



MISSION ACCREDITATION POLICY FOR THE DIOCESAN SCHOOLS SYSTEM

March 2017

Note for 2017

The Policy states that persons in designated positions at the CSO are required to participate in mission formation at the level of co-ordinator. There will be a determination during 2017 about which CSO positions will be so designated.

1. PURPOSE

Sharing in the evangelising mission of the Church, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay exist to educate and form students as “friends in the Lord ... sent out to be missionary disciples.” (Broken Bay Diocesan Mission Statement 2015)

The ongoing evangelisation and Catholic formation of leaders and staff of Catholic schools holds the central place in the fulfilment of this purpose. As the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education states:

For the Catholic educator, religious formation ... must be a part of and a complement to one's professional formation, and ... be proportionate ... religious formation must be oriented toward both personal holiness and apostolic mission... two inseparable elements in a Christian vocation. "Formation for apostolic mission means a certain human and well-rounded formation, adapted to the natural abilities and circumstances of each person" and requires "in addition to spiritual formation, ... solid doctrinal instruction ... in theology, ethics and philosophy". Nor can we forget, in the case of an educator, adequate formation in the social teachings of the Church, which are " an integral part of the Christian concept of life ", (49) and help to keep intensely alive the kind of social sensitivity that is needed.(50)

(Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith, 65)

This Policy supersedes previous versions issued in 2011 and 2013.

Catholic school staff minister within the Church, which “... exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.” (Broken Bay Diocesan Mission Statement 2015) Whilst appreciating the diversity of the faith and life experience of staff, school and system leaders seek to appoint staff possessing and committed to developing personal qualities, dispositions and pastoral gifts that support the purpose of Broken Bay Catholic schools. The formation of staff as missionary disciples is critical to the education and formation of students.

2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Policy:

- requires that all employees assuming their roles after the date of implementation will either have appropriate mission formation or participate in it within a specified period.
- requires that all employees continue to participate in formation opportunities appropriate to their respective roles.
- affirms the mutual responsibilities of individuals, schools and the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) in the area of formation.

This policy specifies five levels of religious formation:

- for **non-teaching support staff** who work in a Catholic school or the CSO.
- for **teachers** in a Catholic school.
- for **coordinators** in a Catholic school and designated positions in the CSO.
- for **teachers of Religious Education**.
- for **those in school and system leadership**.

Induction programs and required qualifications in this Policy apply only to newly appointed permanent staff from the dates specified in section 3 of this Policy.

Teachers with a temporary appointment are encouraged to also fulfil these requirements.

3. POLICY CONTENT

1. When appointing staff in the first four categories, Principals should do so with a view to realising the purpose of this Policy.
2. When appointing senior leaders, the Director of Schools will do so with a view to realising the purpose of this Policy.

SUPPORT STAFF

In addition to the qualifications and competencies pertinent to their role newly appointed school support staff members, commencing from January 2014 onwards, have been required to participate in the equivalent of a one-day mission formation and induction program, ideally within their first year of employment. They are expected to maintain currency through the equivalent of at least three days of spiritual/mission formation every five years, generally through participation in school-based staff spirituality days or relevant CSO Mission Formation programs.

TEACHERS

In addition to the qualifications and competencies pertinent to their professional role newly appointed permanent teachers, commencing from January 2014 onwards, have been required to participate in the equivalent of a two-day mission formation and induction program within the first two years of appointment. This program may be held over several sessions. Teachers are expected to maintain currency through the equivalent of five days of appropriate mission formation every five years, generally through participation in school-based staff spirituality days or relevant CSO Mission Formation programs.

COORDINATORS

Coordinators include subject coordinators, year coordinators and primary school coordinators remunerated as coordinators. Coordinators also include designated CSO roles. From the beginning of 2017, in addition to the qualifications and competencies pertinent to their professional role, newly appointed coordinators who have not gained or who are not in the process of gaining the qualifications required to teach Religious Education will be required to participate in the equivalent of a four-day program of mission formation over a four year period. In addition to maintaining the currency requirements expected of permanent teachers, all coordinators are required to participate in the equivalent of a further three days of mission formation every five years. The CSO provides a range of mission formation programs including one specifically for experienced teachers and coordinators.

TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In addition to being persons appropriately formed as witnesses to the Gospel, newly appointed teachers of Religious Education ordinarily should be practicing Catholics who:

- a. have completed six undergraduate units in Religious Education/Theology in an undergraduate teaching degree at a Catholic institution (if undergraduate study commenced from the beginning of 2013 or afterwards); or
- b. have undertaken four postgraduate units in Theology and/or Religious Education in an approved Catholic program at a tertiary institution.
- c. have complied with the 2001 Policy for the *Professional Requirements for Teachers of Religious Education*:
 - i. through accreditation or registration as teachers of Religious Education in the Diocese of Broken Bay or another Australian Diocese prior to 31 December 2011; or those who are deemed to hold equivalent qualifications; or
 - ii. through attainment of the equivalent of four undergraduate units in Religious Education/Theology at a Catholic tertiary institution, provided these units were commenced no later than 2012.

A teacher may be provisionally accredited for a period of up to five years on the condition of attainment of these requirements. Teachers are advised not to commence post-graduate studies in Theology or Religious Education until the beginning of their fourth year of employment as a teacher. Teachers of Religious Education may apply to the CSO to subsidise post-graduate study.

In addition to the normal currency of religious formation for permanent teachers, Religious Education teachers should undertake an equivalent of three days of formation or professional learning specifically related to the teaching of Religious Education every five years.

SCHOOL AND SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

Leadership at this level refers to:

- Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Coordinators, Leaders of Evangelisation and Catholic Formation, and Youth Ministry Coordinators
- Director of Schools, Assistant Directors, Schools Consultants

In addition to the qualifications and competencies pertinent to their professional role, persons appointed to these roles for 2017 onwards, must:

- be practicing Catholics accredited to teach Religious Education and appropriately formed to be witnesses to the Gospel.
- have completed a minimum of six units of study at a Masters level in Religious Education, Scripture, Theology, and Catholic Leadership in an approved Catholic tertiary institution.

School and System leaders may apply to the CSO to subsidise post-graduate study.

An individual's contract may specify provisional accreditation for a period of four years conditional upon attainment of these requirements.

In addition to maintaining the currency of requirements expected of permanent teachers, these leaders should undertake the equivalent of a further five days of formation, professional learning or formal study, specifically related to leadership in mission, every five years.

4. SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

The CSO will develop specific procedures and oversee appropriate school-based and system staff mission formation, induction and religious leadership opportunities, and monitor school staff mission formation activities in order to implement this Policy. A Mission Accreditation Website has been developed to provide further information and resources. Go to <http://missionaccreditation.dbbcs.org>.

5. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every five years.

6. POLICY DATED

Policy date of completion of formulation and adoption	September 2011
Date of current edition of policy	March 2017
Date of next review	March 2022

Authorised by
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