
Principles for the employment of Conditionally Accredited Teachers

Preamble

These principles have been designed to support quality practice in the utilisation of the Conditional Accreditation provisions described in Section 31 of the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*, while acknowledging that issues of employment and remuneration are the remit of the employers i.e., schools.

Conditional Accreditation is normally granted by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) when initial teacher education (ITE) students enter the final year of their accredited teaching degree. ITE students who have been studying full-time therefore are faced with balancing full-time study and employment or negotiating with their ITE provider to alter their intended pattern of study in the final year, although the timing of any offer of employment in the academic semester may prevent this.

The employment of Conditionally Accredited teachers places responsibilities on them, their employers and their ITE providers. These principles are an attempt to acknowledge the critical role that both initial and school-based teacher educators (also referred to as supervising teachers) play in the development of ITE students, and specifically those who have Conditional Accreditation and are employed.

These principles also attempt to define the dual position that conditionally accredited teachers who are employed assume i.e., that of early career teacher and teacher education student simultaneously. This cohort of teachers should be assisted with developing strategies to maintain personal wellbeing and the ability to make judgements about the balance of work and study to best support their longer-term efficacy as a teacher.

This professional collaboration between schools and ITE providers could also help to reconcile academic and practitioner knowledge for initial teacher education and help to establish and support sustainable research partnerships between schools and ITE providers. Ongoing and committed collaboration, innovation, and effective communication between ITE providers, sectors and schools will be needed to ensure a shared confidence with classroom readiness and high-quality outcomes for Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed at any point in their ITE degree including during the final professional experience (PEX) placement.

Principles

1. ITE providers and employing schools are encouraged to collaborate to establish a formal process for the identification of and reporting on Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed by a school at any point (including during the final PEX placement). A copy of this documentation should be retained by both the ITE provider and the school. In the case of a final PEX placement this process would be established after the formal application (approved by NESAs) for a waiver of Appendix B of the NESAs *Professional Experience in Initial Teacher Education Policy*, and prior to the commencement of the final PEX placement.
2. Conditionally Accredited teachers who undertake periods of teacher employment should share details about their ITE course demands and course assessment obligations, including the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA), with the principals/schools seeking to employ them, prior to finalising any offer of employment. Conditionally Accredited teachers must also notify their ITE providers and provider staff when they undertake any Conditionally Accredited employment as a teacher and identify any potential impact on meeting their coursework and course assessment obligations.
3. As much as possible, Conditionally Accredited teachers being employed should be offered a teaching load and duties that provide them with adequate time to give attention to ITE coursework and course assessment obligations including the TPA. A suggested arrangement where Conditionally Accredited teachers are studying full-time is 0.6 FTE, although this may be difficult to sustain in some courses and in any ongoing manner. Where possible schools are encouraged to consider alternative and innovative models of staffing and employment to acknowledge and support the development of the Conditionally Accredited teacher e.g., job sharing between two Conditionally Accredited teachers.
4. School-based teacher educators (also referred to as supervising teachers) should provide mentoring support to all Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed during the final PEX placement e.g., regular meetings, and the provision of written and verbal feedback during the placement period.
5. ITE provider-based mentoring support (tertiary mentors/liaison officers) should continue for all Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed during the final PEX placement and support TPA requirements.
6. Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed at any point (including the final PEX placement) should be provided with planned and structured school-based professional learning opportunities by schools whilst acknowledging that university commitments are also a priority for the teacher education student.
7. ITE provider-based guidance regarding coursework and assessment would be valuable as a provision to all Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed at any point (including the final PEX placement).
8. Where possible ITE providers should offer alternative access to coursework including remote/online or intensive modes of study to Conditionally Accredited teachers who are employed at any point.