

ACCREDITATION TO TEACH RELIGION IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Scope: This policy applies to all teachers employed in Catholic schools and colleges conducted by Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton (referred to as Catholic Education in the document).

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Every teacher in a Catholic School must be a registered teacher with the Queensland College of Teachers.

To teach Religion in a Catholic School, every continuing teacher or teacher employed on a contract must have accreditation to teach in a Catholic School and accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Rockhampton.

For a teacher who is not a Catholic to teach Religion in the Diocese of Rockhampton, they require the approval of the Bishop (or his nominee).

2. DESCRIPTION

Teachers of Religion need to be competent, informed and articulate. Formal study, reflective teaching experience and ongoing professional development assist teachers to develop their expertise. This policy reflects the Queensland Catholic Education Commission's 2015 Position Statement *Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school*.

As the witness of teachers is so important, their involvement in a parish or faith community is encouraged as it demonstrates their understanding of the Catholic school as part of the Church's mission and their role as members of staff.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

1. All teachers have access to information about accreditation procedures in the Diocese of Rockhampton.
2. Teachers who have completed four units of study in the areas of Religious Education, Theology or Spirituality are awarded Accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic school (ATRICS).



3. Teachers who complete the Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology (also known as “Foundations”) developed by the Institute of Faith Education gain Accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Rockhampton.
4. If a continuing teacher has not completed the relevant study in the areas of Religious Education or Theology, they are granted provisional accreditation for five years. In that time period they have to complete the necessary study requirements.
5. Sponsorship is available to assist teachers to complete the necessary study to gain full accreditation to teach Religion or to extend their knowledge. Such sponsorship is dependent on available funds.
6. Teachers on contract are given the appropriate accreditation for the whole of that calendar year regardless of the starting date of their contract.
7. Certificates are issued to teachers with details of their accreditation status.
8. Teachers must complete five hours of professional development each year to maintain their accreditation to teach Religion in a Catholic school.
9. Assistant Principals of Religious Education/Mission apply to the Assistant Director: Mission to have their professional development plans registered. They also apply to the Bishop through the Director of Catholic Education for approval of visiting speakers from outside the Diocese of Rockhampton. Only the Bishop has the authority to approve the visits of such speakers.
10. Teachers on leave are exempt from these professional development requirements for the period of time that they are on leave.
11. Records are maintained at the Catholic Education Office on the accreditation status of all teachers. These records are updated annually.

4. REFLECTION MATERIAL

RESOURCES

- Congregation for Catholic Education (1988) *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* § 96-97
- Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1977) *The Catholic School* § 9, 34-36, 73
- Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1982) *Lay Catholics in Schools* § 59
- Queensland Catholic Education Commission (2015) *Position Statement Accreditation to teach religion in a Catholic school*
- CEO Circular 2016/037 - *Procedures for the Approval of Visiting Speakers*