Provisional and Conditional Accreditation Policy
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1. **Background**

Requirements for entry into the teaching profession are established in the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*. These requirements ensure that all teachers entering the profession meet a minimum academic benchmark and have completed teaching preparation that combines theoretical and practical components that address the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate Teacher level or equivalent. The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) also assesses the comparability of other relevant qualifications for the purpose of entry into the NSW teaching profession.

2. **Purpose**

This Provisional and Conditional Accreditation Policy describes the benchmark for entry into the teaching profession. The benchmark specifies the qualifications, minimum levels of English language proficiency and Working with Children Check Clearance to commence employment as a teacher in NSW.

3. **Scope**

The policy applies to any person who is required to be accredited under the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*, including teachers who:

- first started teaching in NSW on or after the 1 October 2004, or
- who are returning to teach following an absence from teaching of 5 or more years.

Section 28(1) of the Act requires that such a person must not teach in an early childhood service or school unless that person is accredited. In addition, Section 28(2)(a) states that a person must not employ another person to teach in an early childhood service or school unless that person is accredited.

A teacher’s accreditation remains current for a period of no more than five years under Section 24(d) of the Act.

4. **Objectives**

The objectives of the Provisional and Conditional Accreditation Policy are to:

- establish a qualification benchmark for entry into the teaching profession
- prescribe a level of English Language proficiency for overseas trained teachers entering NSW
- meet appropriate levels of probity by supplying a current Working with Children Check
- provide a level of support for teachers re-entering the profession or entering NSW from overseas
- comply with the requirements for National Consistency of Teacher Registration.
5. Common accreditation requirements

Section 20 of the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 lists the matters to be dealt with by the professional teaching standards including the skills, qualifications, experience and knowledge required for teaching at each level of accreditation.

A person cannot teach in an early childhood service or school unless they are accredited. There are two components to mandatory accreditation:

- Provisional or Conditional accreditation
- Proficient Teacher accreditation (full accreditation).

This policy describes the requirements for provisional and conditional accreditation for teachers seeking work in NSW for the first time, or after a break from teaching of more than five years.

5.1 A Working with Children Check Clearance

A Working with Children Check Clearance (WWCCC) is a requirement of provisional and conditional accreditation. The WWCCC is a legal requirement for every teacher and involves a national criminal history check and review of any findings or workplace misconduct to determine whether a person poses a risk to the safety of children.


5.2 An English Language Proficiency assessment

An English Language Proficiency assessment is required for any overseas trained teacher who has undertaken any part of the full four years of required higher education (or qualifications assessed as comparable) in a country where English is not the main language.

The test is not required for teachers who have undertaken the full four years of higher education study in English in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), the United States of America, Canada and the Republic of Ireland.

More detailed requirements are set out in the BOSTES Policy on the English Language Proficiency for Teachers for Provisional and Conditional Accreditation.

A teacher who is provisionally or conditionally accredited by BOSTES may still be required to successfully complete an English language proficiency test by their employer as a condition of their employment. This test may be in addition to the accreditation requirement.
5.3 Refresher professional development

Completion of a refresher course or courses\(^1\) is required for any teacher who is returning to the profession after an absence from teaching of five or more years, or commencing teaching in NSW from overseas.

Completion of 10 hours within 12 months of the date of provisional accreditation is a condition of a teacher’s accreditation at the level of Proficient Teacher.

Early childhood teachers can select QTC Registered courses that will support their orientation or re-orientation to teach in NSW.

For K-12 teachers, the 10 hours of QTC Registered Refresher Professional Development must cover the following three areas:

1. Educational expectations
   - The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
   - system and/or school priorities

2. Curriculum
   - Key learning areas, predicated on the NSW BOSTES syllabus documents

3. Pedagogy
   - Pedagogical knowledge, skills and understanding of teaching strategies that build evidence based practice and impacts effective student learning and classroom management.

6. Mandatory accreditation

Section 20 of the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 lists the matters to be dealt with by the professional teaching standards including the skills, qualifications, experience and knowledge required for teaching at each level of accreditation.\(^2\)

6.1 Provisional Accreditation

The Board may provisionally accredit a person if:

- the person meets the requirements specified in the professional teaching standards, and
- has completed an approved course and has or will receive a qualification in relation to that course.

6.1.1 Completion of an approved course

BOSTES advises the Minister on the approval of all initial teacher education programs in NSW. This includes historical programs as well as programs currently offered by NSW

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\(^1\) This means QTC Registered Professional Development

\(^2\) An accreditation decision is a pre-condition of employment as a teacher. It is not an offer of employment. Employers may have further requirements in order for teachers to be employed.
teacher education providers. Completion of an approved program enables those graduates to be eligible for Provisional Accreditation.

Approved programs include undergraduate initial teacher education programs or graduate entry initial teacher education programs.

From 2016, graduates of approved programs need to have met the required standard in an approved literacy and numeracy assessment. Graduates who have not met this requirement during their program will need to provide evidence of successful completion of the literacy and numeracy assessment in their application for accreditation.

Requirements for historical, interstate and overseas teachers are included in section 6.5 of this policy.

Early childhood education programs approved by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) are recognised as meeting the requirements for provisional accreditation.

Under regulation 137 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, ACECQA publishes a list of approved and former approved early childhood teaching qualifications. A person who holds an approved early childhood teaching qualification is an early childhood teacher for the purposes of the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.

6.1.2 Requirement for an undergraduate program

A relevant undergraduate program includes at least a four year undergraduate integrated professional qualification (for example, a Bachelor of Education or a Bachelor of Early Childhood – Birth to 5 years) or a double degree covering discipline knowledge and professional studies, (for example, a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education or a Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Teaching).

6.1.3 Requirement for a graduate entry initial teacher education program

A relevant graduate entry initial teacher education qualification must comprise at least two years of equivalent full-time study, for example, a graduate entry Bachelor of Teaching or Bachelor of Education, or Master of Teaching.

6.2 Cessation of provisional accreditation

A teacher’s provisional accreditation ceases under the following circumstances:

- The teacher has not met the Standards at Proficient Teacher at the end of their relevant period. The relevant period is 3 years for teachers employed on a full time basis or 5 years for teachers employed on a temporary, part time or casual basis.
- The teacher is accredited at proficient teacher.
- The teacher has their accreditation revoked.
6.3 Conditional accreditation

Conditional accreditation applies to a person who meets the requirements specified in the professional teaching standards for provisional accreditation but who has not completed an approved course.

Section 31 (3) of the Act states that the Board (BOSTES) may conditionally accredit a person if:

(a) the person

   (i) holds a degree in an area that, in the opinion of the Board is relevant to the area in which the person is or is to be employed to teach, and

   (ii) produces evidence of an offer of employment as a teacher, or

(b) the Board is satisfied that the person has completed a substantial part of an approved course.

6.3.1 Completion of a relevant degree

At least a three year Bachelor degree covering discipline knowledge in the area in which the person will be employed to teach is required.

It is recommended that conditionally accredited teachers seek advice as soon as practicable about admission into an approved graduate entry initial teacher education program to ensure they meet discipline study prerequisites.

6.3.2 A substantial part of an approved course

A substantial part of an approved course comprises:

- at least three quarters of undergraduate integrated professional qualification, for example, a Bachelor of Education, or an undergraduate combined or double degree covering discipline knowledge and professional studies, for example, a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education or a Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Teaching, or

- a three year Bachelor’s degree and at least one year of a graduate entry initial teacher education qualification of at least two years of equivalent full-time study, for example, a graduate entry Bachelor of Teaching or a Bachelor of Education, or a Master of Teaching.

6.3.3 Changing from Conditional to Provisional

Section 30 (4) of the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 allows BOSTES to provisionally accredit a teacher within the first 12 months of their conditional accreditation. Teachers must provide their final transcript to the BOSTES.

6.4 Cessation of conditional accreditation

A teacher’s conditional accreditation ceases under the following circumstances:

a) The teacher has not met the Standards at Proficient Teacher at the end of their relevant period. The relevant period is 4 years for teachers employed on a full time basis or 6 years for teachers employed on a temporary, part time or casual basis.

b) The teacher completes their approved program and is provisionally accredited
c) The teacher is accredited at Proficient Teacher.
d) The teacher has their accreditation revoked.

### 6.5 Other relevant qualifications

#### 6.5.1 Historical qualifications

Historical qualifications completed in NSW are reviewed on the basis of equivalence, and previous or existing requirements to teach in NSW. This includes qualifications that were deemed eligible for employment in NSW prior to the introduction of the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*.

#### 6.5.2 Qualification requirements for interstate teachers

Any person who has completed an accredited program in another Australian state or territory will be recognised as meeting the requirements for provisional accreditation.

All state and territory teacher regulatory bodies undertake a national approach to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) holds a national database of accredited programs. The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) holds a national database of approved (and former approved) qualifications. Early childhood teachers must hold a qualification that is approved or recognised by ACECQA as equivalent to an approved early childhood teaching qualification.

Any teacher who enters NSW with full registration from another state or territory can apply to have their current full registration recognised as the equivalent of full accreditation in NSW (Proficient teacher status) within 60 days of their initial provisional accreditation.

#### 6.5.3 Qualification requirements for overseas teachers

Overseas trained teachers must hold equivalent qualifications and meet the same requirements for Provisional and Conditional Accreditation as graduates of accredited NSW approved qualifications. Overseas qualifications are assessed on their National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) equivalence and NSW subject content knowledge requirements.

Early childhood teachers must hold a qualification that is approved or recognised by ACECQA as equivalent to an approved early childhood teaching qualification.

Some qualifications or workplace-based licenses are not regarded as comparable qualifications in NSW. In these cases, teachers may be eligible for conditional accreditation and provided with advice on relevant additional study.

### 7. Definitions and abbreviations

*AITSL*

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

*BOSTES*

Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards
8. **Related documents**

Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Policy

Ceasing the Provision and Conditional Accreditation of Teachers and Conditional for a Re-accreditation Period Policy

*Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*

*Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*

*Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*