



Victorian Principals Association

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VPA Position Paper

Raising the Quality of Pre-service Training for Entry into the Teaching Profession

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) believes it is imperative that there be a more rigorous and consistent approach to teacher training in Victoria

Purpose

1. To ensure that teacher training is high quality, comprehensive and relevant in order to produce fully prepared teachers.
2. To ensure schools have access to fully prepared, high quality graduate and returning teachers in sufficient numbers to meet the diverse needs of students.

Background to the VPA Position

The VPA position has been determined in the following context:

- Inconsistencies in course content, course outcomes and teaching rounds in recognised teaching courses at tertiary institutions.
- Some newly qualified teachers report, or demonstrate lack of knowledge in basic literacy and numeracy skills and approaches to teaching.
- Many newly qualified teachers have minimal understanding of contemporary educational directions and school imperatives.
- Participants of one year training diploma courses have increased the workload of mentors and are not ready to teach in primary schools. They lack content knowledge and teaching practicum experience. They have very little knowledge of primary curriculum.
- Some teaching round assessments lack rigour. There is inconsistency across the state.
- The process for supervising teachers and the quality of the supervision are inconsistent.
- Graduate teachers are not sufficiently skilled to instruct and facilitate the work of educational support staff.

VPA Position

- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) to become responsible for setting consistent teaching standards in teacher training institutions with an increased emphasis on developing classroom literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teacher training institutions to be required to align course content with VIT teacher standards on a regular basis.
- Training courses must be aligned with contemporary educational directions.
- DEECD to consider campaigns to attract high quality school-leavers and 'change of career' aspirants into the teaching profession.

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- Three criteria for entry into teaching course;
 1. Pre-entry interview for suitability– The profession to take some responsibility by becoming involved with interview process, e.g. Principals with five years' experience be invited to be involved with interview process.
 2. ATAR score: Pre-service training institutions to mandate a minimum entry score for Bachelor of Education courses.
 3. A pre-entry exam to check literacy and numeracy standard.
 - Teacher training to include a mandatory time in schools in the first month of the course.
 - Internships in schools during teacher training to be scheduled to occur during the first few weeks of the school term.
 - Introduce an internship year within the four years of the course with quality teachers to be employed as an instructor / mentor for one year's learning 'on the job'.