

Queensland Teachers' Union

QTU Submission: Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Amendment Bill 2019

February 2019



The Queensland Teachers' Union strongly supports the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Amendment Bill 2019.

The establishment of the Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher classifications achieves a long-standing QTU claim for professional pay for teachers where classroom teachers will be certified against the professional standards in which they are operating.

The QTU acknowledges that the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, developed in 2010 by AITSL, aim to ensure high teaching standards which are recognised across Australia.

Prior to the development of the national standards, the Queensland College of Teachers developed its own standards, which the QTU fully endorsed.

The introduction of these two new classifications provides a genuine choice, enabling classroom teachers to achieve a higher salary by staying in the classroom, rather than applying for promotion.

The establishment of the HAT and LT classifications was one of the state government's election commitments in 2015, after discussion with the QTU, and was negotiated as part of the current certified agreement.

In 2016, the QTU, the QCT and the Department of Education formed a working party to discuss and determine the processes accompanying the HAT and LT pilot which was held across two regions of the department of education, Far North region and North Coast region, throughout 2017 and 2018.

The pilot of the certification process for HAT and LT was completed in 2018. A report on the pilot was provided to the QTU in accordance with the clause in the Certified Agreement.

At the end of the pilot in 2018, there were 44 Highly Accomplished and 3 Lead teachers certified in Queensland. The college of teachers took on the role of certifying body for the pilot and the QTU worked closely with QCT personnel to ensure the success of the pilot.

The new classifications offer a new standards-based salary horizon for classroom teachers with more than five years of recognised experience, with those certified as HATs able to earn \$111,725 and LTs able to earn \$121,975.

The decision, handed down by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in August, follows submissions made by the QTU and the Department of Education and reflects an agreement negotiated with the government.

Expression of Interests for HAT and LT opened state-wide at the end of 2018. The total expressions of interest for the 2019 round of HAT and LT are 750.

In order to support members in their expressions of interests and the development of their portfolios, the QTU engaged QTU Principal member and HAT and LT assessor, Rebecca Hack to conduct information sessions and professional development during Semester 2, 2018. This professional development will continue to be provided by the new QTU PD provided QuEST.

The department of education has also commenced professional development and training relating to HAT and LT and continues to recruit assessors for the 2019 cohort. Many QTU activists applied to be assessors during the pilot and the QTU is of the view that this is likely to be the case with the statewide rollout of the new classifications.

The QTU supports the QCT as the proposed certifying body for Queensland state school teachers. Dr Judy Neilson who works at the QCT, is a highly respected teacher, Deputy Principal, assessor and moderator. We have confidence that the certification process will be done in accordance with the requirements of AITSL. It is reassuring that the proposed bill provides a high-level framework which will give the QCT the flexibility to change the process if the national certification process changes in the future.

The QTU was instrumental in the establishment of the Board of Teacher Registration in 1971 to ensure that the quality of teachers in Queensland. Since then, the QTU has had representation on the Board, which became the Queensland College of Teachers in 2006. We have ensured that the board has practising teachers who have currency of practice in classrooms across Queensland.

The College has the integrity, the due diligence and the capacity to undertake such an important role on behalf of the teachers in state schools throughout Queensland and the QTU strongly supports this Bill which will enshrine their role as the certifying body for the new classifications of highly accomplished and lead teacher.