NESA Endorsed provider of professional development courses for NSW school teachers

ADVICE FOR COURSE DEVELOPERS

Background

From 2018, all NSW schoolteachers must undertake professional development activities to maintain their registration and accreditation required for employment as a teacher in all NSW schools.

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) manages the registration and accreditation of all NSW early childhood, primary and secondary school teachers, executives and principals. On 1 January 2017, NESA replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES).

Teachers maintain their accreditation partly by doing professional development courses registered with NESA. These courses must implement standard descriptors set out in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).

NESA accredits teachers at one of four career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished or Lead. Most teachers are either working towards or deemed to be at the Proficient career stage. Relatively few teachers are accredited at Highly Accomplished or Lead career stages.

Teachers at Proficient career stage may apply for accreditation at Highly Accomplished or Lead career stages by working through a stringent assessment process over an extended period of time. Teachers can use their successful achievement of the objectives of relevant, registered professional development courses as part of their evidence to support their applications and to maintain accreditation.

The APST sets out three domains of teaching and seven standards across the four career stages. Thirty-seven standard descriptors for each career stage are grouped under the standards.

Macquarie University is a NESA endorsed provider

NESA has approved Macquarie University as an endorsed provider of NESA registered professional development courses for early childhood educators, schoolteachers (primary and secondary), school leaders and principals at Proficient career stage and Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) career stage.

Within the Department of Educational Studies, the University has established the Academy of Continuing Professional Development in Education (ACPDE). The Academy is responsible for the implementation of the University’s quality assurance and administrative processes to approve and register courses on the NESA website.
The demand for courses at all career stages is expected to increase significantly over the next few years. During 2018, the University intends to apply for NESA endorsement as an endorsed provider of professional development courses at Lead career stage.
NESA requirements for course descriptions

Courses must reflect quality design and delivery.

As an endorsed provider of NESA registered professional development, Macquarie University must demonstrate that its courses achieve one or more of the standard descriptors for the specified career stage.

A course must explicitly address the nominated standard descriptors and meet the needs of teachers at the specified career stage.

NESA uses the term ‘course’ as a generic term for a professional development activity of any length and any number of Parts. A ‘session’ is a discrete presentation of the whole course.

Macquarie University course description form

Macquarie University has developed an application form for developers who are seeking approval for NESA registered professional development courses.

The form guides the developer through the information that will allow the University to meet NESA requirements for registered courses. These notes expand on the level of detail necessary to contribute to quality assurance and the continuous improvement of registered courses offered by Macquarie University. NESA requires that virtually all of this information is recorded on the NESA eTAMS website for teachers to read. The following item numbers match those in the application form.

Developers’ details

Item

1-5 Items 1-5 of the form collect information about the developers of the course so that they may be contacted about their proposal. Macquarie University’s Privacy Policy applies. The University does not provide these details to NESA.

Developers must submit a brief expression of interest (EOI) to their Head of Department (HoD) prior to developing a course.

This is to ensure that the HoD, or nominee, has approved the course proposal for further development and to proceed to assessment by the Quality Assurance Panel. This is a basic step in quality assurance.

Course identification and targeted participants

6 The title of the course needs to be explicit. Please be clear if the course is specific to a particular type of teacher, subject, syllabus, Stage or school Year. Macquarie University registers approved courses on the NESA website. Teachers who are potential participants should be able to tell if the course will be relevant to them.

7. The course may address only one career stage. That is, one of the Proficient or Highly Accomplished Teacher career stages. Developers should analyse the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to identify the appropriate career stage from the standard descriptors that the course will achieve.

8 Macquarie University allocates a course code when registering the course.
9. The number of participants and estimated fees assist in assessing the viability of the course and in advertising the course.

Developers may propose a cost per participant (fee) or follow the advice of the Academy of Continuing Professional Development in Education. Costing of fees should reflect development and delivery time, career stage and market competition. Macquarie may offer bulk discounts to groups of teachers.

10. To support teachers maintaining their accreditation, the duration of the course should reflect half or full hour timeframes only. Whole hour units are preferable.

11. Developers must specify which standard descriptors the course will achieve. It is unlikely that any one course would enable teachers to achieve more than a small proportion of the 37 standard descriptors at the specified career stage.

Developers may nominate standard descriptors from only one career stage. The course content must align explicitly with and be mapped to the nominated standard descriptors.

12. Developers should take care to pitch the course at the types of teachers most likely to benefit.

While some courses may suit all settings from early childhood to primary to secondary schools, most will need to specify the Stages that the course addresses.

This may be determined from the content and mode of delivery of the course. NSW teachers and students work in Stages as well as in school Years. NESA syllabuses reflect this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary school:</th>
<th>Early Stage 1 = Kindergarten</th>
<th>Stage 2 = Years 3 &amp; 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 1 = Years 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Stage 3 = Years 5 &amp; 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary school:</th>
<th>Stage 4 = Years 7 &amp; 8</th>
<th>Stage 6 = Year 11 (preliminary) &amp; Year 12 (HSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 5 = Years 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td></td>
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**Course background**

13. NESA registered professional development courses must target teachers’ work and be mapped to the school’s curriculum.

If the course is for a key learning area or subject teachers, the current NESA syllabus at the appropriate Stage must be listed.

Note: schools are implementing a number of new K-10 and HSC syllabuses and developers should keep up-to-date with the most recent syllabus.

14. In 2018, NESA added drop-down menus to its website for developers to indicate the relevance to a range of priorities for the teachers’ work and desirable capabilities. These lists are reproduced as an attachment to
Macquarie University’s application form. At least two of the priorities must be indicated for the course.

15. The brief description of the course is for publication to potential participants. It will be published on NESA and Macquarie University websites and in promotional literature.

Teachers may search online for key words, so the description should include key terms. The summary should be an overview that refers to the target group, content, main concepts, research base and any relevant contextual information.

16. Developers should show the research basis for the course as an indication of how the course developer identified the need for and type of the course.

17. Teachers expect that high quality research underpins Macquarie University’s NESA registered professional development courses and activities.

In order to ensure that courses are of highest quality, based on the most recent research and observations in the field, course developers must include references to high quality articles and books that have been published in the last five years. Where developers reference less contemporary research, the seminal nature of the work should be explained.

The research must:

(i) be up-to-date, reliable and relevant

(ii) have a logical, effective and explicit relationship between the research and one or more specific areas of educational practice, theory or policy

(iii) be clear and accessible for teachers

(iv) shape and inform your approach to professional development for teachers.

Developers should annotate lists of references with the relevance of the research to the course.

18. Mode of delivery means how the course will be presented: face-to-face, online, or blended (both online and face-to-face parts or including in-school activities). Showing the hours for each mode could be useful and should add to the total hours claimed in Question 10.

19. Developers should provide a summary of the strategies the facilitators will use to deliver the content. Some of the strategies could include PowerPoints, video, pod-casts, lectures, e-portfolios, reflection exercises, discussions, collegial feedback, quizzes, in-school modelling and so on.

20. The rationale should provide an explanation for the:

- orientation to a specific educational context
- targeted concepts of quality practice and expertise in education, education leadership, teaching and learning
- main ideas, research principles or theory being applied
• motivation, objectives or value for this course to be offered as professional learning for teachers.

21 Formal recognition or credit towards academic qualifications will not necessarily be available for registered professional development course participants. Any recognition of this type would need to be negotiated in an appropriate manner outside the application process described here.

22. Course developers have a wide range of formal and informal assessment strategies available to them. It may be useful for developers to think in terms of deliverables rather than overly formal assessments. The strategies selected should focus on the standard descriptors nominated for the course.

The purpose is for developers and facilitators to be assured that the participants have adequately achieved the outcomes and successfully undertaken the key tasks related to the descriptors.

Facilitator, external assessor and or peer verification may be appropriate.

23. Developers should state the number of participants that could attend a course. This could affect acceptances at enrolment in the course.

24. Some courses may be so specialised that the developer may wish to specify prerequisites. For most course, however, the response to this question will be NIL.

25. Evaluation of the course itself is an essential component of quality assurance and continuous improvement. A key question should be, how well did the teachers’ professional learning resulting from the course change (or affirm) their professional practice and improve the learning outcomes of their school students?

Teachers who register with NESA and claim the hours for accreditation purposes are required to complete a similar online evaluation of the course for NESA. Those teachers employed by NSW Department of Education are required to manage and keep track of all professional learning, accreditation and performance activities via their MyPL portal.

The evaluations will be collated and reported to the Faculty of Human Sciences Faculty Standards and Quality Committee.

Course developers may substitute their own evaluation instruments. This seems particularly likely if Macquarie University academics are delivering the course on behalf of an external organisation.

26. A course website is an optional inclusion. A website URL could be shown in the brief summary with a note to potential participants to consult the website for further information.

Detailed description of the course

27. In the learning outcomes or objectives, describe what teachers will learn, gain, develop or be more capable of doing as a result of participating in the course. Reference to student learning is useful. The objectives must be linked to the
nominated standard descriptors from the APST. Objectives must be specific to the course and not simply a restatement of the more general descriptors.

Be specific about the small number of descriptors that most strongly align with the course content. There must be sufficient time in the course for the teachers to do what each descriptor says and for the facilitator to verify it.

The outcomes (objectives) and the associated descriptors must be carried through into and be consistent with the course content, delivery strategies and activities described in items 28, 29 and 30.

28-30 These items outline the content, delivery strategies and learning experiences and must reflect high quality professional development.

A breakdown showing each part of a course must be provided, including the delivery mode. The parts, indicative times and standard descriptors must be consistent across items 28, 29 and 30.

The timing, resources and activities identified as part of the course need to be sufficient for professional learning to occur and to achieve the course outcome as described by the identified standard descriptors.

Items 28-30 must demonstrate a clear relationship between the course content, delivery strategies, learning activities that the teachers will engage in and the nominated standard descriptors.

28 Item 28 includes the objectives for each Part of a course, outlines the key ideas, materials, structure and focus of the content including the relevant resources and research. It indicates how the content and objectives are developed and linked over subsequent Parts.

29 Item 29 outlines how the facilitator(s) will address the standard descriptors for each part of a course through the delivery of content, use of research and professional development activities.

It should demonstrate a sensible use of the allocated time in achieving the stated learning objectives of the course. The item outlines the materials and research to be used. It explains why and how teacher professional engagement and development is to be facilitated.

30 Item 30 outlines for each part of the course a clear learning focus for NSW teachers that reflects the stated career stage and nominated standard descriptors. It will show:

- the steps or activities that teachers will engage with in order to demonstrate alignment with the practices described in the standard descriptors
- how teachers will make sense of the content and use it meaningfully
- how teachers will use the research or experiences of expert practitioners and colleagues in their professional learning
- how teachers will apply their professional learning to relevant areas of their professional practice and consider changes or shifts or adaptions to improve instruction, organisation and or student learning engagement in their own contexts.
Developers should record any further learning opportunities that support teachers in their professional endeavours.

This might include:

- take-away resources and materials
- access to online resources and materials
- links to an appropriate and informative website
- additional learning opportunities
- additional courses or projects
- professional associations or network groups they could join.

Professional learning is enhanced when the participant receives feedback on their performance. This feedback should be focused on the relevant standard descriptors and the extent to which the teacher achieved the course objectives.

The start and end dates for the course are required. Each session (separate delivery of the whole course) should be shown on a new line. If dates are not known, please make a best guess – NESA requires date to register a course.

Venue(s) should be should as addresses if possible. Otherwise, the default will be Macquarie University.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

1. A Quality Assurance Panel in the Faculty of Human Sciences assesses all applications for Macquarie University to approve and register a professional development course with NESA.

2. Further information on the application and registration process is available from cpd-teachers@mq.edu.au.

These notes draw heavily on the *BOSTES Manual for applying to become an endorsed provider of QTC registered professional development* that was current for 2016 and the requirements for registered courses as reflected in the NESA website of February 2018. The notes are intended as internal advice and are not endorsed by NESA.

These notes accompany and are intended to assist course developers completing the Macquarie University’s application form for NESA registered PD course developers. The item numbers in this advice match those in the form.