

**National Review of Teacher Registration.**

Submission from Lauriston Girls School

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**Focus of the Submission.**

While our commentary relates particularly to our experiences in Victoria it may have broader application to the registration authorities in other states. In any event, we hold the view that as the teaching profession is increasingly mobile it seems obvious that a good outcome of this review might lead to the establishment of a national teacher registration authority which would subsume the registration role of the individual states and their legislation.

Our particular commentary relates to the focus questions in part four of the consultation paper on page 12 especially “Are there barriers/challenges presented by teacher registration for those entering the teaching profession? How could these be overcome?”

**Comments**

In the independent sector in Victoria we are experiencing an increasing number of teachers with a background in the International Baccalaureate (Diploma Program) coming to work in our schools. Lauriston was the second school in the independent sector to offer the Diploma program in Victoria after St Leonards College. We have approximately 20 years’ experience offering the program and have in that time employed a significant number of teachers from both within and outside Australia.

Teachers who have had overseas experience often find themselves in circumstances where they are provisionally registered and need to make their way to full registration via the submission of an investigative project. In essence, this project as it exists in Victoria, is essentially designed for graduate teachers who have two years to complete their project and submit it to a school based panel for approval. Experienced IB teachers who have returned from overseas are not new graduates but are sometimes captured by these provisions.

This situation is also complicated by the rules around mutual recognition in that a teacher who has provisional registration in one authority and applies for registration under the mutual recognition rules will only be granted registration in the provisional category despite their years of experience.

Our contention is that it would be more appropriate for teachers captured by these circumstances to have some other way whereby their experience could be recognised and not to have to complete a project which does not pay due regard to their experience and expertise as a teacher. We suggest that the school should be able to contribute to the evidence provided by the teacher either by way of a detailed classroom observation report and/or supporting documentation attesting to the teacher’s pedagogical competence. This would obviate the need for the teacher to complete a project.

A second, but related issue, for us is the nature of the guidance provided by the Victorian Institute of Teaching in regard to the completion of the project by provisionally registered teachers. While we believe there is no intention by the Institute to mislead teachers as to what is expected we also hold the view that the guidance provided is not sufficiently clear.

Frequently we see provisionally registered teachers who are busy learning the profession in their first or second year of teaching becoming frustrated by what they interpret as the expectations of the move from provisional to full registration. Our experience is that for both the provisionally registered teachers and the mentors they work with the expectation is that the project is a very substantial piece of work. We have seen examples of projects and the supporting documentation exceeding 150 A4 pages. We are told by VIT that this is not the expectation. There seems to be a disconnect between what VIT sees as appropriate and how it is interpreted in the field.

Lauriston Girls School appreciates the opportunity to provide a response to the Consultation Paper.

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