



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

Background

IEUA-QNT welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee's Inquiry into the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Amendment Bill 2019.

IEUA-QNT represents ~17,000 teachers, support staff and ancillary staff in non-government education institutions in Queensland and the Northern Territory and consistently engages in industrial and education debate at both state and national levels through its Education and Industrial Committees and through its national counterpart, the Independent Education Union, which receives input from teachers in all States and Territories.

Submissions

1. Our union strongly supports initiatives that enhance the status of teaching as a profession and believes that certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers, in conjunction with appropriate levels of remuneration, is a positive development that encourages skilled and experienced teachers to remain within the profession.
2. It is desirable that the certifying authority be held in high regard by members of the profession and the general public and, as a practitioner body, the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) is uniquely positioned to fill the role. Regulation of the profession is a key component of QCT activities and regulation of certification is an appropriate, and timely, extension of its existing functions.
3. We note however, that Section 67A limits applications to those coming from teachers "...employed by an employing authority, prescribed by regulation, for a prescribed school." We understand that the College is primarily seeking to process applications from teachers employed in State and Catholic schools, but the status of teachers in independent schools remains unclear. We are aware that Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) is currently a certifying authority for teachers from its member schools; however, there may be schools within that group or an independent school which would wish to make a decision to use the QCT process. Under the current terms of the Bill this would not be possible. For this reason and to 'future proof' the legislation we would seek an amendment to allow any independent school to seek, at any point, to be a prescribed school. We suggest that proposed sections 12A, 12B, and 12C of the Regulation (in clause 13 of the Bill) be amended by adding in each the words:

"an employing authority for a school accredited under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017."

as (c) in s 12A and s 12B and as (d) in s 12C.

We note also that insertion of the above clauses would necessitate changes to the schedule of fees to include teachers from independent schools.

4. The Bill sets out a head of power for the QCT at Chapter 2A Part 1 67A-I for the conduct of the process of accepting, assessing and determining certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher. That head of power is restated at the proposed new 230B(1). The subsequent 230B(2) then 'without limiting subsection (1)' sets out specific functions. Given the breadth of the QCT authority in the process at Chapter 2A it is important therefore that the proposed new 230B is consistent with the process envisaged and set out at Chapter 2A. Currently proposed 230B is not entirely consistent with the head of power process. We therefore propose section 230B(2)(a) of the Act (in clause 5 of the Bill) be amended to read:

“accepting and deciding certification applications by teachers and renewal applications by teachers”

We thank the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for the invitation to engage in consultation through this submission and would welcome the opportunity to engage in further discussion.



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