachers, these accreditation requirements complement, and many are integrated with, CESA's Early Career Teacher programs.

³ Temporary and replacement teachers are sometimes referred to as 'fixed term contract' teachers'; this does not include casually employed teachers, e.g. Temporary Replacement Teachers (TRTs)

⁴ This can at the same time contribute, along with other professional learning, to the maintenance of teacher registration.

4.1.1. Teachers of Religious Education

Teachers of Religious Education are required to have Accreditation before teaching Religious Education or be compliant with the transition requirements. This applies to permanent and contract (replacement and temporary) teachers.

- Transition requirements exist for teachers who are required to teach Religious Education prior to full Accreditation. This includes:
 - undertaking the *Introduction to teaching RE with Crossways* Module within the first school term of their employment
 - completing the Scripture unit of the Graduate Certificate in Education (Catholic Education) (or equivalent) within the first two years of teaching Religious Education
 - school supervision, monitoring and support until the Graduate Certificate in Education (Catholic Education) (or equivalent) is completed, with close supervision until the Scripture and Theology units are completed. This supervision, monitoring and support is to be coordinated by the APRIM.
- Teachers of Religious Education with Accreditation who are new to SA are required to undertake an *Introduction to teaching RE with Crossways* Module within two school terms.
- Appropriate school supervision is required for casual teachers who do not have Accreditation and who are asked to teach Religious Education.

4.2. Spiritual and Religious Formation.

“In choosing to be part of Catholic education, all staff have entered into a space of formation which invites them into a deepening encounter with God. This formation empowers them to engage in God’s mission and be witnesses to the Gospel, to each other, their students, families and the community.”⁵ In light of this, staff have a responsibility to:

- be open to growth in the spiritual and religious journey
- reflect and plan for ongoing spiritual and religious formation on a regular basis
- participate in a range of spiritual and religious formation opportunities, including those available within the school, sector and broader Church.⁶

Teachers are required to engage with

- at least one day (or equivalent) of staff spiritual and religious formation per year

⁵ Like a Mustard Seed 2013 p.3

⁶ Like a Mustard Seed 2013 p.9

- school staff prayer on a regular basis.

Schools are expected to provide opportunities for staff prayer and spiritual and religious formation, with access to support of the Catholic Education Office.

Early career teachers in diocesan schools are required to participate in the CEO's staff spiritual and religious formation program for early career teachers in addition to school based formation.

4.3. Professional Learning in Catholic Studies

All teachers are required to engage in ongoing professional learning in Catholic studies in addition to the spiritual and religious formation detailed above.

This professional learning includes school-based and sector-based professional learning in Catholic studies, and higher education courses in Catholic studies

Professional learning in Catholic studies is supported by the Catholic Professional Formation Allowance.⁷

Teachers of Religious Education are required to engage in at least two days (or equivalent) of professional learning in Catholic studies every two years.

Professional Learning in Catholic studies will be facilitated by schools in partnership with the CEO. The school is required to monitor and document teacher compliance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

Teachers in Catholic Schools are expected to:

- manage enrolment into Catholic Studies courses
- reflect and plan for ongoing spiritual and religious formation on a regular basis
- maintain records of their academic study, professional development and formation
- provide their school with documents to support their attainment of the requirements of the policy
- monitor their progress toward Accreditation within the required timeframes, and apply to the CEO for Accreditation when all requirements have been met.

Catholic Schools

Catholic schools are expected to:

⁷ The Catholic Professional Formation Allowance in the Enterprise Agreement for Catholic Schools is a recognition of the additional knowledge and skills that teachers need to have when employed in Catholic schools.

- ensure that teachers are accredited according to this Policy, and that the Accreditation Induction Modules are undertaken in the teacher's first year as close to the commencement date as possible
- ensure that the requirements of transition to Accreditation are met as set out in this policy
- ensure teachers of Religious Education have Accreditation before teaching Religious Education or are compliant with the transition requirements set out in this policy, and they meet the requirements for professional learning in Catholic studies
- provide school supervision, monitoring and support of teachers of RE until the Graduate Certificate in Education (Catholic Education) (or equivalent) is completed.
- facilitate and promote professional learning in Catholic identity and mission
- facilitate and promote opportunities for spiritual and religious formation for staff
- maintain teacher records of Accreditation, academic study and professional development in Catholic Studies, and spiritual and religious formation
- facilitate teacher access to the Catholic Professional Formation Allowance
- recruit teachers who are willing and able, in the ways this Policy describes, to contribute to the Catholic identity and mission of Catholic schools.

Catholic Education Office

The Catholic Education Office is expected to:

- oversee and manage the implementation of this policy
- facilitate access to the Graduate Certificate in Catholic Education in partnership with UniSA
- facilitate and promote professional learning in Catholic identity and mission
- provide and promote the sector-based modules set out in this policy
- support schools to maintain teacher records of academic study and professional development in Catholic Studies
- provide support to APRIMs in their coordination of supervision of teachers of RE until they complete the Graduate Certificate in Education (Catholic Education) (or equivalent)
- manage the Catholic Professional Formation Allowance
- provide Catholic Studies approval status to courses
- develop and maintain sector Accreditation records.

6. Definitions

- *Diocesan school:*
A diocesan school is a school that has as its governing authority the Archdiocese of Adelaide or Diocese of Pt Pirie.

- *Separately governed school:*
A separately governed school is a school that is governed by a religious institute or ministerial public juridic person.
- *Catholic studies*
Catholic studies is a generic term referring to higher education or professional learning which focuses *to a significant degree on Catholic tradition, teaching and theology* in areas such as:
 - the Catholic identity and mission of Catholic education
 - theological studies founded in the Catholic tradition (including theology, scripture, spirituality, ecclesiology, mission, ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, etc)
 - Religious Education and Catholic approaches to curriculum and pedagogy
 - vocation, ministry and leadership in a Catholic school.⁸

7. Responsibility for implementation, monitoring, and continual improvement

Responsibility for implementation, monitoring and review of the policy is vested at the level appropriate to the following roles:

Catholic Education Offices	Catholic Schools
Assistant Director, Catholic Identity and Mission	Principal
Manager: Catholic Identity and Mission	School Board (or Equivalent)

8. Supporting procedures or policy support documents

The following documents are to be read in conjunction with, and are additional to, any other relevant South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), school or CEO policy, procedure or support document.

- Religious Leadership in Catholic Schools Policy 2021
- Religious Leadership and the Catholic Identity of Schools Statement 2021
- Charter for Staff in Catholic Schools South Australia 2021
- Like a Mustard Seed CESA Stimulus and Foundation Paper for Staff Spiritual and Religious Formation 2013

⁸ For leadership positions, more stringent requirements regarding Catholic studies are applicable; Principals, Deputy Principals and APRIMs are required to undertake Catholic Studies at masters level (i.e., higher than at graduate certificate level).

9. References

N/A

10. Revision Record

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