

News for teachers from the QCT

April 2013

QCT eNews is published by the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) for Queensland approved teachers. It is emailed every second month during the school year to all those on our register with an email address.

The QCT protects the public and the teaching profession by working to ensure that all teachers in Queensland schools meet professional standards of competence and conduct.

Welcome to our second issue for 2013. In this edition of QCT eNews you'll find information about:

- **The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)**
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The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)

During 2013 the QCT is introducing the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) to teachers in all sectors in Queensland through website and newsletter updates, and professional engagement sessions. Like the Professional

Standards for Queensland Teachers in use prior to 2013, the APST are a public statement that describes the professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement required of teachers. The Standards also underpin registration decisions at different career junctures. Copies of the APST can be downloaded from www.qct.edu.au/Standards/index.html.

In each issue of *QCT eNews* during 2013 we will look at a specific standard or descriptor/s by providing general information as well as links to resources such as the *Illustrations of Practice* commissioned by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School leadership (AITSL). Illustrations of Practice are artefacts such as videos, lesson plans or work samples that show what the APST look like in practice in classrooms and schools across Australia.

See below for the first of these features.



Focus on a standard

We begin our regular series of items focusing on particular standards from the APST (see above) with a standard about behaviour management.

Standard 4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments is about teachers making learning engaging and valued; and about creating and maintaining safe, inclusive and challenging learning environments and implementing fair and equitable behaviour management plans.

Within this Standard, focus area 4.3 is: 'Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully'. Examples of this in practice can be accessed at:

<http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/Illustrations/Details/IOP00119>

In this example the teacher establishes a consistent behaviour management approach, linked to the shared school values. These values are explored and given meaning via creative group activities in the pastoral care program she facilitates at the school. The teacher works with the philosophy that when students are engaged in their learning, behavioural problems are less likely to arise.

<http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/Illustrations/Details/IOP00215>

In this example the teacher contends that teachers can create a learning environment characterised by well-paced lessons, explicit instructions, and response to individual learning needs and abilities. Students in a senior English class describe how the teacher has transformed their learning opportunities and achievements.



QCT workshops and information sessions for Term 2 and Term 3, 2013

Registration is now open for QCT workshops and information sessions which will take place during Term 2 and Term 3, 2013. Workshops will be delivered in both metropolitan and regional areas of Queensland. Using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers for reflective practice and renewal will be the focus of the workshops for fully registered teachers. Information will also be provided on new renewal of registration requirements. Workshops for provisionally registered teachers and their mentors/supervisors will focus on using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to move from provisional to full registration including the new evidence requirements. Being piloted this year are two workshops designed specifically for provisionally registered supply and early childhood teachers, to be held in Brisbane.

A full schedule of dates and locations as well as details about how to register for a workshop or information session can be found on the QCT website at <http://www.qct.edu.au/Events/index.html>



What do I get for my money?

Occasionally teachers contact the QCT to ask what they, as individual teachers, receive for their annual registration fee. They wonder what the QCT does for them.

Such questions are based on a misconception of the nature of the QCT. The QCT is a statutory body – that is, it is set up by legislation – whose function is to administer the legislation about teacher registration in this state. Teacher registration is a requirement established by government. The purpose of registration is to protect the public and the profession, not to provide benefits to individual teachers. The QCT is not a professional association which members of the profession can join voluntarily and which is designed to provide services to members.

Registration does, however, benefit the teaching profession generally. It does this mainly by restricting entry to the profession to those who are appropriately qualified and assessed as 'suitable to teach' on the basis of criminal history and other background checks, by taking disciplinary action against teachers in certain situations, and by checking that schools employ only approved teachers in teaching positions.

Similar registration requirements apply in other professions – for example, medical practitioners, engineers, accountants and lawyers.



QCT Teacher Research Grants – applications closing soon

Are you a registered teacher in a Queensland school who has recently undertaken research on teaching and learning issues in schools? The QCT awards a small number of research grants annually to practising teachers to assist them to present their research at key Australian education conferences. You may be eligible to apply for a grant. Receipt of a grant is contingent upon the acceptance of your proposed paper presentation by the conference organisers. The grant provides financial assistance towards conference registration fees and travel and accommodation associated with conference attendance.

Applications must be on [the form](#) provided by the QCT and must be submitted to the QCT **by 30 April**. Please see the [Guidelines for Applicants](#) on the QCT website.



QCT Excellence in Teaching Awards

Nominations are open for the 2013 annual QCT Excellence in Teaching Awards. Registered teachers from State, Catholic and Independent schools are eligible for nomination in four award categories. Nominating a teacher for an award is recognition of a colleague's hard work and a celebration of their achievements that enrich the school community. More information is available on the [QCT Excellence in Teaching Awards webpage](#).



QCT Research Digest

This series of publications looks at the research on various aspects of teaching. Each issue of the Digest focusses on a single topic, reviewing the messages from research on the area and emphasising what the research means for teachers and teaching. Areas covered in

previous issues include: Managing Student Behaviour in the Classroom, Using Data to Improve Learning, The Use of ICT in Schools, and Successful Professional Learning. All 8 issues to date are available on the [QCT website](#).

Look out for the next issue – on Teaching Critical Thinking – in a few weeks.



Learnings from disciplinary cases

Each year a small number of teachers come to the attention of the QCT due to their inappropriate behaviour. In certain circumstances, complaints made to the QCT about teachers result in referral to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal which has the power to hear cases and make orders about teachers' registration.

While the teachers involved are but a tiny fraction of the total number of teachers in the state, such cases often receive significant media attention and thus can bring the whole profession into disrepute.

Teachers should be aware that their registration (and their teaching employment) can be affected for a variety of types of inappropriate behaviour, not only serious misconduct. One example of this was described in the previous issue of *QCT eNews* (February 2013). Another example follows.

A teacher, who was employed as both a Deputy Principal and Principal, engaged in overly familiar and sexually suggestive behaviour with two female students over a period of 11 months. The Tribunal found that obtaining the students' mobile phone numbers and using those numbers at inappropriate times and for inappropriate reasons, engaging with the students in an over-familiar, inappropriate and sexualised manner and tone, was a departure from the standard of behaviour generally expected of a teacher, particularly in such positions of authority. (There was no evidence the teacher engaged in or attempted to physically touch either student.)

The Tribunal suspended the teacher's registration for 12 months and imposed a condition that the teacher must provide a satisfactory psychological report to the QCT before the suspension is lifted.

The Tribunal stated, "*The Principal sets the tone and displays the behaviour on which students and staff model their own behaviour. If the tone and behaviour fall below professional standards there is*

greater risk to the welfare of the students and damage to the reputation of the school and those engaged with it.”



Fortieth anniversary of teacher registration in Queensland

2013 marks forty years since teacher registration was introduced in Queensland. We will be featuring this as a theme in *QCT eNews* throughout the year.

The 1970s was a period of greater freedom in education as in other areas of society. In primary education, for example, new syllabuses gave the teacher statements of the general aims of education, subject aims, and a basic syllabus structure, but did not, as in the past, force schools into a uniform mould. Within the guidelines provided by the programs, teachers were permitted greater flexibility in planning learning experiences for their pupils. This greater freedom created a need for the extension of support, supervision and evaluation mechanisms, and the development of these mechanisms was a major trend in the 1970s.

So besides the introduction of teacher registration, what else was happening in education in Queensland in 1973?

- The first teacher aides were appointed to relieve primary teachers of some non-teaching duties
- Teachers centres were established
- For the first time in 100 years, no Queensland school student was required to sit for a public examination (the Junior and Senior exams were held for the last time in 1970 and 1972 respectively)
- The first resource teacher was appointed to a Brisbane primary school
- The first three state preschool centres opened

Readers of our *eNews* are invited to send in material (e.g. copies of any photographs or other memorabilia, or any personal recollections or stories) about teaching in Queensland in the early 1970s that would be appropriate to share with other registered teachers via the QCT. Selected items may be included in future issues of *QCT eNews* or other QCT publications. Please ensure all contributions are as fully labelled as possible (e.g. names, dates, locations) and that you have permission to share them in this way.

Contributions can be sent via enquiries@gct.edu.au, with '40 years of registration' in the subject line or by post to '40 years of registration', PO Box 389, Toowong Qld 4066.



Engaging students in science and maths

Scientists and Mathematicians in Schools is an Australian Government initiative designed to create and support long-term professional partnerships between scientists, mathematicians and teachers. The purpose is to give teachers a link to current, real-life science and mathematics, to promote a deeper understanding of the role of science and mathematics in our society and, importantly, to engage students in these areas.

Each partnership is unique and completely voluntary, there are no fixed hours – it's up to the teacher and the scientist/mathematician to decide how to collaborate. The program is open to teachers anywhere in Australia and to all levels of schooling.

To find out more information and to register, visit

<http://www.scientistsinschools.edu.au>



Were you teaching in a natural disaster area in Queensland in 2011?

You are invited to participate in a research project to increase our understanding of personal and professional reflections of what it was like to be a teacher in a natural disaster affected area in Queensland during 2011.

This research has ethics approval from the University of Queensland Institutional Human Research Ethics Approval, number 2013000061.

Why is this research being done?

Teachers are in a unique position as long term frontline workers to support children who may have been affected by natural disasters. Teachers provide children with an environment that is safe, routine and one that is conducive to a recovery on a social and emotional level.

What would you have to do?

1. Brief phone survey to determine eligibility (5 minutes) and
2. Face to face open ended question interview (30 mins)

You will be given a \$50 voucher at the completion of your interview.

How will your confidentiality be protected?

As a participant in this research you will be assigned a unique code to de-identify your personal information.

More information?

Please contact Claire Rabaa on 07 3163 2841 or Claire.rabaa@mater.org.au to discuss your interest in this research further.



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