Accreditation to Teach

- Accreditation to teach in a Catholic School
- Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic School
Dear Teachers of Religion,

In July 1996 the Queensland Catholic Education Commission issued its policy on the accreditation of teachers in Catholic schools. This booklet outlines how this policy is implemented in relation to accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Cairns.

The policy essentially is premised on the understanding that, for teachers of religion in a Catholic school, professional development is not static but continually needs to be evaluated and updated. Hence the requirement for accreditation renewal. This booklet and the complementary *Building Religious Education* booklet, will provide a framework and a means for you to meet the requirements of accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school.

The contribution of our teachers to Catholic schools is one of the main instruments by which the Holy Spirit can energise us to build the Kingdom through our schools’ ministry. Through our personal study or inservice participation we can become even more effective instruments of this marvellous challenge as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your ongoing contribution to the ministry of our Catholic schools.

Yours sincerely

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Bill Sultmann

Executive Director - Catholic Education Services

(for and on behalf of the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation of the Diocese of Cairns)
POLICY STATEMENT OF THE QUEENSLAND CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

Policy statement
Every registered teacher in a Catholic school in Queensland requires accreditation to teach in a Catholic school in Queensland.

Every registered teacher of religion in a Catholic school in Queensland requires accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school in Queensland.

Rationale
Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school is a professional requirement undertaken by teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of the Church’s mission in the world, the identity and educational mission of the Catholic school within the mission of the Church, and their contribution as teachers to that mission. (see Appendix 1)

Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school is a professional requirement undertaken by teachers of religion who facilitate learning and teaching to assist students to grow in knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith tradition in the context of an ecumenical and multi-faith world. (see Appendix 1)

The Catholic school participates in the Church’s mission “like a true ecclesial subject, with its educational service that is enlivened by the truth of the Gospel …. a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project, of which Christ is the foundation, directed at creating a synthesis between faith, culture and life.” (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium n.4, 1997; Educating Together in Catholic Schools, n.3, 2007) All teachers in Catholic schools require knowledge and understanding of the Gospel and the Catholic tradition to implement educational pedagogies facilitating a synthesis between faith, culture and life.

“From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith, and having its own unique characteristics.” (The Religious Dimension of the Catholic School n.25, 1988)

“Teachers must remember that it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose. They should therefore be prepared for their work with special care, having the appropriate qualifications and adequate learning both religious and secular.” (Gravissimum Educationis n.8, 1965) Teachers of religion in Catholic schools require qualification and competence in Scripture, Theology and Religious Education theory and practice (see Appendix 2).

Finally, from the Queensland Bishops Project-Catholic Schools for the 21st Century (2001), the following Defining Features of Catholic schools in Queensland emerged:

The Catholic school of the future will:
- have a strong Catholic identity and give witness to Christian values
- be open and accessible to those who seek its values
- offer a holistic curriculum
- be a community of care and right relationships
- be staffed by qualified, competent people who give witness to Gospel values.
Consequences

For Catholic School Authorities  (For the Diocese of Cairns, the Catholic School Authority for all schools and colleges is Catholic Education Services, Cairns, under the direction of the Bishop of Cairns and the Executive Director of Catholic Education Services, Cairns)

Each Catholic school authority in Queensland implements and monitors this Accreditation Policy within its own jurisdiction and within the parameters of this document. Procedures to implement this policy may vary across Catholic School Authorities in recognition of specific needs and conditions.

Accreditation will be portable across all Queensland Catholic School Authorities whose accreditation procedures are implemented within the parameters of this document.

Each Catholic School Authority ensures that teachers have access to opportunities which enable them to fulfil the minimum requirements as set out in this policy and the specific accreditation policy implementation procedures of that authority.

Accreditation affirms the positive contributions of teachers currently in Catholic schools, and is a means by which Catholic School Authorities officially recognise teacher qualification and competence with respect to particular character, philosophy and practices of Catholic schools.

Each Catholic School Authority will facilitate a process to enable accreditation renewal for teachers at the end of their fifth year of accreditation.

Each Catholic school authority in Queensland implements and monitors an Interim Accreditation Policy for new teachers starting for the first time in a Catholic school and until they can complete a five year cycle for accreditation. Procedures to implement this policy may vary across Catholic School Authorities in recognition of specific needs and conditions.

For teachers of Catholic schools

Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school is granted to a teacher by the relevant Catholic School Authority for a five year period.

Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school is granted to a teacher by the relevant Catholic School Authority for a five year period.

Teachers are responsible for meeting the requirements of the accreditation policy within each Catholic School Authority.
Accreditation to Teach

APPENDIX 1

FOR ACCREDITATION TO TEACH IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school is granted to a teacher by the relevant Catholic School Authority for a period of five (5) years.

Gaining accreditation
Teachers who are seeking to teach in a Catholic school can gain accreditation for a period of five (5) years by meeting the criteria as described in the documentation within each Catholic School Authority.

Teachers (including those with interim accreditation, permanent part time teachers and teachers on job share arrangements) are required to provide evidence, acceptable to the Catholic School Authority, of annual participation in professional development activities that support and enhance the religious dimension of education in a Catholic school. Over a five (5) year period, these activities are expected to total at least 25 hours.

Renewing accreditation
Accreditation to teach in a Catholic School is renewable every five (5) years.

In order to continue teaching in a Catholic school, the teacher is required to meet the Catholic School Authority’s guidelines for renewal of this accreditation. Such guidelines will require the teacher to provide evidence, acceptable to the Catholic School Authority, of completion of relevant professional development activities that support and enhance the religious dimension of education in a Catholic school.

Over a five year period, these activities are expected to total at least 25 hours.

FOR ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school is granted to a teacher by the relevant Catholic School Authority for a period of five (5) years.

Gaining accreditation
Teachers who are seeking to teach religion in a Catholic school can gain accreditation for a period of five years by meeting the criteria as described in the documentation within each Catholic School Authority.

Teachers (including those with interim accreditation, permanent part time teachers and teachers on job share arrangements) of religion in Catholic schools require qualification and competence in Scripture, Theology and Religious Education theory and practice and are able to demonstrate knowledge and skills for teaching religion as detailed below.

Knowledge
Knowledge is to be derived from formal qualifications which include four (4) semester units from any one or more of: Religion Studies, Christian Leadership, Theology, Scripture, Religious Education, Liturgy and Spirituality. Examples are found in Appendix 2.

or

The equivalent studies approved by individual Catholic School Authorities as appropriate under the intent of this policy.

Skills

- plan, teach and assess student performance in religion
- evaluate the Religious Education teaching program and
- facilitate student involvement in the faith life of the school.
Renewing accreditation
Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic School is renewable every five years.

In order to continue teaching religion in a Catholic school, the teacher is required to meet the Catholic School Authority’s guidelines for renewal of this accreditation. Such guidelines will require the teacher to provide evidence, acceptable to the Catholic School Authority, of completion of relevant professional development activities that support and enhance the knowledge and skills deemed necessary to teach religion effectively.

Over a five year period, these activities are expected to total at least 50 hours, which may include the 25 hours undertaken as the requirement for accreditation to teach in a Catholic school.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DELIVERY OF IN-SERVICES)

Delivery of inservices for Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School and Accreditation to Teach Religion in a Catholic School

For Accreditation purposes, in-services could be delivered:

- at an individual school level
- within a cluster of schools
- centrally organised by Catholic Education Services

The designer/s of programs to be delivered for these purposes would need to submit an outline, at least two school weeks beforehand, through the school APRE/Principal, who would fill in the Application for School Based Professional Development Form and submit to the Faith and RE Team. This is a requirement due to the portability of accreditation between the five Queensland dioceses.

Typical in-service themes for accreditation to teach in a Catholic School could include:

- spirituality of the teacher
- Why Catholic Schools?
- Re across the curriculum
- School as part of church
- Catholic education and social justice

Typical in-service themes for accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic School could include:

- Theological input on topics being taught in the teaching of the religion program
- Programming in religion
- Assessment and reporting in religion
- Evaluating a religion program
- Teaching methods in religion
- Use of scripture in the teaching of religion
APPENDIX 2

Below are examples of courses that might contribute to the 4 semester units required to teach religion in a Catholic school. Units for accreditation may be taken from within or across courses provided the Religious Education components have been completed.

Australian Catholic University
Preservice Teacher Education and Religious Education (Undergraduate Courses)
- Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary)
- Bachelor of Education (Primary)
- Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood)
- Masters of Teaching

Religious Education (Postgraduate Courses)
- Graduate Certificate in Religious Education
- Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) / Graduate Certificate in Religious Education
- Graduate Diploma in Religious Education
- Master of Education (Religious Education)
- Master of Religious Education
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Religious Education)

Theology and Philosophy (Undergraduate Courses)
- Bachelor of Theology
- Bachelor of Theology (Honours)
- Bachelor of Theology/Bachelor of Social Work

Theology and Philosophy (Post Graduate Courses)
- Doctor of Practical Ministry

Graduate Certificate in Arts (Applied Ethics)
Graduate Certificate in Arts (Theology)
Graduate Certificate in Catholic Identity and Leadership
Graduate Certificate in Catholic Studies
Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Catholic Culture
Master of Arts (Theology)
Master of Practical Ministry

St Paul's Theological College – ACU, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy
- Bachelor of Theology
- Graduate Certificate in Theology
- Graduate Diploma in Theology
- Master of Arts (Theology)
- Graduate Certificate in Ministry
- Graduate Diploma in Ministry
- Master of Practical Theology

Institute of Faith Education
- Certificate 111 in Christian Ministry and Theology
- Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology
- Diploma of Christian Ministry and Theology

James Cook University
- Graduate Certificate in Catholic Education

or the equivalent studies (for example, courses offered at University of Notre Dame and The Broken Bay Institute (BBI) as approved by individual Catholic School Authorities as appropriate under the intent of this policy.)