

QIEU POLICY GRADUATE TEACHERS

Preamble

Graduate teachers bring to their initial appointments a freshness, idealism, enthusiasm and a knowledge of current theory which acts as a stimulus for those partnerships which enrich the working environment.

Clearly a new teacher who feels sincerely welcomed and is given active support in, and information about the workplace and the expectation “in role” is far more likely to operate productively in the school environment than a graduate teacher not inducted successfully.

Basic Principles

- 1) Systemic schemes of induction need to be planned and implemented in all schools where there are graduate teachers as an essential phase of teacher development.
- 2) The induction of graduate teachers should be primarily the responsibility of the school itself. Assistance from outside the school in authorising action, providing resources and advice is also necessary, but this should be supportive and supplementary.
- 3) School induction programs should provide a variety of forms of assistance to the graduate teacher which supplement the graduate teachers background knowledge with information of a specific kind relating to the school and its community, which capitalise on the graduate teachers previous training, and assist him/ her to deal in a practical way with class management, curriculum planning, teaching method, and other facets such as administrative procedures of the graduate teacher’s teaching. The school should also protect the graduate teachers from unreasonable demands, encourage the graduate teacher, strengthen the graduate teacher’s confidence and satisfaction in the graduate teacher’s work, and respect the graduate teacher’s style.

Definitions

Graduate Teacher:

This policy recognises graduate teachers as those who are in their first three years after pre-service training. It also recognises that experienced teachers coming from the Government Sector, interstate and/or overseas will need a modified Induction Process.

Induction:

A program that assists graduate teachers to identify strategies which enable them to carry out their duties in a work site.

Induction Process:

Consists of three distinguishable strands:

- (i) *orientation* - familiarising the graduate teacher with essential information about the school, the community and the teaching tasks to be undertaken
- (ii) *adaptation* - the administrative arrangements made to facilitate the graduate teachers adjustment
- (iii) *development* - the process of relating knowledge and skills acquired in the pre-service training to the practical realities of the classroom

Provisional/Full Registration:

The Queensland Board of Teacher Registration requires a period of provisional registration prior to the granting of full registration. Such a period of provisional registration will be not less than 12 months of full time equivalent teaching in a recognized educational institution.

The Nature of the School Induction Program

Recognising the above a clear process needs to be identified and put in place with adequate resourcing to ensure that the graduate teacher is successfully inducted into the school environment.

In preparing induction programs, schools or systems should consider such aspects as:

- (i) a pre-appointment visit;
- (ii) a letter of welcome with the letter of appointment. At this time a statement outlining the induction program should be sent along with the requirements to satisfy BTR assessment.
- (iii) a handbook of information about the school, its policies, its objectives and procedures, and the community it serves linked to a tutorial on its key features should be provided;
- (iv) pupil-free staff days in January should be utilised, to initiate the graduate teacher into the school community, the mission of the school and introduce them to their working environment;
- (v) the preparation of the first month's current curriculum program, term planner or lesson register by an experienced teacher, as a model for future preparation and discussion;
- (vi) the allocation of an experienced teacher (mentor) to work with each graduate teacher, this should be a flexible arrangement to allow for a change of mentor to meet the graduate teachers evolving needs;
- (vii) the designation of a particular staff member (other than the principal) as a coordinator of induction in the school with an appropriate time allowance to be able to commit quality time to the induction process;
- (viii) involvement of graduate teachers in small group discussions as well as general staff meetings. Mentors would be encouraged to attend some of these meetings;
- (ix) the establishment of specific times for induction activities;
- (x) the need to avoid undue interruptions to the normal teaching program of the school by creating timetabled time for induction activities;
- (xi) the preparation of the whole staff for the induction of graduate teachers so that they are sensitised to acknowledge and support the steep learning curve necessary in a busy school;
- (xii) reduced teaching load for graduate teacher. This time then available could be used to spend time with exemplary classroom practitioners to observe good practice or meet with specialist support staff;
- (xiii) shared duties with experienced staff to learn 'duty of care' obligations and become familiar with the 'hidden curriculum'.

The Importance of School Climate for Induction

"The School Administration need to accept that it has a primary responsibility to create a climate in which the graduate teachers is welcomed, given active support and is assimilated into a workplace environment through adequate planning and resourcing."

Issues such as:

1. The sensitising of existing staff to the arrival of new staff in the term before their employment through:
 - (i) The raising of problems that new teachers may face and how staff might assist.

- (ii) Identifying key people who will act as mentors with specific roles such as pastoral, academic, Board of Teacher Registration assessment.
 - (iii) Identify written procedures for graduate teachers and request staff familiarise themselves with these.
2. Identify suitable mentors who want to work with graduate teachers. Compulsory supervision should be avoided and time release should be available to skilled staff to promote the schools policy in relation to graduate teachers.
3. The employer, through the administration of the school, needs to ensure that the enthusiasm of graduate teachers is curbed to realistic proportions in relation to co-curricular or extra curricular activity. The total workload should be considered carefully when looking at a graduate teacher's commitment so that over exuberance will not adversely affect classroom performance.
4. Collegial interaction should be encouraged in both an academic and social sense with mentors encouraging measured participation consistent with overall workload.

Induction Provided By Outside Agencies

Consistent with "Basic Principle 2" QIEU acknowledges the growing awareness of systemic employing authorities such as Regional Diocese and the Archdiocese of Brisbane in providing initial induction experiences.

Many non-systemic schools take advantage of the AISQ induction process.

We commend these employers for their commitment and support the involvement of graduate teachers in such programs.

General Comment

This policy is tabled for immediate application at the school site. It has clear recommendations for procedures and processes and aims to compliment any initial induction experience provided by the Diocese or employing authority.

The policy announces the desire of QIEU to encourage the growth of individual confidence and competence of the teacher.

Consistent with recommendations in the Board of Teacher Registration publication "Welcoming New Teachers" the following positions are endorsed:

Role of Graduate Teacher

- A teaching load appropriate to a graduate teacher from within the teaching area(s) for which the graduate teacher was prepared and which does not include excessively large classes or classes known to present special difficulties (where possible, a graduate teacher would be given a reduced teaching load and/or additional release time).
- Engagement in lesson preparation, discussions with teacher-mentor, and involvement in school or college induction activities, graduate teacher seminars and other inservice professional development programs.

Role of Mentor Teacher

- Provision of advice and assistance to the graduate teacher as needed or requested on the planning, teaching and evaluation of instruction.

- Providing other professional support to the graduate teacher, eg.
 - ~ coaching
 - ~ demonstrations
 - ~ recommendations on courses, workshops or conferences to improve the graduate teacher's knowledge and skills
 - ~ introduction to professional associations
 - ~ acculturation into the school or college and its community
 - ~ orientation to the resources, policies and procedures of the school, region and system
- Observing and critiquing the graduate teacher's performance, and providing feedback or formative assessment that is confidential to the graduate teacher and the mentor.
- Acting as confidant, counsellor and advocate for the graduate teacher.
- Holding regular discussions/conferences with the graduate teacher.
- Holding regular discussions/conferences with the graduate teacher for the purposes indicated above.
- Involvement in graduate teacher seminars.

Board of Teacher Registration Documents

Board of Teacher Registration documents including:

- Provisional Registration and Induction;
- Principal's Report;

can be found on the Board's website at www.btr.qld.edu.au alongside other information which will assist graduate teachers to cope with the requirements of registration in Queensland.