

Supporting the induction of new teachers

Guidelines for schools

State of NSW, Department of Education and Training, Professional Learning Directorate, 2004

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1. Introduction

These guidelines are designed to support the school-based induction of teachers commencing their employment with the NSW Department of Education and Training. They should be read in conjunction with the *Professional learning policy for schools* (2004) and other support documents relating to new teachers.

2. Background

During the first years of a career in teaching, induction plays a critical role in supporting the development of a capable and confident professional. Effective induction increases the quality of teaching practice in schools, reduces the number of early-career teachers leaving the service and builds commitment to professional learning, teaching and public education.

All members of the NSW Teaching Service have a professional obligation to support new teachers as they begin their teaching careers by sharing their experience and expertise with the new teacher. All teachers benefit from collegial, collaborative and constructive programs of induction that develop personal, professional and practical knowledge.

A flexible induction program responds to the personal qualities of new teachers and builds their knowledge, experiences, enthusiasm and aspirations. School leaders and experienced teachers recognise the value of integrating school-based induction into the professional learning component of the school plan, whilst maintaining a clear focus on the new teacher's needs.

3. Eligibility for induction

Induction is a structured learning program that supports the professional growth of new teachers from the level of competence attained at the completion of a teacher education program to that required for ongoing employment as a teacher in NSW Government schools.

Induction programs are provided to all probationary teachers entering permanent full-time or permanent part-time employment as:

- recent graduates of teacher education programs
- teachers appointed through the Permanent Employment Program
- teachers who are entering the profession having undertaken Accelerated Teacher Training or Retraining programs
- former teachers returning to permanent employment after a period of separation from the Department
- experienced temporary or casual teachers taking up their first permanent appointment
- experienced teachers entering employment in the NSW DET from interstate or overseas or from non-government schools in NSW.

A probationary teacher is a teacher who is appointed to a school under Section 48 of the *Teaching Services Act* (1980). The requirements for assessment of a probationary teacher are found in *The Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers*, (July 2001). Following a satisfactory *Principal's Report on Teacher*, probationary teachers are awarded a *NSW Teacher's Certificate* and are eligible for permanent employment in the Department.

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Following school-based induction, a probationary teacher experiencing difficulties with their teaching performance must be provided with a negotiated improvement program as detailed in *Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers who are Experiencing Difficulties with their Teaching Performance*, (July 2001).

Induction is also provided to all casual and temporary teachers employed under the principal's discretion. These teachers are eligible to seek assessment for the award of a *NSW Teacher's Certificate* if they meet the requirements for eligibility described in the *Teachers Handbook*. This does not guarantee them permanent employment with the Department.

Additionally, aspects of induction such as orientation to the school and collegial networks can provide valuable support for all teachers who are newly appointed to a school.

4. Induction processes in NSW government schools

Induction includes orientation to the NSW Department of Education and Training and to the school, as well as a school-based induction program involving structured supervision, collegial support, mentoring and professional networking.

Orientation to the Department, as the employing authority, is provided by the Department prior to or at the time of employment and is designed to provide new teachers with information on:

- the values, ethics, priorities and structures of public education
- the legal requirements with which they must comply
- the professional expectations of their role
- professional support and career opportunities that are available
- personal support and personnel services for employees.

Orientation to the school starts with a personal welcome and introduction to the school community. It is a structured process through which the new teacher learns how the school operates and develops knowledge and understandings about the:

- nature and overall learning needs of the students
- expectations and aspirations of the school community
- roles and responsibilities of the principal and other school staff
- roles and responsibilities of the new teacher
- *Code of Conduct for NSW Department employees*
- availability of local professional support
- nature of the induction program proposed by the school
- roles and responsibilities associated with the induction program.

Orientation to the school is also important for all teachers who through transfer or promotion are newly appointed to the school.

School-based induction includes structured, collegial programs of professional learning and support centred on the new teacher's needs. It should be responsive, flexible and balance teaching experience with the demands and complexities of teaching and responsibilities within the school.

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A supportive, structured supervision program includes:

- opportunities to apply and refine knowledge and skills developed through teacher education programs
- processes to identify the individual's professional learning needs
- cooperative planning and team teaching supported by classroom observations of and by the new teacher
- structured feedback and assessment processes that include constructive comments on lessons and suggestions for further action and refinement of teaching practice
- professional discussion about legal requirements, professional expectations and the responsibilities and obligations described in departmental policies
- opportunities to play an active role in the school and within its community.

A supportive and structured supervision program is complemented by careful consideration of class allocations and school responsibilities. New teachers will also be assisted in their development by working within positive collegial teams.

5. Features of quality induction processes

School culture, climate and leadership are crucial to the success of induction programs. A learning community that values professional growth and uses teamwork to improve the quality of everyone's teaching creates a positive and supportive learning environment for the new teacher. The new teacher benefits considerably when school leaders take an active role in induction by organising school practices to support the new teacher, encouraging mentoring relationships and assisting them to define the values, ethics and practice of the profession.

As a key factor collegial support:

- focuses on quality teaching, teacher professionalism and ethical practice
- establishes strong, positive and professional relationships for sharing knowledge, understandings and skills between new teachers and their colleagues
- builds a foundation for further professional learning by developing capacity to self-evaluate and critically reflect on practice
- links new teachers, mentors and supervisors with networks external to the school, including tertiary institutions and professional associations.

Mentoring and professional networks, available both within and external to the school, make important contributions to the induction experience. Access to networks and support from within the profession provide opportunities to share and learn through the strengths, experiences and talents of colleagues. New teachers also benefit from encouragement and support for career planning from experienced teachers. Mentoring relationships that promote collaborative inquiry, cooperative practice and critical reflection enhance the foundation of the new teacher's professionalism.

6. Responsibilities

The principal, staff and the new teacher share responsibility for the effectiveness and success of the school-based induction program. Depending on the size of the school, support for new teachers may be shared between the principal and other staff members.

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It is the principal's responsibility to:

- ensure the provision of an individual, comprehensive, appropriately funded, supportive and supervised induction program for each teacher
- actively participate in the induction program whilst encouraging others to be involved
- ensure induction is designed in consultation with the new teacher to meet their needs
- include induction programs as part of the professional learning component of the school plan
- evaluate the impact of induction on the new teacher.

Depending on the size and resources of the school, the following responsibilities may be shared amongst coordinators, supervisors and mentors.

- Implement a relevant, structured and supportive supervised program.
- Share professional knowledge, understanding and skills with the new teacher.
- Encourage mentoring relationships for the new teacher.
- Keep the principal informed on the new teacher's progress.

It is the responsibility of the new teacher to:

- engage in school-based induction programs developed in consultation with designated staff supervisors, mentors or co-ordinators
- prepare for the award of a *NSW Teacher's Certificate*.

It is the responsibility of all other school staff to support the induction and professional growth of the new teacher.

7. Support for school-based induction programs

Regions:

- provide support, through such things as the provision of resources and networks, to meet the needs of new teachers
- identify and promote exemplary practice that supports new teachers
- monitor, when necessary, the implementation of *Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers* and *Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers who are Experiencing Difficulties*.

State Office:

- develops and coordinates resources to support school-based induction programs
- builds relationships with universities to facilitate transition from teacher education programs to employment with the Department
- analyses and reports on statewide trends in and impact of, school-based induction
- coordinates the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Department's induction program for new teachers.

8. Reporting

Schools report on new teacher induction programs and expenditure through the annual reporting and planning process in accordance with financial reporting and audit requirements.

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State office works with regions to analyse and report on:

- trends in certification and retention of new teachers during the first five years of service
- findings, conclusions and recommendations of induction programs
- expenditure for supporting new teacher induction.

9. For further information

Policy

- *Professional learning policy for schools*, 2004
- *Teachers Handbook*, updated November 2003
http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/employment/awardcon/handbook_ch1.doc

Section 1 Assessment of Teachers:

- 1.2.2.2 Teachers on Probation and Temporary Teachers in their First Year of Service
- Reports by Principals on Teachers on Probation and Temporary Teachers in their First Year of Service
- 1.3.3 Award of Teacher's Certificate.

http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/employment/awardcon/handbook_ch9.doc

Section 9 Casual Teachers:

- 9.2.1 Eligibility
- 9.2.2 Procedures for Award of Teacher's Certificate.

Procedures

- *Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers*, July 2001
http://www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/beginningteachers/files/Num_probteach.pdf
- *Procedures for Managing Probationary Teachers who are Experiencing Difficulties with their Teaching Performance*, July 2001
http://www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/beginningteachers/files/Num_probattch_teachers_having_difficulties.pdf
- *Department of Education and Training Principal's Report on Teacher*
http://www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/beginningteachers/files/Num_probattchT_report.pdf

DET web sites

- New Teacher web site:
www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/beginningteachers
- Leadership and Management web site:
www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/leadership
- Quality Teaching web site:
www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/qualityteaching/

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- Teacher Professional Learning web site:
www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/TeacherProfLearning/
- Curriculum specific support for professional learning for teachers is also available from the curriculum support home page at:
www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au
- Professional learning links are available from the Teaching and Learning Exchange DET intranet home page at:
<http://tale.det.nsw.edu.au>

Support materials

Teacher Induction Kit, February 2001

<http://www.curriculumsupport.nsw.edu.au/beginningteachers/index.cfm?u=3&i=85>

Recommended readings

Beattie, M. (2000) Narratives of Professional Learning: Becoming a Teacher and Learning to Teach. *Journal of Educational Enquiry* Vol. 1 No. 2 pp. 1–23.

Britton, E., Raizen, S. Paine and L. Huntley, M. (2000) *More Swimming Less Sinking, Perspectives on Teacher Induction in the U.S. and Abroad*

http://web.wested.org/online_pubs/teacherinduction

(last accessed February 2004).

Carter, M. and Francis, R (2000) *Mentoring and Beginning Teachers' Workplace Learning*, paper presented at the AARE Conference, Sydney

<http://www.aare.edu.au/00pap/car00232.htm>

(last accessed February 2004).

Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (2002) *An Ethic of Care. Effective Programmes for Beginning Teachers*. Quality Teacher Programme, Canberra.

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (2000) Mentoring in the New Millennium. *Theory into Practice* Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 50 to 56.

Kardos, S.M., Johnson, S.M., Peske, H.G., Kauffman, D. and Lui, E. (2001) Counting on Colleagues: New Teachers Encounter the Professional Cultures of their Schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 250–290.

Lang, C. (1999) *When Does It Get Any Easier? Beginning Teachers' Experiences During Their First Year of Teaching*, paper presented at the AARE-NZARE Conference

<http://www.aare.edu.au/99pap/lan99269.htm>

(last accessed February 2004).

Martinez, K. (1994) Teacher Induction Revisited. *Australian Journal of Education* Vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 174–188.

Ramsey, G. (2000) *Quality Matters. Revitalising teaching: Critical times, critical choices*. Report of the Review of Teacher Education, New South Wales.

Segal, G. and Schuck, S. (1999) *Challenging experienced teachers' conceptions of mentoring and teaching? Learning to be a mentor of beginning teachers*.

<http://www.education.uts.edu.au/projects/cerg/papers/gsegalsschuck.doc>

(last accessed February 2004).