



Staff Accreditation for Marist Schools

POLICY, PRINCIPLES and PROCEDURES

Policy

- All members of staff in Marist schools have sufficient knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the primary mission of evangelisation of a Marist school and a readiness and a competence to share in it in ways that are appropriate to their roles in the school.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that realisable strategies are in place for this to occur.

Principles

1. The Marist school, as a ministry of the Church and a community within it, shares in God's mission of love. It exists to make Jesus Christ known and loved through Christian education of young people, especially those most in need.
2. Each member of staff is called take some responsibility for realising the fundamental purpose of the school, which Marists understand to be a sharing in the eternal work of Mary: to bring Christ-life to birth in young people, to nurture its growth in them, and to bring them into a sense of belonging within the Christian community.
3. Each member of staff brings the fruits of his or her own spiritual journey, to which the school offers pathways for further enrichment, formation, and education.
4. The effectiveness of evangelisation in the school will come first from the witness of evangelical living by all staff. This will be augmented by the effectiveness of Christian education, and the quality of Christian leadership. Teachers and school leaders require a certain minimum level spiritual formation and theological education to fulfil their specific responsibilities.
5. The Marist school is coalesced around a distinctive Marist spirituality and a sense of family which are understood as to be, respectively, a particular school of Christian spirituality and a characteristic way of forming Christian community that are both well suited to the milieu of Catholic education. It is necessary for the leaders of the school to live out this way of Christian discipleship in their own lives, to be able to articulate it and to induct others into it.
6. Teachers of religious education and those who exercise leadership in a Marist school share in the teaching and pastoral ministry of the Catholic Church in whose name the Institute of the Marist Brothers has the right and the responsibility to act.

Context

1. All dioceses in Australia have guidelines for minimum requirements for spiritual formation and theological education for staff of Catholic schools. Wherever possible, Marist schools meet these requirements and participate in opportunities provided by dioceses for meeting them. In many cases, the programmes and opportunities offered by the Province will satisfy these requirements of

the local diocese. As much as possible, agreements are put in place to formalise this understanding.

2. Where the minimum standards of this policy exceed those of the local diocese, members of staff in Marist schools are required to satisfy these additional requirements.
3. Spiritual formation and theological education form part of the broader experience of continuing professional learning that is expected of all staff, according to the roles they have in the school.

Procedures

1. Appointment and Induction

- 1.1 The Principal ensures that as a condition of employment, each prospective member of staff is aware of the content of this policy and has committed to it. This is usually achieved through their signing an agreement with the essentials of the policy included in it or, in the case of senior leaders, the inclusion of the relevant provisions of this policy in the formal employment agreement.
- 1.2 Before appointment, the Principal (and where relevant the Regional Director) ensures that the prospective member of staff has the relevant theological and professional credentials for the position.
- 1.3 During the first half-year of appointment, each staff member receives adequate induction from the local school as to how it goes about its evangelising and educating mission, and the ways in which the staff member is expected to support this.
- 1.4 In addition, and wherever possible, each new staff member attends a Marist induction programme offered by the Province.
- 1.5 Where a person is appointed to a senior leadership role in the school, and the person does not have a professional background in Catholic education or the Marist community, then an orientation programme is developed. This may require enrolment in theological studies, participation in designated Marist spiritual formation, an individualised reading programme, and/or spiritual accompaniment.

2. Accreditation *(See Appendix A)*

- 2.1 There are five categories of accreditation that are applicable to staff in Marist-governed schools:
 - a. **Accreditation to work in a Marist school** (applicable to all staff)
 - b. **Accreditation to teach in a Marist school** (applicable to all teaching staff)
 - c. **Accreditation for Leadership in a Marist school** (applicable to staff who have a position of middle-management)
 - d. **Accreditation to teach Religious Education in a Marist school** (applicable to teachers of Religious Education)
 - e. **Accreditation for Senior Leadership of a Marist school** (applicable to Principals, Deputy Principals [howsoever named], and Directors of Mission [howsoever named]).
- 2.2 These categories parallel similar categories for accreditation in other Catholic schools in most Australian dioceses. For the most part, the requirements for attaining accreditation are met by the same or equivalent processes that operate in those dioceses. Marist Schools Australia recognises the accreditation processes that operate in all Australian dioceses in which Marist schools are located.

- 2.3 Upon appointment, each member of staff receives a document that certifies the appropriate level of accreditation.¹
- 2.4 Where additional formation or education is necessary, then **Provisional Accreditation** may be offered by the Principal, and a written agreement is signed detailing the requirements to be met and a time-frame for meeting them.² In the case of a Principal's or Deputy Principal's being short of requirement, then provisional accreditation and any attendant agreement is made by the Regional Director. Provisional accreditation may be granted for up to four years.
- 2.5 It is a condition of employment for each member of staff that he or she meets and continues to meet the requirements for the relevant category.
- 2.6 It is a responsibility of the school to ensure that adequate support and opportunity are afforded each member of staff for him or her to meet the minimum standards for accreditation.
- 2.7 The school is to have formal mechanisms for credentialing, recording, and updating the accreditation of all staff. Where possible, these mechanisms should use or cooperate with relevant diocesan arrangements.

3. Ongoing learning and enrichment

- 3.1 Primarily it is the responsibility of each member of staff to attend to the ongoing requirements for his or her relevant category of accreditation, and for keeping his or her own records that are relevant to this.
- 3.2 As necessary, Principals offer and allow staff the time and opportunity to meet their relevant obligations under this policy.
- 3.3 Principals have a responsibility for inviting and supporting staff to participate in courses and programmes in Marist spirituality and Marist educational practice. As well as the benefits that accrue to individuals from such opportunities, the Principal shall have a strategic plan for building Marist capacity in the school.

¹ This certification is given either by the school or by the local diocese, depending on the arrangements in place for each school.

² Where a Marist school has agreed to follow the specific requirements of its local diocese, then accreditation may be granted by a designated person in the relevant diocesan office.

APPENDIX A

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH CATEGORY OF ACCREDITATION

Category	Minimum initial standard	Currency
A	<p>Participation in scheduled orientation programme(s), usually of 4-6 hours in total, which includes these topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mission of the Catholic school ▪ Fundamentals of Catholic teaching and practice ▪ What it means to work in a Catholic school ▪ Introduction to Marist spirituality and Marist education ▪ The vision, priorities, and practices of the School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of 15 hours over each period of 5 years, through programmes and events offered or organised by the School. ▪ It is expected that each school would offer one CPL opportunity each year on these topics for all staff.
B	<p>In addition to A, teachers will be professionally qualified to teach their allocated subjects. Their orientation shall additionally include with the first twelve months (if not already done in previous employment or study):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The place of Scripture and Sacraments in Catholic life ▪ The parochial and diocesan structures of the Church, and the role of agencies such as diocesan education offices ▪ The structure and spread of the Marist Brothers' Institute and the Australian Marist Community ▪ Pastoral care in the Catholic school ▪ Basic Catholic social teaching ▪ Basic Catholic moral teaching ▪ Further study in Marist spirituality and Marist educational practice, and the contribution of the spiritual families of the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of 30 hours of formation over each period of 5 years. Typically this requirement would be met by attendance at staff faith formation days and ongoing reading provided by the School. ▪ A full day of faith formation (or equivalent opportunity) would normally be offered by each school each year.
C	<p>In addition to B, middle managers require at least 4 units of post-graduate study in theology, religious education, and/or Catholic school leadership.</p> <p>Where this qualification is not held, middle managers shall enrol in a graduate certificate or masters programme including such study. Alternatively, they may complete within two years of appointment the equivalent of four days (24 hours) of approved study and/or approved (and examined reading) in Christian spirituality, education and/or leadership. Topics suitable for such study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theology ▪ Christian spirituality ▪ Missiology and the Catholic Church ▪ Scripture ▪ Faith formation of staff ▪ Liturgy ▪ Catholic life and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of 45 hours over each period of 5 years. This would typically involve the requirements as described for Category B (30 hours) plus at least 15 hours of personalised formation in the approved areas. ▪ Often the latter 15 hours would be met by attendance at a programme offered by the Marist Province or by the Diocesan office.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Catholic social teaching ▪ Religious education ▪ Catholic values across the curriculum ▪ Culture of Catholic schools ▪ Marist spirituality ▪ Marist education 	
D	<p>Teachers of religious education are qualified Catholic³ teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Church's purposes in Catholic education. In order to be accredited as a teacher of religious education, teachers must have completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undergraduate studies which include a minimum of SIX approved units in religious education/theology <i>OR</i> • a minimum of four approved postgraduate units of study in religious education/theology <i>OR</i> • the completion of diocesan or Marist approved qualification in religious education/theology from an endorsed provider. <p>Upon individual application, teachers may also be accredited to teach religious education if they have previously been accredited to teach religious education in another State or Territory of Australia, provided their previous accreditation was based on similar criteria to those above.</p>	As for Category C
E	<p>Senior leaders in Marist schools meet the criteria for Categories C and D. Additionally, they have a master's degree which includes at least four units of theology, or are enrolled in such a degree.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of seventy-five hours of formation over each period of five years. ▪ Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff faith formation days (30 hours), relevant CPL, relevant conferences, and/or formal tertiary studies in theology (45 hours).

³ It is generally expected that all teachers of Religious Education are Catholic and will display a demonstrable commitment to the teachings of the Catholic Church in the area of faith and morals along with active participation in a Catholic Eucharistic community. In special circumstances, teachers from other Christian denominations, notably the Orthodox tradition, may be granted provisional accreditation to Teach Religious Education. For Marist Diocesan schools such approval must be sought through their Catholic Education Office. For Marist owned schools such approval must be sought through the National Director of Marist Schools Australia.