

VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF TEACHING

PERMISSION TO TEACH POLICY 2011

1. PREAMBLE

Throughout this document references are made to the applicable sections of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act) as amended on 1 January 2011.

One of the purposes of the Act is to provide for the registration of teachers in schools in Victoria. Under the Act there are two categories of registration. The first category is as a person who is qualified to be registered as a teacher and the second category is as a person with appropriate skills and experience to teach who is eligible to be granted permission to teach. To be registered as a teacher the person must satisfy the requirement of sections 2.6.8 and 2.6.9. To be granted permission to teach the person must satisfy the requirements of sections 2.6.13 and 2.6.14.

Only a person who is registered or who is granted permission to teach can undertake the duties of a teacher in a school (s.2.6.56). The duties of a “teacher” include the delivery of an educational program or the assessment of student participation in an educational program (s.2.6.1).

In recognising the profession of teaching (s.2.6.3 (1)) the Institute promotes the practice that wherever possible any person employed to undertake the duties of a teacher in a school in Victoria should be a qualified teacher registered pursuant to section 2.6.9 of the Act.

However; in particular circumstances, the Institute may grant permission to teach to a person who is not fully qualified as a teacher to undertake some, or all of the duties of a teacher for a limited period of time. This allows a school to employ a person who is not fully qualified as a teacher where no qualified and suitable registered teacher is available.

Evidence that the school has first sought to employ a registered teacher (s.2.6.13 (2)(ab)) is required, unless it is a position where this requirement is exempted by the Institute (s.2.6.13(4));

To be eligible for registration with permission to teach the person must demonstrate that they have the appropriate skills and experience to teach and be suitable to be a member of the teaching profession (s.2.6.14 (1)).

Registration with permission to teach confers the professional status and professional obligations of a registered teacher on a person who does not meet the qualification requirements for registration as a teacher.

Permission to teach is not a renewable form of registration (s.2.6.17(4)) and is limited to a maximum of 3 years for any grant (s.2.6.14(2)(a)).

Permission to teach is not an enduring form of registration. A person seeking a second or subsequent period of permission to teach will be required to demonstrate that they have engaged appropriately with the profession and/or made appropriate progress toward attaining an approved teacher education qualification or, where applicable, registration as teacher.

The policy for permission to teach is based on the following principles:

1. Only registered teachers should undertake the duties of a teacher in a school;
2. Permission to teach applies only to positions where the duties to be undertaken are those of a teacher;
3. Permission to teach can only be considered where there is evidence that a school has first sought to employ a registered teacher but where no suitable and qualified registered teacher is available to undertake the position, unless it is a position where this requirement is exempted by the Institute;
4. All persons undertaking the duties of a teacher must have appropriate skills and experience to teach relevant to the teaching position and as a member of the teaching profession;
5. Permission to teach is not a renewable form of registration and is limited to a maximum of 3 years for any grant;
6. Persons seeking more than one period of permission to teach are required to demonstrate that they have engaged appropriately with the profession and/or made appropriate progress toward attaining an approved teacher education qualification or, where applicable, registration as teacher.

1.1 Where does permission to teach apply?

Under Section (2.6.1) of the Act, a “teacher”:

- (a) means a person who in a school, undertakes duties that include the delivery of an educational program or the assessment of student participation in an educational program; and
- (b) includes a person employed as the principal or the head of a school whether or not that person undertakes the duties of a teacher if the person has been employed as a teacher in any school prior to being employed as the principal or the head of a school;
- (c) does not include a teacher’s aide, a teacher’s assistant or a student teacher.

Where a school intends to employ a person who is not a qualified teacher to undertake the duties of a teacher, the following advice is provided to assist schools in determining the requirement for a permission to teach application and endorsement.

1.1.1 An application for permission to teach is required where the following criteria apply:

- where the engagement of a person is for the delivery and/or assessment of student participation in an educational program; and
- the educational program is part of a curriculum that
 - is authorised by the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (e.g. VELS, VCE, VCAL); or
 - is authorised by the International Baccalaureate Organisation; or
 - in a non-government school, is authorised and reviewed by the Victorian Registration & Qualification Authority and is approved as the educational program of the school by the school’s governing body;
- the education program forms part of the required curriculum for a student in that school; and
- the person is being engaged because of their specific skills and experience in a particular subject or discipline to deliver and/or assess the student’s participation in the required curriculum for a student; and
- the educational program is to be conducted at a school (*as defined under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006*).

1.1.2 An application for permission to teach is not required if the duties to be undertaken by the person are those of a teacher’s aide, teacher’s assistant or a student teacher or are duties to be undertaken in a co-curricular or extra-curricular program.

1.1.3 Sports Coaches, Instrumental Music Instructors, and other instructors whose duties relate to co-curricular or extra-curricular programs are not considered to be undertaking the duties of a teacher.

2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Sections 2.6.13 and 2.6.14 of the Act provide the requirements under which the Institute may grant an applicant permission to teach.

In order to be granted permission to teach the person:

- must have the appropriate skills and experience to teach (s.2.6.14(1)(a));
- must provide the information required in the form approved by the Institute and any further information required by the Institute in respect of their application (s.2.6.13(3));
- must have the application for permission to teach endorsed by the principal of the employing school (s.2.6.13(2)(a));
- must provide evidence that the school intending to employ or engage them had first attempted to employ or engage a registered teacher to fill the teaching position (s.2.6.13(2)(ab)), unless exempted from this requirement by the Institute (s.2.6.13(4));
- must satisfy the Institute that they are suitable to teach (s.2.6.14(1)(a) and s.2.6.8(b)(i));
- must satisfy the Institute that they are competent in speaking and communicating in English (s.2.6.14(1)(a) and s.2.6.8(b)(ii));
- must not be precluded under section 2.6.9(2) in that they must satisfy the Institute that they are of suitable character (s.2.6.14(1)(b)); and
- must pay the required fee (s.2.6.14(d)).

In addition, under section 2.6.14(2):

The Institute may impose any condition, limitation or restriction it thinks appropriate on the permission to teach including –

- the period the PTT is in force, except that any grant of permission will not exceed 3 years from the date of grant of the permission (s.2.6.14(2)(a));
- any subject the person is permitted to teach;
- the school/s where a person is permitted to be employed or engaged.

3. POLICY

To meet the legislative requirements of permission to teach, the Institute will implement the following policy:

3.1 Application Form

Applicants for permission to teach must apply on the form approved by the Institute. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all relevant sections of the application form are completed.

3.1.1 Completing the application includes obtaining the endorsement of a school. The endorsing principal should provide the following information:

- Details of the teaching position for which the permission to teach is being sought, including the duties to be undertaken; the key selection criteria for and the duration of the position;
- An assessment of the applicant's skills and experience to teach and a statement as to why these skills and experience to teach are appropriate to the position; and
- Details of the professional support and supervision to be provided to the applicant during the period of the permission.

3.1.2 The application must include evidence satisfactory to the Institute that the school has first sought to employ a registered teacher. This includes:

- evidence that the position has been advertised in the statewide media (print or electronic) for a period of at least one week inclusive of a weekend; and
- a statement from the endorsing school that no qualified and suitable registered teacher was available.

An exemption from the requirement to provide evidence of first seeking a registered teacher may be sought by an applicant for positions where, for reasons of the subject type or the form of employment, a person other than a qualified and registered teacher is required. Exemptions may be requested for the following positions:

- VET subjects requiring recent industry experience
- Recognised supply and demand initiatives– e.g. Career Change
- Community languages offered by the Victorian School of Languages and community language schools where registered as a senior secondary provider
- Specialist access and equity programs requiring other professional expertise e.g. community service or youth work expertise; higher education expertise for approved university study programs
- Teaching exchange programs
- Casual replacement or emergency teaching
- Short term positions of 6 months or less.

- 3.1.3. If the applicant intends to undertake the duties of a teacher in more than one school this should be indicated on the application. In certain circumstances a permission to teach approval may not be limited to a particular school.
- 3.1.4 The applicant must also complete the following sections of the application.
- Details of identity, including provision of 100 points of 'proof of identity' documents;
 - Consent for the Institute to obtain a National Criminal History Record Check (NCHRC) from the CrimTrac Agency. If the applicant does not consent to an NCHRC, the Institute will not process the application;
 - Authorisation for the Institute to conduct a police check from time to time during the period of registration with permission to teach;
 - English language competence information;
 - Declarations concerning criminal charges, conviction or finding of guilt, disciplinary proceedings, any physical or mental impairment and other matters which might indicate that it may not be in the public interest for the applicant to be a teacher; and
 - A statutory declaration regarding the information supplied in the application which is witnessed by an authorised person under the *Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1958 (Vic)*.
- 3.1.5 The applicant is required to obtain a character reference in support of their application for permission to teach.

3.2 Appropriate Skills and Experience to Teach

All applicants for permission to teach must be able to demonstrate that they have the appropriate skills and experience to teach relevant to the teaching role for which the permission is being sought.

For an initial application

- 3.2.1 An applicant for permission to teach is required to provide evidence that they have the appropriate skills and experience to teach relevant to the position for which the permission is sought and as a member of the teaching profession, and must be able to meet the following standards, in that the applicant will:
- have the appropriate subject/discipline knowledge that they will be required to teach;
 - have strategies to build positive relationships with students;
 - be able to maintain safe learning environments;
 - be able to use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective learning; and
 - have attained a level of formal education or training and English language competence sufficient to enrol in an approved course of teacher education during the period of their permission, unless exempted by the Institute.

3.2.2 The applicant will need to provide evidence satisfactory to the Institute of any education or training to be a teacher, experience as a teacher either generally or in a particular subject, and/or expertise in a particular subject or discipline in support of their claims to meet the standards. The evidence might include but not be limited to academic transcripts, trade or other qualifications, records of employment or statements of service, voluntary experience and relevant references.

For a second or subsequent application

3.2.3 An applicant for a second or subsequent period of permission to teach is required to demonstrate that they have the appropriate skills and experience to teach relevant to the position for which the permission is sought and a commitment to becoming a member of the teaching profession, in that the applicant will:

- have the appropriate subject/discipline knowledge that they will be required to teach;
- have demonstrated effective strategies for building positive relationships with students and effective communication with parents and caregivers;
- be able to maintain safe and challenging learning environments;
- be able to use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective learning; and
- have made appropriate progress toward attaining an approved teacher education qualification, or where applicable, registration as teacher, during the period of a previous period of permission to teach or in the interim, as outlined in clause 3.2.4.

3.2.4 The applicant will need to provide evidence satisfactory to the Institute of their education or training to be a teacher, experience as a teacher either generally or in a particular subject, and/or expertise in a particular subject or discipline in support of their claims to meet the standards. The evidence might include but not be limited to academic transcripts, trade or other qualifications, records of employment or statements of service, voluntary experience and relevant references.

Appropriate progress toward attaining an approved teacher education qualification will be determined by the Institute. It may include evidence of education or training to be a teacher, participation in standards referenced professional development activities and professional engagement, and/or evidence of improvement in English language competence to be eligible for enrolment in an approved teacher education qualification.

3.3 Suitability to Teach

All applicants for permission to teach must satisfy the Institute that they are suitable to teach. This requirement is articulated in the criteria of the Suitability to Teach Policy approved by the Minister. The key criteria are as follows:

- 3.3.1 The NCHRC obtained for the applicant will be assessed by the Institute to ensure that there are no grounds to prevent registration under the Suitability to Teach Policy.
- 3.3.2 An applicant who has resided in any country other than Australia for a continuous period of 12 months or more during the 10 years prior to the date of the lodgement of the application, and who was 18 years or older when they resided in that country, must provide an original or certified copy of a criminal records check (CRC) from that country at the time of application for registration. The CRC document must be no more than 12 months old at the time of application and must cover the full period of residency in that country.
- 3.3.3. The applicant must also be physically and mentally able to undertake the duties of a teacher.

3.4 English Language Competence

Applicants for permission to teach must satisfy the Institute that they are competent in speaking and communicating in the English language. This requirement is articulated in the criteria of the English Language Competence Policy approved by the Minister. The key criteria are as follows:

- 3.4.1 An applicant is required to provide evidence that they can meet one of the following:
- completed their teacher education qualifications at an Australian institution or at an institution in a country where English is the national language of instruction;
 - undertaken an English language test that is recognised by the Institute and achieved the required standard; or
 - English is the applicant's first or primary language.
- 3.4.2 In exceptional circumstances permission to teach for languages other than English (LOTE) may be granted to an applicant at a lesser level of English language competence than the required standard for an English language test. To be considered under this clause, the applicant will need to provide:
- evidence of the English language test level achieved;
 - the reasons why an exceptional circumstance applies to the permission to teach application;
 - evidence of what they are prepared to do to improve their English language competence over the period of time requested for the permission; and
 - a statement of support from the principal who is endorsing the application as to the assistance the school will put in place to help improve the applicant's English language competence during the period of time requested for the permission.
- 3.4.3 Should an applicant, who has been granted permission to teach under exceptional circumstances for English language competence, apply for a second or subsequent period of permission to teach they will be required to:
- complete the approved application form and provide evidence and documentation required under clauses 3.2.3 and 3.2.4; and
 - produce evidence that they meet the standard for English language competence; or
 - provide evidence of the exceptional circumstances that apply to the position, together with evidence of an improvement in their English language competence since their previous application and a statement of what they are prepared to do to improve their English language competence over the period of time requested for the second or subsequent permission.

3.5 Conditions, limitations or restrictions

- 3.5.1 The Institute may impose any condition, limitation or restriction it thinks appropriate on a permission to teach including the period for which the permission remains in force.

A grant of permission to teach may not exceed 3 years from the date of the grant of the permission.

- 3.5.2 The Institute may impose conditions on a grant of permission to teach with regard to any subject or discipline the person is permitted to teach and the school/s where a person is permitted to be employed or engaged.

The Institute may impose any additional condition, limitation or restriction it thinks appropriate on a grant of permission to teach.

- 3.5.3 Unless otherwise specified, persons who have permission to teach will be under the general supervision of a registered teacher. General supervision includes oversight of the planning and implementation of class programs, and professional support with regard to:

- teaching methods/practices
- student welfare
- assessment procedures and related matters.

- 3.5.4 The Institute will only grant permission to teach where it is intended that the applicant will be in sole charge of a school, after the consideration of the applicant's qualifications, skills and experience and the general supervision arrangements to be provided.

3.6 General Policy Guidelines

- 3.6.1 Applicants must meet all of the policy requirements for permission to teach.

- 3.6.2 The Institute will not finalise processing applications until the application fee has been paid.

- 3.6.3 The person must be approved for permission to teach by the Institute prior to the commencement of duties as a teacher (s.2.6.56).

- 3.6.4 Registration with permission to teach confers the professional status and professional obligations of a registered teacher on a person who does not meet the qualification requirements for registration as a teacher.

3.7. Categories of Permission to Teach

- 3.7.1 The Institute will recognise two categories of permission to teach (PTT):
- PTT casual relief teacher (CRT); and
 - PTT
- 3.7.2 The PTT (CRT) teacher category applies to teachers who are less than fully qualified as a teacher but hold a completed qualification(s) that includes at least three years of higher education (or full time equivalent), including at least one year (full time or equivalent) of approved teacher education.
- 3.7.3 The PTT category applies to persons who have the appropriate skills and experience to teach relevant to the duties as specified by the endorsing school.
- This category also applies to teachers approved as PTT (CRT) who seek to undertake a fixed term teaching position in a particular school.

The Permission to Teach Policy 2011 was adopted by the Council of the Victorian Institute of Teaching on 13 October 2010, to be implemented from 1 January 2011.

This Policy replaces the Permission to Teach Policy 2007 and will be reviewed in 2013.