

Suitability to Teach POLICY

Version: 2.0

Version effective: 12/06/2026

Audience: External - publicly available

1. Purpose

The Queensland College of Teachers' (QCT) Suitability to Teach policy (policy) has been developed in alignment with the suitability to teach statement approved by the Australasian Teacher Regulatory Authorities (ATRA). The policy reflects a nationally agreed approach to the registration of teachers, which supports consistent and sound regulatory outcomes in the best interests of children and young people in education settings, and to maintain public confidence in the profession.

This policy provides information and guidance to applicants for teacher registration or permission to teach regarding matters that will be considered by the QCT in determining whether they are suitable to teach, specifically the nature and extent of considerations that the QCT will make into an applicant's suitability to assess their fitness, character, conduct and criminal history.

This policy also reflects QCT's commitment to its obligations under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (CSO Act), to comply with the Child Safe Standards and report harm or misconduct as appropriate, under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

2. Rationale

Teachers occupy a position of trust and authority in communities, as such they must be held to a high standard of professional and ethical behaviour including integrity, honesty and accountability. This standard includes adherence to laws and compliance with all child safeguarding codes, legislation and responsibilities.

A teacher has responsibility for some of the most vulnerable members of the community, therefore suitability to teach must involve an assessment of an applicant's character, conduct and criminal history at the point in time of determining an application or renewal of registration or permission to teach.

Teachers are expected to maintain this high standard when working with students, children, colleagues and other members of the community, both in their professional and personal lives.

This policy sets out broad principles and establishes guidelines the QCT will apply to suitability to teach considerations, rather than outlining strict rules of interpretation.

3. Scope

Suitability to teach is a continuing obligation, assessed over time having regard to the nature, seriousness, frequency and recency of any misconduct, criminal conduct, incompetence or impairment concerns. This policy will be applied at application and continues to apply to any holder of an approval to teach.

This policy applies to applicants for provisional registration, full registration, permission to teach, renewal of full registration or permission to teach and restoration of full registration.

The policy does not apply to 'excluded persons' as they are ineligible to apply for registration or permission to teach.

The QCT is entitled to have regard to any matter that it considers relevant in considering suitability to teach. For this reason, it is not possible to prescribe all circumstances that may be considered by the QCT in determining an applicant's suitability to teach.

The policy is designed to be flexible and allow for discretion, while implementing the requirements of the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (the Act). Each application for registration will be considered on its individual merits.

4. Policy statement

To be eligible for registration or permission to teach in Queensland, a person must be suitable to teach, pursuant to ss8(1)(b), 9(1)(b) and 10(1)(c) of the Act.

Applications for registration or renewal of registration or permission to teach will be determined at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Suitability is a point in time assessment and therefore applications requiring suitability assessment will not be deferred pending the conclusion of any other criminal, civil or disciplinary, allegations or proceedings.

4.1. Determining suitability

- A person is considered suitable to teach where they are suitable to work with children and young people; are a suitably fit and proper person to hold teacher registration; and are competent to undertake the role of a teacher.
- The paramount consideration of the QCT in determining a person's suitability to teach is the safety, welfare and best interests of children.
- Teachers must uphold and comply with all relevant legislation governing education, child safety (including jurisdictional mandatory reporting requirements) and privacy.
- Teachers must conduct themselves with honesty, professionalism and respect, reflecting community expectations and maintaining high ethical standards.
- Teachers must be competent, knowledgeable and skilful and must demonstrate and maintain the qualifications, English language proficiency, professional conduct and professional practice required for their role.
- Teachers must recognise that their conduct impacts their professional standing and public confidence and must therefore demonstrate integrity, dignity, responsibility, respect, justice and care.
- Suitability to teach is intrinsically linked to professional conduct. Where there is evidence that a teacher has engaged in serious misconduct/criminal conduct, has demonstrated incompetence in undertaking the role of a teacher, or if they suffer from an impairment to the extent that their ability to carry out the inherent requirements of a registered teacher is affected, this will have a bearing on considerations about their suitability to teach.
- In determining suitability to teach, the QCT will apply the Suitability to Teach – Guidelines for Applicants. Applicants should consider this policy and the guidelines when applying for teacher registration/renewal/restoration or permission to teach in Queensland.
- Information relevant to determining suitability to teach includes:
 - a person's history of compliance with their teacher registration requirements including any conditions on their registration and any previous decision to refuse to grant, refuse to renew, suspend or cancel a registration or other authorisation to teach
 - the person's point-in-time criminal history including information about the committing, or alleged or possible committing of an offence by the person, whether in Australia or overseas, the nature of the offence and its relevance to the duties of a teacher
 - relevant information from entities including Queensland Police Service, Blue Card Services and the Queensland Family and Child Commission such as reportable conduct allegations, pending criminal charges or convictions
 - any behaviour that departs from the standard of behaviour reasonably expected of a registered teacher or shows the person is not of good character, including in a private capacity
 - the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings by a practice and conduct body
 - whether the person has contravened an order made by any teacher regulatory authority within Australia, New Zealand or any other country
 - whether the person has a medical condition or impairment that may manifest in conduct or behaviours that may pose a risk of harm to children or impair the person's competence (professional knowledge, practice and engagement) to teach
 - relevant information from other teacher regulatory authorities, employing authorities, early childhood regulators and authorities including the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), registration bodies, former employers (within Australia and from overseas) regarding any

conduct that is likely to bring the teaching profession into disrepute, including conduct occurring outside of the teaching environment

- whether the person meets all of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) to the graduate level set out by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).
- false or misleading information provided on application for registration or renewal of registration
- any other matters that the QCT determines appropriate and relevant to consider.

4.2. Suitability is ongoing

- Suitability to teach is required to be determined upon initial application for registration or permission to teach and on renewal or restoration of an application for registration or permission to teach.
- Maintaining suitability to teach is an ongoing obligation of a person who holds teacher registration in Queensland.
- Where a person no longer holds teacher registration and seeks to become re-registered, any prior conduct which was considered by the QCT's Integrity Unit (disciplinary matters), including where no disciplinary action has been taken, will form part of a suitability to teach assessment on reapplication.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. QCT Office

- Under section 264 of the Act, the Board may delegate its powers to a member of the Board, a committee of the Board, the Director or an appropriately qualified member of the QCT Office's staff.
- Suitability to teach decisions have been delegated to the Suitability to Teach Committee, the QCT Director and appropriate QCT staff.
- The QCT has discretion as to the appropriate decision maker to determine a particular matter, which will be dependent on the nature and complexity of the decision to be made and the individual circumstances of the applicant.
- Decisions about suitability to teach will be made in the public interest, in accordance with the principles of natural justice and the requirement to make decisions in a way compatible with the *Human Rights Act (Qld) 2019*.

5.2. Applicants and approved teachers

- To ensure that the QCT can regulate the profession effectively and efficiently, the QCT expects that applicants for teacher registration or renewal/restoration of registration will interact with the regulator in an honest and transparent manner in disclosing and declaring information that is relevant to suitability to teach considerations.
- Where an applicant provides false or misleading information or fails to provide relevant information to the QCT as the teacher regulator, this can frustrate the screening process and may lead to risks of harm to children. It can also demonstrate a lack of integrity, honesty and transparency by the applicant.
- Such a person may be determined not to be a fit and proper person and therefore not suitable to teach. Importantly, for persons who obtain teacher registration, the QCT is empowered, where warranted, to commence investigation and/or disciplinary action in regard to conduct which occurred prior to the teacher's registration if the matter was not disclosed to the QCT upon application.

6. Definitions

Incompetence – is the lack of skill, ability, or knowledge required to perform the role of a teacher to a satisfactory standard. Performance below the graduate teacher standard of the APST could be the threshold for the QCT to determine incompetence.

Excluded person – a person who is prohibited from reapplying for registration or permission to teach by a practice or conduct order or a person who has been convicted of a serious offence.

Suitable to teach – a person is considered suitable to teach where they are suitable to work with children and young people; are a suitably fit and proper person to hold teacher registration; and are competent to undertake the role of a teacher.

Renewal of full registration – renewal is a five-yearly process that applies to teachers with full registration. The purpose of five-yearly renewal is to ensure that fully registered teachers maintain a high standard of professional practice and conduct. It allows the QCT to confirm if teachers have been meeting their professional development requirements, if they have been active in the profession, if they continue to be suitable to teach, and if they are complying with any conditions on their registration.

7. Legislation

- *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*

8. Considerations

8.1 Commitment to Human Rights, Multiculturalism, Equity, and Child Safety

The QCT is committed to upholding the principles of the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*, the *Queensland Multicultural Recognition Act 2016*, and the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*. This policy has been developed to ensure fairness, inclusivity, and the safety and wellbeing of all individuals, including children and young people.

In line with these commitments, this policy:

- Respects, protects, and promotes human rights.
- Supports equitable access to services and opportunities for all individuals, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Embeds principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in its design and implementation.
- Prioritises the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of children and young people, ensuring compliance with Child Safe Standards.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with these principles and to reflect the evolving needs of Queensland’s communities, including children and young people.

9. Related documents

- Suitability to Teach – Guidelines for Applicants

10. Document details

Title	Suitability to Teach Policy
Record number	2026/394966
Owner – Unit/Role	Integrity Unit
Approver	QCT board
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Effective from	12/06/2026
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11. Version history

Version	Record number	Date	Author	Changes made
1.0	2024/120053	14/10/2016	-	-
2.0	2026/394966	12/06/2026	Integrity Unit	Revised policy
2.1				