

Catholic Diocese of Armidale

Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools

Framework for the Accreditation of Staff in Catholic Schools



Bishop's Commission For
Catholic Schools Policy



Catholic Schools Office
Diocese of Armidale

Context

The Catholic Church and Catholic School of the Third Millennium are undergoing major change. The Catholic School today is a major centre for evangelization of the Church and is held in very high regard¹. The Catholic School is a major, and possibly for many, the only place in which they experience the “new evangelisation” and encounter the living Catholic Church.

All staff, ancillary and teaching, need a deep personal knowledge and sense of the living Catholic Christian Tradition, in order to ensure that the entire life of the school is permeated with a Catholic vision. This is even more important for teachers of Religious Education. In this context, Catholic Education and Schools Offices have a responsibility to provide appropriate initial and ongoing education in faith and theology, as well as formation for all staff as all staff have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel as witnesses.² This proclamation of the gospel comes through living a life that is in accord with Christian principles.

In recent times the *N.S.W. Institute of Teachers* has been established as a statutory authority, articulating a NSW Professional Teaching Standards Framework³. Seven elements of teaching competence were developed within three domains of Professional Knowledge, Practice and Commitment. Within each of these domains/elements, four stages of competence were also developed, that is, Graduate Teacher, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. The completion of relevant programs and qualifications is one way (though limited) of promoting competency and faith /theological education with a Catholic perspective, especially in relation to Element One: *Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students*⁴.

All staff in Catholic Schools, including support staff, teachers, teachers of Religious Education and school leaders as well as staff working in the Catholic Schools Office need clear expectations regarding the faith and theological requirements for their work in Catholic Schools, with corresponding school and system support. In response to this the NSW Directors of Catholic Schools have agreed to and developed a commonly agreed standard for accreditation which is recognised by all NSW Dioceses. This policy conforms to the commonly agreed framework of five levels of faith education/ and qualifications (i.e. for all staff, teachers, teachers of Religious Education, and school leaders) supported by appropriate school and system financial support.

¹ Schools are generally perceived as centres of energy in society (according to Robert Fitzgerald OAM) and while child focussed, can be places of inter-generational connectedness. This could apply, to a greater degree for the Catholic Church School.

² *Evangelii Nuntiandi*; Apostolic Exhortation Pope Paul VI, 21, 1975

³ Hayes, Alan, Professor, (Chair), *Report to the Minister on the Establishment of an Institute of Teachers*. Interim Committee Secretariate, Sydney NSW, 2003.

⁴ Hayes, Alan, p. 41. Element Six is also closely related, that is: *Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice*.

Explanation of Terms

For the purposes of this policy *Senior Leadership Positions* are defined as the School Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Director of Catholic Schools, CSO Assistant Directors and Education School Consultants.

Accreditation is defined as the process of officially recognising that a person has met the standards required to continue to work, teach, teach Religious Education and lead in a Catholic school.

Currency is defined as the ongoing renewal and maintenance of accreditation through continuing studies and or professional development.

Rationale

From 2012, the Catholic Dioceses of NSW have agreed to implement a set of common minimum standards, for all who work in Catholic Schooling and agree to recognise the accreditation standards of each Diocese provided that any accreditation meets at least the minimum agreed standard. The Diocese of Armidale in keeping with all NSW Dioceses in accepting this also reserves the right to add further accreditation requirements if deemed necessary.

The Diocese of Armidale recognises:

- The importance of all teaching staff in Catholic Schools holding a Religious Education qualification or in the case of those who will never be required to teach Religious Education or assume a leadership role a Catholic Studies qualification or equivalent
- The need to have an agreed framework for accreditation
- The need to focus the accreditation process on higher levels of accreditation for school leaders
- The need for ongoing renewal and maintenance of accreditation through continuing studies and or professional development.
- The need for all employees both in schools and in the CSO to meet minimum accreditation requirements.

Aims

In this context, the framework has the following aims:

1. To ensure that all teaching staff appointed to Armidale Diocesan Schools receive accreditation appropriate to their expected level of responsibility.
2. To establish an accreditation framework of five levels of competency and appropriate qualifications for all ancillary staff, teachers, teachers of Religious Education and leaders in Catholic schools.
3. To identify the minimum accreditation requirements for staff not required to teach Religious Education.
4. To ensure that all staff, especially those responsible for delivering Religious Education, receive a certificate of accreditation that is recognised by the other NSW Dioceses.

OVERVIEW

- There will be five categories of Accreditation:
 - **Accreditation A** – Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School (support staff and CSO staff)
 - **Accreditation B** – Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School [all teaching staff, including those who may not be teachers of Religious Education (RE)]
 - **Accreditation C** – Accreditation for Leadership in a Catholic School (Co-coordinators and leaders at Middle Management level)
 - **Accreditation D** – Accreditation to Teach Religious Education (all RE teaching staff)
 - **Accreditation E** – Accreditation for Senior Leadership (Principals, APs, RECs and CSO senior leadership)

- There will be an obligation for all employees to **obtain** accreditation within a specific timeframe

- **Provisional Accreditation** will be provided to staff who are working towards the requirements for full accreditation in categories C, D and E

- There will be an obligation to **maintain** ongoing **currency** of accreditation

- All obligations will be noted in relevant contracts

- Currency requirements fulfilled for higher categories of accreditation will meet the requirements for earlier accreditation categories

Categories of Accreditation

CATEGORY A: - ACCREDITATION TO WORK IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

All new employees, CSO staff and School support staff who have direct and immediate contact with students, parents and teaching staff are required to participate, at a minimum, in a one-day (or equivalent) Orientation Program to acquaint them with the vision and mission of Catholic schools within the context of the evangelising and catechising mission of the Catholic Church. This would normally be conducted at the beginning of a school year for all new staff.

Aspects of this program may include but not be limited to:

- an introduction as to what it means to be employed in a Catholic workplace
- diocesan guidelines/expectations
- discussion on the Vision and Mission Statement for Catholic Schooling in the Diocese of Armidale
- discussion on the relationship of these documents to an individual's work.

Typically, the staff to attend the Orientation Program would include:

- school secretaries
- CSO staff
- teachers' aides/assistants
- teachers
- AEAs/AEWs
- lab assistants
- library assistants
- grounds staff and cleaners (during school hours) who have direct contact with students
- canteen staff
- counsellors
- bursars

Schools need to determine at a local level how volunteers are engaged in the relevant aspects of the Orientation Program.

Currency: It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of all staff.

All staff, including support staff, are expected to attend a minimum of **fifteen hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days. This level of currency is for all who will not progress beyond this level of accreditation.

CATEGORY B: - ACCREDITATION TO TEACH IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

All newly appointed teachers, and CSO Education Coordinators, both part-time and full-time, are required to participate, at a minimum, in the equivalent of a two-day formation program so as to obtain Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School. This category incorporates the requirements of Category A. Aspects of this program could include but are not limited to:

- Mission of the Catholic Church and School
- Catholic Life and Culture
- Pastoral Care
- Scripture, Prayer and Liturgy
- Christian Leadership
- Catholic Social Teaching
- Integration of Catholic curriculum.

Currency: It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of staff. All teachers are expected to attend a minimum of **thirty hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation / RE curriculum days.

CATEGORY C: - ACCREDITATION FOR LEADERSHIP IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Co-ordinators and Middle Managers must be qualified teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School. The CSO will be responsible for developing or supporting, at a minimum, the equivalent of a six day (36 hours) leadership formation program.

In order to be accredited for Category C, participants must have completed:

- A diocesan approved program on Foundations of Religious Leadership. Aspects of the program could include but are not limited to:
 - Mission of the Catholic Church and School
 - Catholic Life and Culture
 - Pastoral Care
 - Scripture, Prayer and Liturgy
 - Christian Leadership
 - Faith Formation of Staff
 - Partnership with Families and Parishes
 - Catholic Social Teaching
 - Catholic Worldview across the Curriculum
 - Ethics

Currency: It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and/or spiritual development of staff. It is expected that all Co-ordinators and Middle Managers will complete a **minimum of forty-five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days (30 hours) and additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership (15 hours). This may include formal tertiary study if specifically related to RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation, e-conferences, social justice programs) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

Category C Accreditation requirements apply to:

- Directors of Study/Curriculum Co-ordinators
- Heads of Department/Subject Co-ordinators
- Year and Welfare Co-ordinators
- Youth Ministry Co-ordinators
- Primary School Co-ordinators
- CSO Education Co-ordinators
- Any other equivalent roles

CATEGORY D: - ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Teachers of Religious Education must be qualified **Catholic** teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School. In order to be accredited as a teacher of Religious Education, teachers must have completed, at a minimum:

- a major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of **six approved** units of study for students *commencing their undergraduate studies from the beginning of 2012⁵*) **OR**
- an **approved** major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of **six** units of study for students *commencing their undergraduate studies from the beginning of 2012*) **OR**
- a degree in Theology or allied disciplines at a Catholic tertiary institution **OR**
- a postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study) **OR**
- a CEO/CSO approved postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study); **OR**
- a CEO/CSO approved qualification in Religious Education/Theology from an endorsed provider (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study).

Upon individual application, teachers may also be accredited to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools if they have previously been accredited to teach Religious Education in another State or Territory of Australia.

Currency: It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of staff. It is expected that all teachers of Religious Education will complete a **minimum of forty five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days (30 hours) and additional professional development in RE/Theology (15 hours). This may include formal tertiary study if specifically related to RE/Theology. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

⁵ The exact date would be subject to discussion and negotiation with the relevant tertiary institutions.

CATEGORY E - ACCREDITATION FOR SENIOR LEADERSHIP IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Senior leaders in Catholic schools must be qualified Catholic teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School. Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Co-ordinators, CSO Director, Assistant Directors and Education Schools Consultants are considered to be senior leaders.

To be eligible for senior leadership positions employees must, at a minimum:

- be accredited for Leadership in a Catholic School (Category C)
- be accredited to teach Religious Education (Category D)
- have completed a **minimum of four units** of study at a postgraduate level in Religious Education/Theology/Catholic Leadership at a Catholic tertiary institution or as part of an **approved** program of study at a secular tertiary institution. The units would be in addition to any subjects covered to achieve Accreditation D.

Furthermore, at an individual diocesan level, there may be additional specific accreditation requirements for each senior leadership position.

Currency: In addition to these requirements it is expected that all senior leaders will complete a **minimum of seventy-five hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. This may include relevant formal tertiary study. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days, participation in approved conferences, and additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership. It may also include approved formation experiences at parish level (adult formation courses, parish ministry formation) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).

CATEGORY A: Accreditation - Work in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale NSW

Target Group	Prerequisites	Minimum requirements	Course Details	Currency	Provisional Accreditation	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEAs • Bursars • Canteen Staff • Chaplains • CSO • Administration Staff • CSO • Professional Staff • Ground staff and cleaners with direct contact with students (during school hours) • ICT Personnel • School Lab Assistants • Leaders • Learning Assistants • Library Assistants • Secretaries • Student Welfare Officers • Teachers' Aides • Teachers 	<p>Catholic/committed to the ethos of Catholic schooling.</p>	<p>6 hour orientation program facilitated by the Catholic Schools Office in Term One each calendar year;</p> <p>and</p> <p>A minimum one hour induction and orientation to the role at the local site.</p>	<p>CSO Developed Program Covering;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction to what it means to work in a Catholic workplace • CSO Expectations • Mission Statement for Catholic Schooling in the Diocese of Armidale • Discussion on the relationship of these documents to an individual's work 	<p>15 hours over 5 Years.</p> <p>All staff members of both school and CSO, including support staff are required to attend a minimum of 15 hours of faith formation over a period of 5 years as a means of maintaining this level of accreditation.</p> <p>Typically this formation would consist of attendance at staff spiritual formation days.</p>	<p>Provisional accreditation is given to staff that commenced employment after the annual CSO "New Employees Day" held in Term One each year.</p> <p>Provisional accreditation would normally be for 12 months with the expectation that the new employee would attend the orientation day held in Term One the following year.</p>	<p>1 day = 6 hours. This is 5 hours face to face and a total of 60 minutes break time.</p>

Category A

CATEGORY B: Accreditation - Teach in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale NSW

Category B						
Target Group	Prerequisites	Minimum requirements	Course Details	Currency	Provisional Accreditation	Notes
All newly appointed teachers both part time and full time.	Catholic/ committed to the ethos of Catholic schooling. Category A	6 hours Catholic Teacher Formation Program.	<p>A two day Professional Development Program which is inclusive of Category A requirements and covering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission of the Catholic Church and School • Catholic Life and Culture • Pastoral Care • Scripture, Prayer and Liturgy • Catholic Social Teaching • Catholic World View • Across the Curriculum 	<p>30 hours over five years.</p> <p>All teachers are required to attend a minimum of 30 hours of faith formation over a period of five years as a means of maintaining this level of accreditation.</p> <p>Typically this formation would consist of attendance at staff spiritual formation days.</p>	<p>Provisional accreditation is given to staff that commenced employment after the annual CSO "New Employees Day" held in Term One each year. Provisional accreditation would normally be for 12 months with the expectation that the new employee would attend the orientation day held in Term One the following year.</p>	<p>1 day = 6 hours. This is to face and a total of 60 minutes break time.</p>

CATEGORY C: Accreditation - For Leadership in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale NSW

Target Group	Prerequisites	Minimum requirements	Course Details	Currency	Provisional Accreditation	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All CSO Education Coordinators Curriculum Coordinators Primary Coordinators Teachers wishing to be coordinators or middle managers Year Coordinators Youth Ministry Coordinators Any other paid equivalent role in middle management 	Catholic/committed to the ethos of Catholic schooling Category A Category B	A six day Catholic Leadership Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic Life and Culture Pastoral Care Scripture, Prayer and Liturgy Christian Leadership Faith Formation of Staff Partnership with Family and Parishes Catholic Social teaching Catholic World View Ethics 	45 hours over five years. All staff in this category are required to attend a minimum of 45 hours of faith formation over a period of five years as a means of maintaining things level of accreditation. Typically this formation would consist of attendance at staff spiritual formation days. And additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership and or spirituality	Provisional Accreditation C: would generally be granted to teachers assuming leadership positions at this level on the basis of a recommendation from an appropriate representative of the employer to the Assistant Director Mission and Evangelisation subject to the following provisions: 1)the applicant is Catholic, or if from another religious tradition, demonstrates a strong commitment to the Catholic ethos 2)the details surrounding the contractual nature of the arrangement be fully documented 3) a professional development pathway is developed, e.g. enrolment in a relevant postgraduate study program. The Provisional Accreditation of leaders will be monitored at the school level. Provisional Accreditation is generally two years.	1 day = 6 hours. This is 5 hours face to face and a total of 60 minutes break time. Additional 15 hours could be gained by participation in formal tertiary study if specifically related to Catholic leadership/ Theology or RE. It could include participation in approved formation experience at a parish or diocesan level such as adult faith formation courses, parish ministry, immersion programs or retreat experiences.

Category C

CATEGORY D: Accreditation- To Teach Religious Education in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale NSW

Target Group	Prerequisites	Minimum requirements	Course Details	Currency	Provisional Accreditation	Notes
Teachers of Religious Education	Category A Category B	Catholic Six undergraduate units in RE/Theology; or Four unit Graduate Certificate of RE/Theology or its equivalent from a Catholic Tertiary Institution or associated Catholic Provider.	Post Graduate Certificate in Religious Education/Theology from Broken Bay Institute/ UON consisting of four 600 level units as determined by the CSO. Other equivalent programs as approved by the CSO Armidale.	45 hours over five years Staff in this category are required to attend a minimum of 45 hours of faith formation over a period of five years as a means of maintaining this level of accreditation. Typically this formation would consist of attendance at staff spiritual formation days, and additional professional development in RE/ Theology/Catholic Leadership and/or spirituality. It may also include formation experiences at parish (adult faith formation courses, parish ministry courses, social justice programs) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).	Four years maximum. Provisional accreditation is subject to the following provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant is Catholic • The details surrounding the contractual nature of the arrangement are fully documented • A professional development pathway is developed, (i.e. enrolment in the relevant post graduate study). 	1 day = 6 hours. This is 5 hours face to face and a total of 60 minutes break time.

Category D

CATEGORY E: Accreditation – Senior Leadership in a Catholic School in the Diocese of Armidale NSW

Target Group	Prerequisites	Minimum requirements	Course Details	Currency	Provisional Accreditation	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Catholic Schools CSO Assistant Directors Principals Religious Education Coordinators Assistant Principals CSO Education and Schools Consultants 	<p>Catholic committed to the ethos of Catholic schooling.</p>	<p>A six hour orientation program facilitated by the CSO in Term One each calendar year;</p> <p>and</p> <p>A minimum one hour induction and orientation to the role at the local site.</p>	<p>Senior leaders will need eight post graduate units in RE/Theology Catholic Leadership. (four for category D and four for category E).</p> <p>Approved courses are currently available through BBI/ UON and ACU.</p>	<p>75 hours over five years.</p> <p>All staff in this category are required to attend a minimum of 75 hours of faith/spiritual formation over a period of five years as a means of maintaining their level of accreditation.</p> <p>Typically this formation would consist of attendance at staff spiritual formation days, (30 hours). The remaining 45 hours may be gained from participation in approved tertiary study in the areas of RE/Theology/ Catholic Leadership. It may also include CSO sponsored cluster meetings, conferences and it may include formation experiences at parish (adult faith formation courses, parish ministry courses, social justice programs) or diocesan level (immersion programs, retreat experiences).</p>	<p>Four years maximum.</p> <p>Provisional accreditation is subject to the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant is Catholic The details surrounding the contractual nature of the arrangement are fully documented A professional development pathway is developed, (i.e. enrolment in the relevant post graduate study). 	<p>1 day = 6 hours. This is 5 hours face to face and a total of 60 minutes break time.</p>

Category E

