



## NATIONAL REVIEW OF TEACHER REGISTRATION – EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### SUBMISSION TO AITSL

#### SUMMARY

Montessori Australia generally supports the registration of early childhood teachers as part of a national approach to teacher registration. We submit below some thoughts and comments from members of the Montessori community working in early childhood settings in both schools and long day care centres.

Overall, we believe there should be a nationally consistent approach with ACECQA, AITSL, regulatory bodies and authorities and that teacher registration should be a national process, not carried out at the state level, to support consistency.

There are inevitably going to be cost implications for early childhood services with regard to pay parity, staffing and mentoring and small centres will find this very challenging.

#### SPECIFIC COMMENTS

##### 1. Elements of Registration

We consider the jump from Proficient to Highly Accomplished to be quite big and that there is not much scope to rate teachers within Proficient.

We suggest another level or gradation in the registration process. This is particularly relevant in small schools/centres where mentoring teachers on their classroom practice is important just in terms of their pathway to leadership (Highly Accomplished and Lead which talk about 'supporting colleagues' and 'leading colleagues'). Many teachers in early childhood settings would not be able to reach Lead teacher status as they are not leading anything.

ACECQA registration requires 1 early childhood teacher for every service. Often they are the Centre Managers who do not work in the classroom on a day to day basis. At present they would be unable to gain teacher registration as they do not actively work with children.

Montessori early childhood educators all have a Montessori diploma and are very experienced but are mostly not degree qualified. Those that do get a degree go and get a job in a school as soon as they can. Services can often only therefore afford to pay high salaries to the Centre Manager to keep them not to every early childhood teacher.

## **2. Teacher Quality**

To improve teacher quality, we believe the process has to be meaningful and contextualised to each setting and sector. The rationale for improving teacher quality needs to be communicated more effectively in order to gain acceptance.

## **3. Improvements**

Many of our services are finding it difficult to source appropriately qualified, skilled and experienced mentors relevant to our particular sector. If there were some workshops to help the registration process, there could be opportunities for clusters of services/schools to assist with this. In addition, there is a need for more recognised professional learning opportunities for early childhood teachers.

## **4. Nationally consistent approaches**

We believe that there needs to be consistency between registration bodies, eg ACECQA, AITSL, Regulatory Authorities and bodies which are driven by mutual collaboration and recognition.

## **5. Teacher standards and application to ECT registration**

Whilst there is an expectation in school settings that professional learning is important, there isn't necessarily the same culture in early childhood settings outside of schools. There needs to be more emphasis on the importance of this and a focus on relevancy to particular sectors. For example, we would like to see professional learning opportunities for Montessori-specific workshops and conferences being recognised.

Montessori Australia

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