

## ***Without Prejudice***



An AEU discussion paper  
on Teacher Registration  
for the ACT:

# ***Roles and Responsibilities of Professional Registration bodies and a Model for the ACT***

**[While TAFE is not mentioned in this paper, it is the AEU position that TAFE teachers should be included in any teacher registration process established in the ACT.]**

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*Note: An asterisk\* indicates documents that I recommend you should download and read.*

## 1. The Role of Professional Registration Bodies

The primary role of a professional registration body is to set and uphold standards of professional practice. The basic assumption of a professional registration body is that as professional knowledge is highly specialised, members of the profession are often better placed to set standards and to judge best practice than are employers or clients.

A professional registration body that performs this role effectively can enhance the quality and status of its members' work in many ways.

First, when members of the profession work in relative isolation [ie are employed by many different clients on a one-off basis, like engineers, or work largely alone in classrooms, like teachers] a professional registration body can provide assurance that its members' services will be of a certain standard.

Second, when a profession is under attack for an apparent deterioration in standards, a professional registration body can establish uniform standards of practice and a code of ethics for its members. This improves the quality and consistency of service in new or rapidly growing professions [eg massage therapists, acupuncturists]. It can also help to alleviate public concerns about the competence of its members. For example, the US National Board for Professional Teaching Standards states one of its indirect aims is to "elevate the status of the teaching profession, educate the public about the demands and complexity of accomplished teaching practice, and make teaching a more attractive profession for talented college graduates with other promising career options" [NBPTS 2001].

Finally, by setting and enforcing standards of practice, and defining the scope of its members' skills and services, the professional registration body can argue for higher levels of pay for its members. The NBPTS has done this quite effectively in the USA.

The main benefit of a professional registration body is that standards of practice are determined and enforced by the membership – who presumably have a good understanding of professional issues – rather than by employers. If a professional registration body is sufficiently strong in enforcing its standards, employers may refer significant responsibilities to the association in areas such as hiring, promotion and dismissal. On the other hand, if the association has weak standards and/or does not enforce them properly, employers are likely to take these responsibilities back. In the medical profession, for example, health complaints commissions now enforce standards of practice and the role of professional registration bodies is limited to licensing and professional development.

The main disadvantage of a professional registration body is the risk of becoming too exclusive – using its entry standards to restrict the supply of a service, through setting high entry standards, and therefore drive up the price of that service [and increase the income of its members]. Professional medical associations are often accused of this practice, when for example, they reject applications by overseas-trained doctors, or limit the number of specialists admitted to the association each year.

## 2. Responsibilities of Professional Registration Bodies

A professional registration body has three core responsibilities:

1. To *define* professional standards for its members;
2. To *enforce* standards of professional conduct; and
3. To *accredit* courses for its members at the pre-service level and for continuing professional development.

## 2.1 Defining Professional Standards

Standards of professional conduct defined by the professional registration body usually apply at two levels. First, entry-level standards ensure that entrants to the profession have sufficient qualifying knowledge and practical experience to be a teacher. Second, a professional registration body may support the career development of its members by developing levels of membership beyond the entry-level, to recognise higher levels of professional competence. The development and application of differentiated standards recognises professional growth and assists in defining a career path for members of the profession. To be effective, the standards must be *applied*. Each level of membership must have entry requirements that are enforced by the professional registration body and there should be no automatic career progression to advanced grades of membership without meeting the criteria set for membership at that level. To ensure against “soft” standards, the professional registration body could consider quotas for higher categories of membership [ie applying limits to the number of places awarded in the higher categories each year].

There are substantial differences between professional registration bodies in the number of grades of membership they define and in the criteria they set for entry to those levels.

Many professional registration bodies have only one category of membership – professional teacher. This is the case in the Ontario Teachers College and in all Australian States except New South Wales. But most bodies have a probationary stage of membership for beginning teachers. All bodies grant teachers membership for life subject to the payment of an annual fee, except for the Western Australian College of Teaching which grants membership for five years with renewal subject to participation in recognised forms of professional learning. The standards set by these bodies are simply entry standards such as completion of an approved qualification and practical experiences. Some evidence of participation in continuing professional development may also be required.

The General Teaching Council for Scotland recently introduced a higher grade of membership called a Chartered Teacher, but the entry criteria appear somewhat soft, in that the status of Chartered Teacher is granted upon completion of an approved Masters Degree program. There is an alternative route for teachers to apply for Chartered Teacher Status through recognition of prior learning, based on submission of a portfolio and commentary that is assessed by a panel of peers. This “accreditation route” also results in the award of a Master’s Degree and thereby Chartered Teacher status. But as completion of the approved Master’s Degree Program [“the Program Route”] also results in the conferral of Chartered Teacher status, teachers have an option that does not appear to involve peer assessment of their professional practice. We do not know how rigorously the Master’s Degree Program evaluates classroom practice – yet to be an effective standard for teaching, this should happen by professional peers. North American research on teacher effectiveness suggests that there is no proven link between holding postgraduate qualifications such as Master’s degrees and quality teaching [Darling-Hammond 2000, Nye, Konstantonopouls and Hedges 2004].

**Table 1: Grades of Membership and Criteria for Entry – NSW Institute for Teachers, Ontario College of Teachers & General Teaching Council for Scotland**

	<b>GRADES</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR ENTRY</b>
NSW Institute of Teachers	1. Educational leader	▪ Not yet defined
	2. Accomplished Teacher	▪ Not yet defined
	3. Competent Teacher	▪ Graduate + two years experience
	4. Graduate Teacher	▪ Completion of recognised qualification
Ontario College of Teachers	1. Member	▪ Completion of recognised qualification
General Teaching Council for Scotland	1. Chartered Teacher	▪ Completion of recognised Masters degree [through either completion of an approved program of study or RPL by a panel of peers]
	2. Member	▪ Qualification + completion of 1 year teacher induction scheme
	3. Probationary Member	▪ Recognised teaching qualification

The New South Wales Institute for Teachers has defined four grades [“stages”] of membership: graduate teacher; competent teacher; accomplished teacher; and educational leader. The Institute’s *Professional Teaching Standards Framework* defines what teachers need to know, understand and do within each of these four grades. The *Framework* appears to draw on the approach of the American National Board for Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS] by making sets of propositions about what teachers need to know, understand and do, at each stage, under seven headings, or “elements”. The propositions [“elements”] are:

1. Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students;
2. Teachers know their students and how students learn;
3. Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning;
4. Teachers communicate effectively with their students;
5. Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills;
6. Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice; and
7. Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community.

The *Framework for Professional Teaching Standards* describes what teachers –at each of the defined stages of their career – should know, understand and do within each of the seven elements [New South Wales Institute of Teachers 2005]\*.

Among the other professional registration bodies in Australia, some also have defined standards [eg Victoria has eight propositions], but none appear to have defined career stages or grades of membership, except in New South Wales. But although the NSW Institute has defined professional teaching standards, it has not yet defined the criteria for assessing entry to each grade. So we do not know how the standards will be applied, in terms of the criteria that will determine entry to each stage, and how the applicants will be assessed.

Professional registration bodies for teachers are still evolving in terms of their standards-setting role. No examples were found of a teacher professional registration body that has clearly defined standards of entry across multiple grades of membership. The closest model in teaching is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS] in the USA, to which teachers apply for membership after practicing for three years. The NBPTS is a body for advanced teaching standards and does not seek to cover all teachers in the profession.

The system used to determine accomplished teaching by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards in the USA is peer-assessment by the professional registration body. The peer assessment process is time-consuming and expensive for individuals [it takes about one year]. A successful candidate will be issued National Board Certification for a period of 10 years, after which they must renew their certification through a process that demonstrates continuing professional growth. The cost to individuals is US\$2,300 for initial certification and US\$1,150 for renewal, but employers often pay this cost. Only fifty percent of applicants are successful in obtaining accreditation through the NBPTS [NBPTS 2001, 2005].

Early research indicates that the peer-assessment system operated by the NBPTS is effective in identifying accomplished teachers – as measured by improved learning outcomes among students. The rigour of the assessment enables the NBPTS to argue for higher pay to teachers with NBPTS-accreditation. Many employing authorities throughout the USA now provide bonuses to teachers certified by the NBPTS, and use NBPTS certification as criteria for awarding increased status and pay to accomplished teachers.

The NBPTS uses a range of tools in its performance assessments of accomplished teachers. Teachers seeking certification from the National Board are required to participate in a comprehensive peer-reviewed assessment as well as a written examination. Applicants must submit a comprehensive portfolio comprised of videotapes of their teaching, a selection of student work samples, learning products, and detailed analyses of their practice. The portfolio is designed to capture teaching in real-time, real-life settings, to allow trained assessors to examine how teachers translate knowledge and theory into practice. Teachers also complete a series of written exercises that probe the depth of their subject-matter knowledge, as well as their understanding of how to teach those subjects to their students.

In addition, applicants must be examined on content specific to their fields. For the Generalist/Early Childhood Certificate, there is a three hour examination that requires applicants to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in the six areas of: Literacy; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Children's Play; and Physical Education, Health and Safety. [NBPTS 2001, 2005].

In teaching, we have an example of a professional registration body that has defined professional standards across multiple grades of membership, but that does not define its criteria for entry to each grade [the NSW Institute of Teachers]. We also have an example of a professional registration body that defines and applies rigorous peer-assessed standards for its members, but which does not cover the entire profession [the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards]. To find a professional registration body that both defines standards and applies them across multiple grades of membership for the entire profession, we need to look to the professional registration body of engineers for a working model.

**Table 2: Engineers Australia – Grades of Membership & Eligibility Pre-requisites for a Professional Engineer**

Professional Engineer	
GRADE	CRITERIA FOR ENTRY
Chartered Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be Member or Fellow</li> <li>▪ Stage 2 competency-based assessment comprising Professional Engineering Practice Report and Professional Interview</li> <li>▪ Evidence of compliance with Continuing Professional Development Requirements</li> </ul>
Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has followed or is following the profession of engineering and either:</li> <li>▪ Has held sustained major responsibility in the design or execution of important engineering work; or</li> <li>▪ Has high educational qualifications, has held a prominent position in the profession, and has made a major contribution to the science and practice of engineering; or</li> <li>▪ Has had suitable engineering education/training, extensive responsibility in the design/execution of important engineering work and has achieved exceptional eminence in the profession</li> <li>▪ Assessment by panel of peers</li> <li>▪ Moderated nationally</li> </ul>
Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be Graduate</li> <li>▪ Minimum of three years acceptable work experience at level of Professional Engineer</li> </ul>
Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completion of an IEAust-recognised four-year engineering qualification in Australia or equivalent</li> </ul>
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enrolled in an IEAust-recognised four-year professional engineering educational program in Australia</li> </ul>

**Notes:** The occupational categories of Engineering Technologist and Engineering Officer are omitted from this table, but can be viewed in the source document.

Source: Engineers Australia [2005]\*.

Engineers Australia [formerly the Institution of Engineers, Australia] is an example of a fully self-regulating professional registration body that offers five grades of membership [Student, Graduate, Member, Fellow and Chartered Practitioner]. To attain the two higher grades – Fellow and Chartered Practitioner – a member must be eminent in the field, comply with continuing professional development requirements, and undergo a competency-based assessment by a panel of peers that is moderated nationally. The grades apply across three occupational categories – Engineering Officer, Engineering Technologist and Professional Engineer. See the source document for more details across the three occupational categories [Engineers Australia 2005].\*

## 2.2 Enforcing Standards of Professional Conduct

Enforcing standards of professional conduct is a key role for a self-regulating professional registration body. By developing standards of competence and conduct for their members to enter the profession and to maintain their membership, the profession has a basis for inviting members to join, benchmarks for members who want to maintain their membership, and reasons for excluding or dismissing members who are not performing at the expected standard. In this way, a self-regulating professional registration body uses standards to enhance quality.

Self-regulation only works to promote standards if the profession has mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with the standards and to apply sanctions to members

who do not comply. A self-regulating profession has a social responsibility to sanction members who are incompetent and found guilty of professional misconduct. Overseas, the General Teaching Council for Scotland plays this role, as does the Ontario College of Teachers.

Engineers Australia has a clearly defined procedure for investigating complaints against its members who are bound by its by-laws, regulations and code of ethics. A tribunal hears complaints against members and if a member is found guilty of professional misconduct, such as fraud, misrepresentation, injury to the professional reputation of others or plagiarism, sanctions are applied. The sanctions include expulsion, suspension for up to five years, specified professional development, fines and reprimands. Members also have access to an appeals process [The Institution of Engineers, Australia 1999].

The Ontario College of Teachers has a broad mandate to license, govern and regulate the practice of teaching in Ontario. Teachers who want to work in Ontario public schools must be members of the College. The College has developed three sets of standards in the areas of: *Professional Ethics; Professional Practice; and Professional Development*. The College has a process for hearing complaints against members and sanctions members found guilty of professional misconduct. The Ontario College of Teachers has the power to de-register teachers if they are found guilty of professional misconduct or are unfit to practice. The College applies a range of sanctions, from warnings through suspension to de-registration, to teachers who are found guilty of professional misconduct through the College's Disciplinary process. The 27 items defined as professional misconduct in the Act of Parliament governing the College are quite comprehensive [see box].

In most cases where the Ontario College recommends de-registration, the teacher has also been tried and found guilty by the criminal justice system. They are usually de-registered under Category 5: "Failing to maintain the standards of the profession". This is a broad and subjective category, where the "standards of the profession" are determined by the members on the disciplinary tribunal, rather than spelt out in legislation. The College's Disciplinary process also appears to deal effectively with many allegations of professional misconduct that do not appear before the courts, and thus plays a role in upholding standards of professional conduct in teaching [Ontario College of Teachers 2005].

**The following acts are defined as professional misconduct for the purpose of subsection 30 [2] of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*:**

1. Providing false information or documents to the College or any other person with respect to the member's professional qualifications.
2. Inappropriately using a term, title or designation indicating a specialisation in the profession which is not specified on the member's certificate of qualification and registration.
3. Permitting, counselling or assisting any person who is not a member to represent himself or herself as a member of the College.
4. Using a name other than the member's name, as set out in the register, in the course of his or her professional duties.
5. Failing to maintain the standards of the profession.
6. Releasing or disclosing information about a student to a person other than the student or, if the student is a minor, the student's parent or guardian. The release or disclosure of information is not an act of professional misconduct if, the student [or if the student is a minor, the student's parent or guardian] consents to the release or disclosure, or if the release or disclosure is required or allowed by law.
7. Abusing a student physically, sexually, verbally, psychologically or emotionally.
8. Practising or purporting to practise the profession while under the influence of any substance or while adversely affected by any dysfunction, which the member knows or ought to know impairs the member's ability to practise, and in respect of which treatment has previously been recommended, ordered or prescribed but the member has failed to follow the treatment.
9. Contravening a term, condition or limitation imposed on the member's certificate of qualification and registration.
10. Failing to keep records as required by his or her professional duties.
11. Failing to supervise adequately a person who is under the professional supervision of the member.
12. Signing or issuing, in the member's professional capacity, a document that the member knows or ought to know contains a false, improper or misleading statement.
13. Falsifying a record relating to the member's professional responsibilities.
14. Failing to comply with the Act, the regulations or the bylaws.
15. Failing to comply with the Education Act or the regulations made under that Act, if the member is subject to that Act.
16. Contravening a law if the contravention is relevant to the member's suitability to hold a certificate of qualification and registration.
17. Contravening a law if the contravention has caused or may cause a student who is under the member's professional supervision to be put at or to remain at risk.
18. An act or omission that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.
19. Conduct unbecoming a member.
20. Failing to appear before a panel of the Investigation Committee to be cautioned or admonished, if the Investigation Committee has required the member to appear under clause 26[5][c] of the Act.
21. Failing to comply with an order of a panel of the Discipline Committee or an order of a panel of the Fitness to Practise Committee.
22. Failing to co-operate in a College investigation.
23. Failing to take reasonable steps to ensure that requested information is provided in a complete and accurate manner if the member is required to provide information to the College under the Act and the regulations.
24. Failing to abide by a written undertaking given by the member to the College or an agreement entered into by the member with the College.
25. Failing to respond adequately or within a reasonable time to a written inquiry from the College.
26. Practising the profession while the member is in a conflict of interest.
27. Failing to comply with the member's duty under the Child and Family Services Act.

Source: Ontario College of Teachers 2005 website.  
>[http://www.oct.ca/en/InvestigationsHearings/misconduct-regulation\\_E.asp?path=octweb\\_e:3\\_0](http://www.oct.ca/en/InvestigationsHearings/misconduct-regulation_E.asp?path=octweb_e:3_0)<

In Australia, the New South Wales Institute of Teachers does not have responsibilities for investigating complaints, though it can de-register members who have been found guilty of offences under other legislation [see Section 24 of the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004, NSW*]. In other jurisdictions, the Teachers' Registration Boards in SA and NT have limited or no responsibilities in this area. The recently established Tasmanian Teacher Registration Board does have disciplinary and inquiry powers under its Act, as does the Western Australian College of Teachers. The Victorian Institute of Teaching has a well-developed role in this area.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching has extensive responsibilities for investigating complaints made against its members. In 2003-04, the Institute received over 99 complaints against teachers' serious misconduct, serious incompetence or fitness to teach, most of which were lodged by the Department. The Institute has conducted a number of informal and formal hearings, applying sanctions and de-registration where applicable. The *Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001* spells out the role of the Institute in this regard. The Institute is currently in the process of developing a code of ethics and a code of conduct to support its disciplinary work [Victorian Institute of Teaching 2004].

### **2.3 Accrediting Courses**

Minimum standards for entry to the teaching profession have been demonstrated to have an impact on teacher effectiveness. These standards usually require the applicant to be trained in an accredited program, and in some jurisdictions, to pass a test. The US experience – documented by Linda Darling-Hammond [2000]– confirms that teachers who meet the minimum entry standards for registration are more effective [in terms of producing student learning outcomes] than teachers who do not meet the standard but are permitted to teach.

All the teacher registration authorities established by Australian State and Territory governments have responsibilities regarding the accreditation of pre-service courses. Course approval and accreditation is also the responsibility of the General Teaching Council for Scotland and the Ontario College of Teachers.

The extent to which authorities are prescriptive in their processes for approving or accrediting teacher education courses varies. The minimum formal requirement for course approval in Australia is that it must be a degree course of three or four years duration in a recognised higher education institution. Beyond specifying this minimum benchmark, authorities have different processes for approving or accrediting pre-service courses. Some authorities – such as the South Australian Teachers Registration Board – merely confer with institutions about pre-service teacher education courses to ensure that minimum standards are met. But the general trend is towards a more formal process of course accreditation and review. Every teaching authority in Australia has developed or is considering the development of formal accreditation processes for pre-service teacher education courses [James 2005].

The Queensland Teacher Registration Board has a clearly defined process for the accreditation of teacher education courses. The Board requires institutions to submit documentation that identifies how their course meets the Board's *Guidelines* about the desirable content of teacher education courses. The Board's *Guidelines* for courses identify desirable characteristics of teacher education courses in terms of the institution, the program design and professional experience components. After a

process of consultation with the Board's Professional Education Committee, the institution is granted "Phase One acceptance", which grants registration, on the condition that the course will be delivered as indicated in the institution's submission. When the first cohort of students is graduating from the Phase One Program, the course is reviewed by a Board-appointed Committee and if the review is favorable, "Phase Two acceptance" is granted for four years. Institutions must then submit annual updates to the Board and be subject to a Board review every four years [Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland 2005]\*.

The course accreditation model of "guidelines – submission – review" that has been adopted by the Queensland Teacher Registration Board appears quite common, with variations in its application around the world. In the UK, for example, the Teacher Training Authority [TTA] specifies criteria such as minimum time spent on the practicum and time spent on core subjects but does not specify the minimum length of time for a course. In Canada, the Ontario College of Teachers specifies 15 conditions that teacher education programs must meet to be accredited by the College [James 2005].

In many States of the USA, teacher entry tests are administered by employing authorities but opposition to these tests is growing. The entry-level test administered by the Ontario College of Teachers is now abolished. Instead, teachers with the appropriate qualifications are awarded provisional certification – which enables them to teach in Ontario schools – in the expectation that they will complete a "qualifying assessment" within a year, to obtain a full licence. Teacher tests in the USA have been widely criticised for their discriminatory effects, and for their unreliability. They have no proven impact on the quality of teaching. Recent research suggests that a teacher's verbal or intellectual aptitude correlates with better student achievement [Leigh and Mead 2005: 4], but there is no evidence teacher certification tests are the most effective way to measure such attributes.

One final – but important – issue to note is the tendency of some professional registration bodies to take the easy path of increasing the number of years of pre-service training required for membership of the profession. There is no research evidence to demonstrate that more than three-four years of pre-service training contributes to teacher quality. On the contrary, it is the quality of pre-service programs – particularly in the area of linking theory with practice – that appears to have most impact in terms of teacher preparation. The Queensland model, with its focus on actively monitoring course outcomes, appears the most promising in this regard.

The Queensland model of "guidelines – submission – review" is also useful in accrediting programs of continuing professional development. As professional registration bodies usually recommend that their members participate in continuing professional development, it is common for the professional registration bodies to approve or accredit courses for this purpose. In Australian teacher professional registration bodies, this role is relatively under-developed, though it is a common role for teacher professional registration bodies overseas.

The professional registration body's role should simply be to provide its stamp of approval on courses offered by providers in the continuing professional development field. Initially, this would involve defining what courses teachers needed [guidelines] and calling for submissions from providers. On the basis of paper-based submissions, the courses could be granted provisional accreditation, and providers could apply for full accreditation after a year [to be reviewed every few years]. In these reviews, the professional registration body should aim to evaluate the long-

term impact of the courses, rather than rely on instant post-course evaluations ["happy sheets"]. The professional registration bodies could also consider granting "preferred supplier" status to short course providers who demonstrate consistent quality in course delivery and outcomes.

### **3. Governance**

There is no single model of governance for professional registration bodies. In theory, professional registration bodies should be bodies elected by their membership, independent of government. Engineers Australia, for example, is a fully elected body, governed by a nine-member Council, whose members are elected by a broadly representative national congress which meets at least once a year to advise the Council and review the association's charter, by-laws, code of ethics and disciplinary procedures.

Professional registration bodies for teachers, in contrast, are being established by governments and their governing bodies are not entirely elected by the membership. The Queensland Board of Teacher Registration has 15 members, of which 3 are teachers elected by the membership, 3 government appointees and the rest appointees of stakeholders [including teacher unions]. At the extreme of this spectrum, the Teacher Registration Boards in the Northern Territory and South Australia are not elected bodies at all, but their members consist entirely of nominees of stakeholders [only a few of whom are teachers].

The most representative bodies are in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, each of which has a broadly representative Council, with a large membership – around half of which is elected and half appointed by the minister.

A problem faced by the bodies in New South Wales and Victoria [details on the governance of the Western Australian College of Teachers are scant] is the extent to which a Council of around 20 people can effectively govern the day-to-day operations of an organisation. In New South Wales, the Council's role is purely advisory, and a small governing Board of three Ministerial appointees [plus the CEO and Chair of the Council] manages the operations of the Institute. In Victoria, in contrast, the Council's role is to govern the institute and the executive comprises the CEO reporting to the Chair.

The advantage of the NSW model is that the Council does not have to deal with day-to-day operational issues and is not held accountable for the efficient and effective operation of the Institute, but can concentrate on professional issues. The disadvantage, of course, is that by being relegated to an advisory role, the only body with elected members [ie the Council] has limited powers of governance.

**Table 3: Governance of Professional Registration Bodies in NSW, Victoria & NT**

	Chair	Executive	Council
<b>NSW Institute of Teachers</b>			
Structures	Chair	Board of Governance	Quality Teaching Council.
Members	Govt.-appointed Chair of both Board and Council	5-members: Chair, CEO and three government appointees [no practicing teachers]	21-members: 10 elected teachers plus 10 govt.-appointed plus Chair. Govt.-appointed Members are a nominee of each of the following: NSWTF; NSW IEU; Board of Studies; Director-General; CEC NSW; AIS NSW; NSW Teacher Education Council; Parent representative as determined by Minister; two teacher reps as determined by Minister, one of whom is a member of the Professional Teachers' Council NSW. Limit of six years for all members' terms.
Role		Oversee operational management of Institute	Provide <i>advice</i> to Institute in relation to the Institute's functions under this Act.
<b>Victorian Institute for Teaching</b>			
Structures	Chair	No formal structure	Council of the Victorian Institute for Teaching
Members	Govt.-appointed Chair of Council	CEO/Chair	20 members: 8 elected teachers; 2 elected principals; 10 govt. appointees [inc. Chair]. Govt.-appointed members to represent the following: teachers [3]; principals [2]; parent [1]; employers [2]; teacher educator [1]; Secretary of Dept [or nominee]
Role		CEO responsible to the Chair for implementation of Council's decisions	Govern the Institute
<b>NT Teacher Registration Board</b>			
Structures	Chair	Board	No Council
Members	Elected by Board	12 members: nominees of: the CEO of DEET [2, 1 of whom is Indigenous; AEU NT [2, 1 of whom is based in a remote school]; NT IEU [1]; AIS NT [1]; CEO NT [1]; CDU [1]; Batchelor Institute [1]; NT Council of Government Schools Organisations [1]; NT Joint Council of Professional Teaching Associations [1 teacher]; the Association of NT School Education Leaders [1 teacher]	NA
Role		Operational Management	NA

#### 4. An ACT Model

As the last jurisdiction in Australia to establish a professional registration body for teachers, the ACT can draw on the experience of the existing associations in defining the responsibilities and governing structures of its registration body.

#### 4.1 Defining Professional Standards

To assist in providing a recognised career path for teachers, the ACT model should define professional standards across six grades – four of which have entry criteria involving peer assessment of teaching practice. The six grades could be applied [with small modifications] to different occupational categories, such as early childhood teacher, special education teacher, primary teacher, secondary teacher and school principals and deputy principals. We should also not rule out having an occupational category for teacher’s aides, or other people in support roles in classrooms.

**Table 4: Professional Standards & Grades of Membership in ACT Model**

Professional Teacher	
GRADE	CRITERIA FOR ENTRY
Leading Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be an Advanced Practitioner</li> <li>▪ Contributes significantly to the advancement of the profession</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates exceptional expertise in teaching and professional leadership</li> <li>▪ Nomination supported by many members of the professional registration body</li> <li>▪ Assessed as a Leading Practitioner by a panel of peers;</li> <li>▪ Evidence of compliance with Continuing Professional Development Requirements</li> <li>▪ Renewable every ten years subject to evidence of engagement in continuing professional development, and assessment by a panel of peers [Entry quota applies]</li> </ul>
Advanced Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be a Member</li> <li>▪ Are highly accomplished and successful practitioners and either:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has held sustained major responsibility in the design or execution of important work in the teaching profession; or</li> <li>○ has held a prominent position in the profession, and has made a major contribution to the practice of teaching; or</li> <li>○ has achieved exceptional eminence in the profession</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Assessed as an advanced practitioner by panel of peers</li> <li>▪ Renewable every ten years subject to evidence of engagement in continuing professional development, and assessment by a panel of peers</li> <li>▪ [Entry quota applies]</li> </ul>
Accomplished Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be a Member</li> <li>▪ Recognised as having a strong mastery of teaching practice and an established record of effective teaching</li> <li>▪ Assessed as an accomplished teacher by a panel of peers</li> <li>▪ Renewable every eight years subject to evidence of engagement in continuing professional development, and assessment by a panel of peers</li> </ul>
Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eligible to be Graduate</li> <li>▪ Minimum of three years acceptable teaching experience</li> <li>▪ Assessed as a competent teacher by panel of peers</li> <li>▪ Renewable every five years subject to evidence of engagement in continuing professional development, and assessment by a panel of peers</li> </ul>
Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completion of a recognised teaching qualification and satisfactory criminal record check</li> </ul>
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enrolled in an recognised professional teaching educational program in Australia</li> </ul>

The key features of the model outlined in Table 4, are:

- the provision of a clear professional career path through four grades of membership after graduating as a teacher;

- rigorous entry criteria for the four grades of membership beyond graduate level, involving regular assessment of practice by peers;
- quotas for entry to the upper two grades of membership;
- limited term membership of the upper four grades, subject to a review by a panel of peers [this is particularly important in grades where quotas are applied, to ensure that places come up for new applicants].

Having different grades of membership is critical to enhance the status of the profession and to provide clear career paths for membership. The criteria for each grade should be based on a professional standards framework developed by the registration body, along the lines of the *NSW Professional Teaching Standards Framework*.

#### **4.2 Enforcing Standards of Professional Conduct [Complaints Procedures]**

A self-regulating professional registration body must have the procedures to examine complaints against its members and the power to act on those complaints [apply sanctions and de-register members if complaints are upheld]. These powers should be identified in the enabling legislation for the ACT Model, as in the *Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001* and the *Ontario College of Teachers Act [subsection 30[2]]*.

The ACT model should have the powers and procedures to investigate complaints against members and to act on them. It should develop a code of ethics and a code of conduct to support its disciplinary work

#### **4.3 Accrediting Courses**

The ACT model should accredit teacher education courses at both the pre-service level and in-service courses for continuing professional development.

At both levels, the course accreditation model of “guidelines – submission – review” that has been adopted by the Queensland Teacher Registration Board is a good example to follow. Under this model, the professional registration body defines *Guidelines* that identify desirable characteristics of teacher education courses in terms of the institution, the program design and professional experience components. The Association requires institutions to submit documentation that identifies how their course meets the *Guidelines*. After a process of consultation with the association’s Professional Education Committee, the Board may grant the institution “Phase One acceptance”, on the condition that the course will be delivered as indicated in the institution’s submission. When the first cohort of students is graduating from the Phase One Program, the course is reviewed by a Board-appointed Committee and if the review is favorable, “Phase Two acceptance” is granted for four years. Institutions must then submit annual updates to the Board and be subject to a Board review every four years.

For continuing professional development, the process may vary, to grant “preferred supplier” status to institutions delivering a range of short courses. The professional registration body should also develop a long term strategy for professional development and growth and seek to place its accreditation activities within this framework.

#### **4.4 Governance**

As the ACT is a small jurisdiction, it can avoid some of the governance issues faced by larger states such as Victoria and New South Wales – primarily the problem of too large a Board. Although a self-regulating professional registration body should be elected entirely by its members, this seems unlikely to occur in the teaching

profession. By the same token, there is little point in having a professional registration body comprised entirely of the representatives of stakeholders and interest groups [eg NT]. The goal should be a Board that is actively interested in professional issues, while generally representative of the profession as a whole.

In the ACT model, the Governing Board should have 15 members, 12 of whom are elected by members of the registration body. Of these 12 elected members, there should be a minimum of two members from each of the four top membership categories [ie 2 leading practitioners, 2 advanced practitioners, 2 accomplished teachers, and 2 ordinary members]. In other words, 8 positions are reserved for representatives of members in each category.

The remaining four elected positions should be an open ballot, but the following post-ballot criteria should be applied to ensure that the entire Board is representative of the profession as a whole:

- at least 50 per cent of Board members should be female;
- at least 50 per cent of Board members should be employed in government schools
- at least 1 Board member should be employed in the non-government sector.

The remaining 3 positions on the Board should be Ministerial appointees.

The Chair should be elected by the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer should report to the Governing Board.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This model aims to promote a fully self-regulating role for the professional registration body of teachers in the ACT, with comprehensive involvement in the areas of teacher education, teacher's career development and the handling of complaints against teachers. Performing all these roles should assist the professional registration body in enhancing the status of the teaching profession, while ensuring that responsibility for issues such as career progression and disciplinary actions remains in the hands of members of the profession.

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