

APPLICABLE TO	All CSO and diocesan school employees
DOCUMENT OWNER	Head of Religious Education and Spirituality Services
APPROVAL DATE	November 2018
APPROVED BY	CSO Leadership Team
SCHOOL ACTIONS	System policy: Schools are to ensure their practices are consistent with this policy. A local policy is not required.
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	July 2012 (Faith Education Accreditation Policy)
NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2020
RELATED DOCUMENTS	Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Handbook 2018

Purpose

This policy outlines faith accreditation requirements for employees of the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CSO), and their contractual obligations for working, teaching and leading in diocesan schools. It aims to

- respond fully to the Bishop's invitation and mandate to work, teach and exercise leadership in a Catholic school on his behalf.
- respond to the changing needs and culture of Catholic schools.
- recognise, promote and affirm appropriate forms of professional learning relevant to working, teaching and leadership in a Catholic school.
- promote the attainment of academic knowledge and skills in the areas of religious education and Catholic school leadership.
- provide opportunities for all staff to become familiar with and to be immersed in the life and culture of Catholic education.
- nurture the spiritual formation, faith development and ongoing professional growth of all staff.
- use accreditation status under this policy as one of the criteria to assist with selection of staff for teaching or leadership positions in Catholic schools
- ensure that accreditation at categories becomes a mandatory expectation of employment and that all staff gain accreditation appropriate to their respective roles.
- ensure that, in keeping with contemporary professional practice, all staff through appropriate professional support and development maintain currency of their accreditation status.

This policy gives an overview of the five accreditation categories (see 'Definitions'). The related Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Handbook addresses how employees can attain accreditation and how the CSO will provide ongoing support for its employees in faith formation.

Policy Statement

The Catholic school community has a responsibility to put into place appropriate and supportive yet rigorous pathways for the preparation and ongoing professional learning of teachers, especially in Religious Education, and for the professional and spiritual formation of those who will lead our schools

into the future. It is the responsibility of all staff and teachers in a Catholic school and service areas at the CSO to introduce the students to the mystery of Christ and the living tradition of the Church.

Scope

This policy applies to employees of the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle who work in CSO service areas and at diocesan schools.

Guiding Principles

This revised accreditation policy is a response from a directive from a Conference of Diocesan Directors of Education of NSW and the ACT and is aligned with the Accreditation Framework for Catholic Schools in NSW (Nov 2010). It was from this document that the previous Faith Education Accreditation Policy (2012) was developed. In 2016 the Catholic Schools Council commissioned a review of the current FEA Policy and its implementation in schools. This document reflects changes recommended from the 2016 review.

The Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy is written in the context of the pastoral letter of the Bishops of NSW and the ACT *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads* in which they 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.

This policy is designed to assist and support staff in terms of

- portability and equity across dioceses.
- recognition of study and qualifications.
- achievement of professional standards.
- development towards promotional positions.

Responsibilities

Director of Schools

The Director of Schools is responsible for

- the consistent and effective implementation of this policy and procedures across the school system.

Head of Religious Education and Spirituality

The Head of RE and Spirituality Services is responsible for

- ensuring appropriate support and resources are available to enable staff to be accredited at the relevant category.
- the effective and strategic monitoring of this policy and procedures on behalf of the Bishop and Director of Schools.
- creating summaries of data about qualifications and levels of accreditation on a regular basis to be used for the ongoing refinement and implementation of this policy.
- writing an annual report of the accreditation of staff and an evaluation of this policy and associated procedures to be provided to the Bishop, the Catholic Schools Council and the CSO Leadership Team.

Catholic Schools Office – Religious Education and Spirituality Services

The CSO is responsible for providing

- modules to support Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead.
- financial support for approved courses undertaken for staff to achieve Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead.
- advice to Principals and staff about Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead status and requirements.
- updated accreditation data to Bishop, CSO Leadership Team and Principals.
- Guidance and direction in terms of contractual obligations in regards to Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead requirements.

Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for

- recording employees' Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead details in personnel files, and ensuring employees are informed of their faith accreditation requirements in their contracts.

School Principals

The Principal (or their delegate) monitors and promotes Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead at the local level and provides relevant advice and support.

Principals need to ensure Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Requirements are being met by applicants on employment

Employees

Individual permanent staff members at the CSO and in diocesan schools have the prime responsibility for their Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead. This includes completing all modules and courses of study required, maintaining currency and providing the necessary documentation to the CSO.

Definitions

Accreditation Categories

There is an obligation for all permanent employees to obtain accreditation within a 4-year timeframe

ACCREDITATION CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Category A: Accreditation to Work	CSO Professional Officers, all School Support Staff, all CSO Administration Staff
Category B: Accreditation to Teach	Teaching staff who do not teach Religion
Category C: Accreditation for Leadership	Secondary Studies Coordinators, Secondary Student Coordinators, Secondary Administration Coordinators, Primary Coordinators and all CSO Education Officers
Category D: Accreditation to Teach Religion	Secondary Religious Studies Coordinators and all permanent Teachers of Religion (Primary and Secondary)
Category E: Accreditation for Senior Leadership	Principals, Assistant Principals, Primary Religious Education Coordinators, Secondary Ministry Coordinators, Director of Schools, Assistant Directors of Schools, Religious Education and Spirituality Services Education team members and the Head of Teaching and Learning Services

Currency

Maintaining currency of accreditation begins once an employee has completed the requirements to gain accreditation. Details about the hours for currency at each level are listed in the Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Handbook, and recorded in the Faith Accreditation Database.

Accreditation modules and courses of study that are being taken as part of initial accreditation requirements are not eligible as currency hours.

Budget

The Catholic Schools Office will ensure an appropriate proportion of its budget, dependent on system priorities, to support the implementation of the Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy, including the professional development of staff.

Legislative/Professional Guidelines

Accreditation Framework for Catholic Schools in NSW (Nov 2010)
Catholic Schools at a Crossroads (2007)