

## Review of Permission to Teach AEU Response – Without Prejudice

The AEU has considered the Terms of Reference for the Review of Permission to Teach (PTT), the PPT categories, Registration Committee practice and Victorian Institute of Teaching Council policy.

The AEU believes that registration is crucial to protecting the quality of teaching and learning in Victoria. While there should be ease of compliance in the PTT area, it should not be at the expense of proper standards and should be rigorously applied.

The Institute should be aware that there is still a degree of cynicism about its merits amongst teachers and they are looking for the registration process to set high, professional standards. Any watering down of requirements would jeopardise their future support.

The AEU believes that any final decision about an individual's registration should be made by the Council rather than a committee, which should only have a recommending role. Also, the committee should continue to include elected Council members on it.

An over-riding principle for PTT registration is that “no suitable registered teacher is available”. The Institute should develop a definition of what is meant by ‘suitable’? How does the Institute ensure that schools are only applying for PTT for an individual when they have exhausted all possibility of employing a fully qualified teacher? The AEU believes that schools should provide evidence that registered teachers who applied for a position were not suitable in terms of the Institute's definition.

### PTT Categories

Division 1: Originally the AEU had a number of concerns, including that candidates who state that they are enrolled in an approved course of primary or secondary teacher education should have to provide evidence and that this needs to be tracked. Current processes seem to ensure that evidence of enrolment and expected completion is supplied prior to the original registration and prior to the second (and final) year. As long as this requirement is adhered to, the AEU accepts this Division where a qualified teacher is not available.

Division 2: The AEU believes that this category basically covers two groups. The first includes those, such as Instrumental Music Teachers, who do not take whole classes and do not deliver a complete curriculum area. It is appropriate for those people to get PTT in this division under the current arrangements and the Institute should develop an agreed list of positions that fall into this group.

The second group covers ‘instructors’ who do teach whole classes and deliver a complete curriculum area. They do the work of registered teachers. We have a number of

concerns about this division in the way that it allows instructors to teach in schools where a teacher is not available.

Firstly, the AEU believes that a basic principle for this group is that these instructors should be enrolled in an approved course of primary or secondary education as for Division 1. We are aware that appropriate courses need to be available and the Institute should work with universities to investigate the availability and possible development of such courses.

Secondly, the general guidelines state that, “prior to the second year of PTT, the Principal must advise the Institute in writing of the school’s intention to continue the PTT”. It is not appropriate that this PTT should just be advised. It should be sought annually as for Division 1, with schools providing proof that they could not get a qualified teacher.

Division 3: As there are a number of groups in this division, this submission will deal with them separately.

Permission to Teach School/Tertiary Institution Exchange (3.1) – The AEU accepts this sub-division and believes that it is appropriate to support such exchanges.

Permission to Teach Inter-Government Agreement (3.2) – Where teachers are seconded through an inter-government agreement, the AEU believes that they should be qualified to teach in their own country, which is not a current requirement.

Permission to Teach Interschool Exchange (3.3) – The AEU believes that there are appropriate safeguards and accepts this sub-division.

Permission to Teach: VET in Schools (3.4) – The AEU would like information about the status of the accepted qualifications, who offers them and the relationship between them and primary/secondary teaching qualifications. The discussion paper will need to clarify the situation so that the AEU can respond in more detail about the appropriateness of this category. The AEU is particularly concerned that a person with Certificate 4 in Workplace Training and Assessment would be allowed to teach VET with only general supervision. There should be a requirement for direct supervision. Such a person should also be enrolled in one of the other accepted courses. Also, the current wording is that “The candidate’s employment will be limited to the particular specialist curriculum area...”. The word ‘will’ should be changed to ‘must’.

Permission to Teach – Professional Experience (3.5) – This category relates to non-government schools and the AEU is unaware of the circumstances and so makes no comment at this stage. We would like information about this category and how it may relate to government schools. The discussion paper will need to describe this category so that the AEU can respond about the appropriateness of it.

Division 4: The guidelines for this category are generally appropriate. However, the AEU believes that it would be clearer if it stated that “Teachers in this category are required to provide evidence that they have completed at least three years...” rather than “... hold at least three years...”.

Now that all primary and secondary courses are required to be at least 4 years, the AEU believes that this division should eventually become defunct.

The AEU looks forward to responding to the discussion paper that is developed out of this process. This review is important to the workings of the Institute but it is early in its life. A range of data should be kept, including the numbers of registrations in each category and the subject areas taught. There should then be a further review in two years, part of which would include consideration of this data.