
Policy Title: School Teacher Qualifications
Published: 2009
Identifier: STQ200908
Legislation: *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
Public Sector Management Standards
Education Act 2004

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Under Sections 68 and 71 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994 (PSM Act)*, prescribed qualifications must be verified prior to the appointment of a person to a teaching office (school teacher) position.
- 1.2 School teacher qualifications are required for employment in all school teacher (classroom teacher and school leader) positions in the Education and Training Öä^&ç |æ^ (the Öä^&ç |æ^).
- 1.3 Assessment of school teacher qualifications is a mandatory component of the Öä^&ç |æ^ pre-employment procedures for applicants for teaching classification positions.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 This policy implements the *Public Sector Management Standards* on pre-employment school teacher qualifications requirements.
- 2.2 This policy provides guidance to applicants for school teacher positions on the Öä^&ç |æ^ qualifications requirements for these positions.
- 2.3 This policy details the Öä^&ç |æ^'s requirements for assessment of school teacher qualifications.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Permanent Teacher** – A school teacher appointed under *PSM Act* Section 63 (1) in a permanent teaching position.
- 3.2 **Contract Teacher** – A school teacher employed under *PSM Act* Section 108 in a temporary teaching position for a period no longer than 12 months. Special circumstances may require the Öä^&ç |æ^ to employ a school teacher in a temporary teaching position for a period longer than 12 months.

- 3.3 **Casual Teacher** – A school teacher employed under *PSM Act* Section 110 in a temporary teaching position on a day-to-day casual basis.
- 3.4 **Pre-service Teacher** – A student from a tertiary institution who has not completed their teaching qualifications and is completing the teaching practice requirements of the pre-service professional education courses.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Qualification Requirements

4.1.1 Pre-service Professional School Teacher Education Requirements

The pre-service professional components are theoretical and practical subjects with a clear relation to initial school teacher education. These include courses in education, curriculum studies and teaching methodologies appropriate to the applicant's area of teaching expertise, education/developmental psychology, and studies in teaching and learning.

The pre-service professional components must include at least six weeks (30 days) of supervised school teaching practice.

In the case of early childhood education, the professional school teacher education must include:

- at least three semesters of professional studies oriented to early childhood education and 90 days of supervised teaching practice in preschool classes and/or K-2 classes in primary schools (in the case of an integrated degree);
- or a one year graduate program devoted to early childhood education and including at least 50 days of supervised practice in preschool classes and/or K-2 classes in primary schools.

4.1.2 Permanent Teacher Qualification Requirements

To be eligible to be appointed as a classroom teacher, or to be appointed or promoted to a school leader classification in the Education and Training *Öä^&f |æ^* an applicant must hold either:

- an Australian bachelor degree of at least three years duration or part-time equivalent (or a qualification assessed as comparable) plus at least one year of tertiary level pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1.

OR

- an integrated degree of at least four years duration or part-time equivalent (Australian bachelor degree or a qualification assessed as comparable) including at least one year of pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1.

4.1.3 Contract Teacher Qualification Requirements

To be eligible to work as a contract employee in the Education *æ | äÁ/æä ä * Öä^&f |æ^* an applicant must hold at least an Australian diploma of teaching (or a qualification assessed as comparable) including pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1.

4.1.4 Casual Teacher Qualification Requirements

To be eligible to work as a casual employee in the ACT an applicant must hold at least an Australian two year course of school teacher training from a state institution (or a qualification assessed as comparable) including pre-service professional school teacher education including components outlined in 4.1.1.

The Qualifications Coordinators in the O&A's Workforce Management Section assess whether qualifications are comparable to minimum school teacher qualification requirements.

4.2 Qualification Requirements for Specialised Teaching Areas

4.2.1 Qualification Requirements for School Counsellors (School Psychologists)

The following are mandatory qualifications for employment as a school counsellor (school psychologist):

- completion of a pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1; and
- eligibility for registration with the Psychologists Board of the ACT.

It is preferable that applicants have successful school teaching experience.

4.2.2 Qualification Requirements for School Teacher Librarians

School teachers appointed to permanent, temporary or long-term part-time positions as a school teacher librarian should possess the following qualifications:

- completion of a pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1; and
- a librarianship qualification that meets the requirements of Associate Membership of the Library Association of Australia (ALIA) or equivalent.

4.2.3 Qualification Requirements for English as a Second Language (ESL) School Teachers

School teachers appointed to permanent, temporary or long term part-time positions as an ESL school teacher should possess the following qualifications:

- completion of a pre-service professional school teacher education, including components outlined in 4.1.1; and
- a minimum of one semester unit, or equivalent, in the methodology of teaching students who bring an additional language, at an accredited tertiary institution.

5. ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

An additional completed tertiary award over and above the base qualification requirement for a permanent teacher as specified in section 4.1.2 will be recognised as an additional qualification. These awards include:

- master degree
- doctorate
- additional bachelor degree
- additional graduate diploma
- graduate certificate.

Honours degrees will be assessed on a case by case basis and must include a minimum of one year full- time study above the requirements of the base degree. Where the base degree is of at least five years full-time duration, the additional year for honours may not be required.

As shown in Table 1, a classroom teacher requires eight points of approved additional tertiary study to qualify for one salary increment advancement.

The eight points must include a recognised formal award such as a Graduate Certificate.

Table 1 – Points Relating to Incremental Advancement

Tertiary Study	Min Units	Points
Additional Graduate Diploma, Additional Bachelor Degree, Masters, Doctorate, Honours	8	8
Graduate Certificate	4	4
A Unit of Study at University or equivalent unit at CIT	1*	1

*1 Unit based on 'normal' university unit of minimum 40 hours

6. OVERSEAS TRAINED TEACHERS

Applicants with overseas qualifications are assessed against the Australian Qualifications Framework.

6.1 Requirement for teachers to be proficient in the English language

Applicants must have sufficient ability in the English language to meet the standard required for teaching in an English language environment. Applicants must:

- have been born/raised and undertaken tertiary education in English in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada or the United States.

OR

- from the commencement of second semester 2009, provide results from the Academic version of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test showing they have achieved a minimum score of 7.5 in all areas: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The successful results may be achieved over several attempts at the IELTS test.

OR

- provide evidence of extended and comprehensive experience of a minimum five years full-time employment as a school teacher in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada or the United States.

An applicant who is required to complete an IELTS test may be employed as a casual school teacher at the discretion of the delegate on the condition that IELTS requirements are successfully completed in a specified period.

If there is any doubt about an applicant's proficiency in the English language, the delegate may request completion of an IELTS test.

In addition to the IELTS Academic version the Öã^&q |æ^ may also recognise the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT). A score of A in each of the four categories is required to meet the Öã^&q |æ^'s Proficiency in the English Language standard.

The Öã^&q |æ^ reserves the right to request an applicant undergo the IELTS Academic version, although the applicant may have achieved a successful PEAT test result.

7 SCHOOL TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS ASSESSMENT

The Qualifications Coordinators, under the direction of the Manager, Workforce Management, assess the qualifications. If a decision cannot be made the application under consideration is submitted to the Qualifications Committee (see 7.1 below).

Before a school teacher can work for the Öã^&q |æ^ the applicant's qualifications must meet the school teacher qualifications requirements. The assessment is made in order to determine if the applicant meets the minimum school teacher qualifications and to:

- establish whether the applicant is qualified to be appointed as a teacher
- establish whether the specific qualifications requirements for a position are met (eg. counsellor/psychologist, teacher librarian, ESL teacher).

The assessment of an applicant's qualifications occurs:

- before an offer of permanent appointment is made to a school teacher who is not already registered for casual employment
- before a contract is offered to a school teacher who is not already registered for casual employment
- when a school teacher applies for registration as a casual school teacher
- when a school teacher applies for recognition of additional qualifications
- when a school teacher requests a review of teaching or additional qualifications.

Original documents or certified copies of the applicant's final academic transcripts are required for assessment of qualifications.

Assessments are also undertaken when it must be established that an applicant meets the Öã^&q |æ^'s school teacher qualification requirements:

- for any substantive promotion position ensuring that the applicant meets the requirements of section 4.1.2
- for a school counsellor (school psychologist) position
- for a school teacher librarian position
- for an ESL position.

7.1 Qualifications Committee

The purpose of the committee is to advise and make recommendations on:

- the minimum school teacher qualifications requirement for entry into the **Öä^&ç |æ^**
- the validity of overseas school teacher qualifications
- the status of qualifications awarded at the conclusion of school teacher training/retraining courses
- the consideration of previous work experience as equivalent or relevant to teaching for incremental purposes
- the criteria for upgrading of status of school teachers within the service
- the adequacy and value of courses to meet such criteria.

The committee meets at least once a term with additional meetings held on a needs basis.

The Director, Human Resources is the delegate for approving the committee's recommendations.

The composition of the Qualifications Committee is:

Manager Workforce Management
Manager Organisation Capacity
Assistant Manager Workforce Management
Assistant Manager Organisation Capacity
Two representatives from the Principals' Association
A representative from Curriculum Support and Professional Learning
Qualifications Officer Workforce Management (Executive support)
Two representatives from the Australian Education Union; and
A representative from the University of Canberra.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

Applicants for school teacher positions with the **Öä^&ç |æ^** are responsible for providing certified true copies of their qualifications for an assessment. Unless overseas qualifications are issued in English by the tertiary institution, a registered translator must translate them into English.

The **Öä^&ç |æ^** is responsible for assessing an applicant's qualifications:

- as meeting the requirements for school teachers' qualifications under Public Sector Management Standards
- in a timely fashion prior to commencement of employment.

9. FURTHER ADVICE

Contact: Recruitment Services
Phone: (02 6205 5000)
Email: DET.Employment@act.gov.au

10. POLICY OWNER

Director, Human Resources

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Public Sector Management Act 1994

Public Sector Management Standards

*ACT Department of Education Teaching Staff Union Collective Agreement
2007-2009*