



Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead

Handbook for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

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'The identity and success of Catholic education is linked inseparably to the witness of life given by the teaching staff. School staff who truly live their faith will be agents of a new evangelisation in creating a positive climate for the Christian faith to grow and in spiritually nourishing the students entrusted to their care. They will be especially effective when they are active practising Catholics, committed to their parish community and loyal to the Church and her teaching.' John Paul II: *Ecclesia in Oceania*, 2001

About the Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy

Background

The revised Accreditation to Work, Teach and Policy is a response from a directive from a Conference of Diocesan Directors of Education of NSW and the ACT and is aligned with the Accreditation Framework for Catholic Schools in NSW (Nov 2010). It was from this document that the previous Faith Education Accreditation Policy (2012) was developed.

In 2016 the Catholic Schools Council commissioned a review of the current FEA Policy and its implementation in schools. This document reflects changes recommended from the 2016 review.

This handbook is for staff employed in Catholic schools and the Catholic Schools Office and supports the revised Accreditation to Work Teach and Lead Policy and Procedure, formerly known as the Faith Education Accreditation (FEA) Policy of 2012.

The Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy was written in the context of the pastoral letter of the Bishops of NSW and the ACT *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads* in which they challenged educational leaders and staff to dedicate themselves to ensuring that our schools

- ▶ are truly Catholic in their identity and life
- ▶ are centres of the 'new evangelisation'
- ▶ enable our students to achieve high levels of Catholic religious literacy
- ▶ are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals.

The Catholic school community has a responsibility to put into place appropriate and supportive yet rigorous pathways for the preparation and ongoing professional learning of teachers, especially in Religious Education, and for the professional and spiritual formation of those who will lead our schools into the future. It is the responsibility of all staff and teachers in a Catholic school to introduce the students to the mystery of Christ and the living tradition of the Church.

The Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy is designed to assist and support staff in terms of

- ▶ portability and equity across dioceses
- ▶ recognition of study and qualifications
- ▶ achievement of professional standards
- ▶ development towards promotional positions
- ▶ ongoing support in faith formation

Aims

The Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead Policy aims to

- ▶ respond fully to the Bishop's invitation and mandate to work, teach and exercise leadership in a Catholic school on his behalf
- ▶ respond to the changing needs and culture of Catholic schools
- ▶ recognise, promote and affirm appropriate forms of professional learning relevant to working, teaching and leadership in a Catholic school
- ▶ promote the attainment of academic knowledge and skills in the areas of religious education and Catholic school leadership
- ▶ provide opportunities for all staff to become familiar with and to be immersed in the life and culture of Catholic education
- ▶ nurture the spiritual formation, faith development and ongoing professional growth of all staff
- ▶ use accreditation status under the policy as one of the criteria to assist with selection of staff for teaching or leadership positions in Catholic schools
- ▶ ensure that accreditation at the appropriate category becomes a mandatory expectation of employment and that all staff gain accreditation appropriate to their respective roles
- ▶ ensure that, in keeping with contemporary professional practice, all staff through appropriate professional support and development maintain currency of their accreditation status.

Guiding Practices

The following guidelines provide for the implementation of the policy for the faith education requirements of all **permanent** staff in Catholic schools in the Diocese and the Catholic Schools Office.

- ▶ There is an obligation for all permanent employees to obtain accreditation within a specific timeframe, normally four (4) years.
 - ▶ All full time and part time permanent staff are required to achieve the level appropriate to their position.
 - ▶ Provisional Accreditation will be provided to staff who are working towards the requirements for full accreditation at Category D and E.
 - ▶ There is an obligation to maintain ongoing currency of accreditation for the level appropriate to their position.
- ▶ The requirements for currency begin once the required level of accreditation has been achieved.
 - ▶ There is an expectation that staff will undertake some ongoing faith development each year towards fulfilling the currency requirements.
 - ▶ It is highly desirable that casual and temporary teachers be appropriately accredited. Casual and temporary teachers are welcome to participate in Accreditation courses at their own expense, provided spaces are available. Appropriate documentation will need to be kept by individual casual and temporary teachers with regard to attendance at any accreditation courses inspired by pastoral mission.

The Five Accreditation Categories

Individuals may be given appropriate Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead if they:

- ▶ complete the following requirements **OR**
- ▶ are able to establish equivalence and relevance with other courses **OR**
- ▶ have relevant accreditation from other dioceses.

Category A:
Accreditation to Work School Support Staff, CSO Administration Staff,
CSO Professional Officers

Category B:
Accreditation to Teach All teaching staff who do not teach Religion

Category C:
Accreditation for Leadership Secondary Administration Coordinators, Secondary Student Coordinators, Secondary Studies Coordinators, Primary Coordinators and all CSO Education Officers

Category D:
Accreditation to Teach Religion Secondary Religious Studies Coordinators, and all permanent Teachers of Religion (Primary and Secondary)

Category E:
Accreditation for Senior Leadership Principals, Assistant Principals, Primary Religious Education Coordinators, Secondary Ministry Coordinators, Director of Schools, Assistant Directors of Schools, Religious Education and Spirituality Services Education team members and the Head of Teaching and Learning Services



Category A

Accreditation to Work

- ▶ Permanent School Support Staff, all CSO Administration staff and CSO Professional Officers are to complete a 6-hour module entitled Faith Story Witness as an introduction to the Diocese within the first year of appointment. This module will be provided by the Catholic Schools Office.
- ▶ School Support Staff who have direct and immediate contact with students, parents and teaching staff as well as those CSO staff who are not directly involved with schools are required to participate in order to acquaint themselves with the Vision and Mission of Catholic schools within the context of the evangelising and catechising mission of the Catholic Church.

The School Support Staff who will attend this program include:

- ▶ School secretaries
- ▶ Teachers aides/assistants
- ▶ Lab assistants
- ▶ Library assistants
- ▶ Grounds staff and cleaners who have direct contact with students (during school hours)
- ▶ Canteen staff
- ▶ Other support staff nominated by Principal

Currency

- ▶ It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of all staff.
- ▶ All permanent support staff are expected to attend a minimum of **15 hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing Accreditation to Work in a Catholic school. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff formation days.



Category B

Accreditation to Teach

Accreditation to Teach requires all **newly appointed permanent teachers**, both permanent part time and full time, to participate, at a minimum, in **two** modules in the first two years of appointment. These modules will be provided by the Catholic Schools Office. A compulsory module will be Faith Story Witness and a choice of **one** other approved module.

Currency

It is expected that all schools will utilise one professional development day per year for the purpose of the faith formation and spiritual development of staff. All permanent teachers are expected to attend a minimum of **30 hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation. Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff formation days.



Category C

Accreditation for Leadership

All Secondary Administration Coordinators, Secondary Student Coordinators, Secondary Studies Coordinators, Primary Coordinators and CSO Education Officers must complete the equivalent of a **four-day (24 hours)** leadership formation program, which includes Faith Story Witness and **three** other approved modules. These modules must be completed within the first two years of employment.

Secondary Studies Coordinators, Secondary Administration Coordinators, Primary Coordinators and CSO Education Officers must have a strong commitment to the Catholic ethos and to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School.

In rare situations Principals may need to appoint non-Catholic staff to a Student Coordinator or Primary Coordinator position. This appointment must be approved by the Director of Schools in consultation with the Bishop.

Currency

It is expected that Secondary Student Coordinators, Secondary Studies Coordinators, Secondary Administrators and Primary Coordinators will complete a minimum of **45 hours** of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation.

CSO Education Officers will also be expected to maintain their level of accreditation as required by the Bishop or the Director of Schools.

Category D

Accreditation to Teach Religion

This category applies to Secondary Religious Studies Coordinators, and all permanent teachers or coordinators who teach Religion (primary and secondary). All teachers of Religion must be Catholic and qualified teachers, with the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the Vision and Mission of the Catholic School.

In order to achieve Accreditation to Teach Religion, both primary and secondary teachers must have completed:

- ▶ the Faith Story Witness module within the first year of appointment

AND

- ▶ a major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of **6 approved units of study** for students **commencing their undergraduate studies from the beginning of 2012**)

OR

- ▶ an **approved** major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of **6 approved units** of study for students **commencing their undergraduate studies from the beginning of 2012**)

OR

- ▶ a degree in Theology or allied disciplines at a Catholic tertiary institution

OR

- ▶ a postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study)

OR

- ▶ a CSO approved postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study)

OR

- ▶ a CSO approved qualification in Religious Education/Theology from an endorsed provider (minimum of **four** postgraduate units of study).

Upon individual application and provision of the required documentation, teachers may also be accredited to teach Religion in Catholic schools if they have previously been accredited to teach Religion in another state or territory of Australia.

Currency

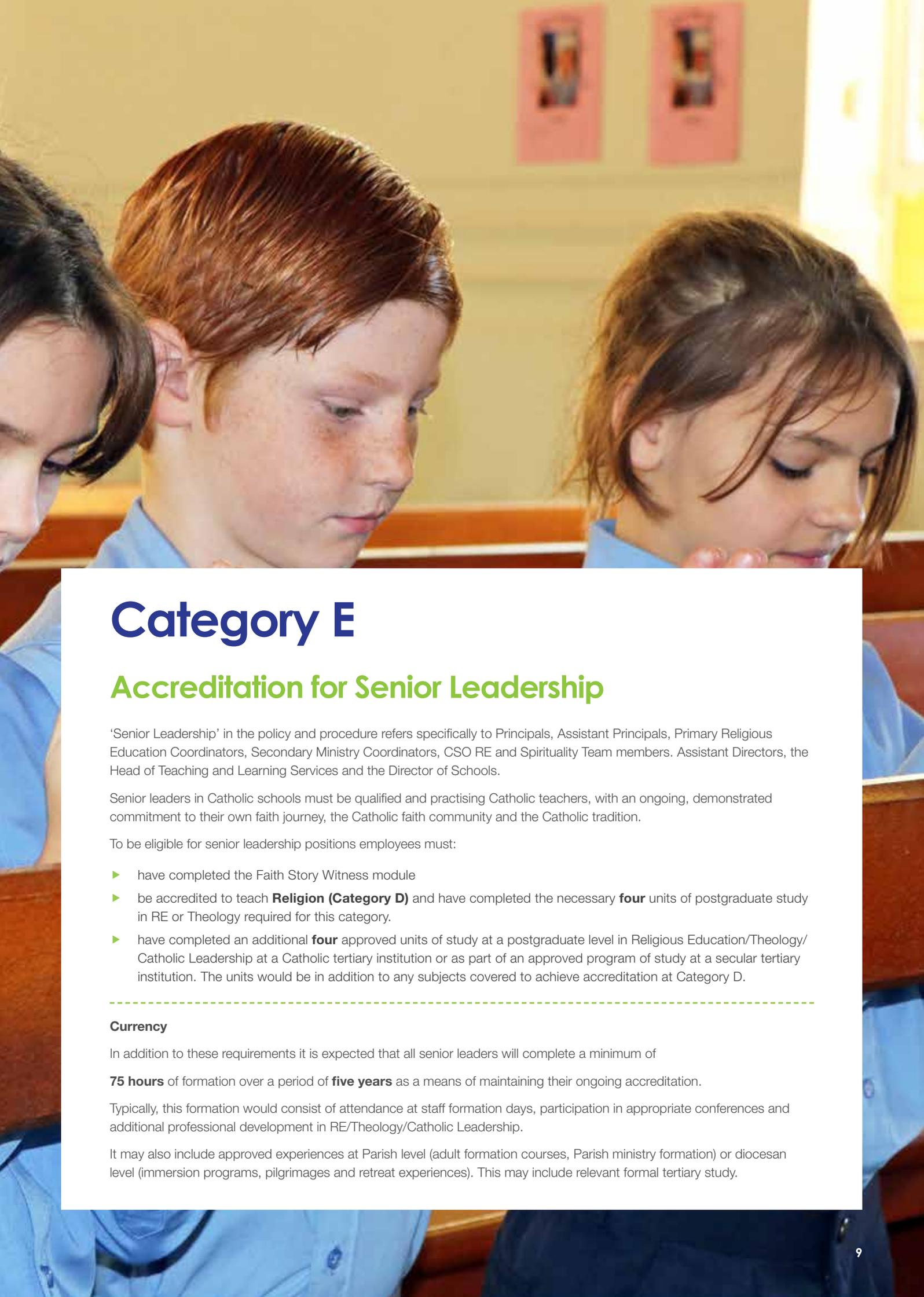
It is expected that all teachers of Religious Education will complete a minimum of **45 hours** of formation over a period of five years as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation.

Completion of Requirements

Accreditation requirements for Category D: Accreditation to Teach Religion are to be completed either before appointment or agreed in writing upon appointment to be 50% completed within two years and fully completed within six years of appointment.

Newly appointed early career teachers who are teaching Religion, who do not already have tertiary qualifications in the teaching of Religion and who must also fulfil the NESA requirements may opt to postpone their postgraduate study in RE until they have completed their NESA accreditation. In this case these teachers will be required to undertake an additional module on the diocesan K–12 Religion Syllabus within the first year of appointment. They will be provisionally accredited to Teach Religion during this period of time.

It is highly desirable that all temporary Religion teachers be appropriately accredited.



Category E

Accreditation for Senior Leadership

'Senior Leadership' in the policy and procedure refers specifically to Principals, Assistant Principals, Primary Religious Education Coordinators, Secondary Ministry Coordinators, CSO RE and Spirituality Team members. Assistant Directors, the Head of Teaching and Learning Services and the Director of Schools.

Senior leaders in Catholic schools must be qualified and practising Catholic teachers, with an ongoing, demonstrated commitment to their own faith journey, the Catholic faith community and the Catholic tradition.

To be eligible for senior leadership positions employees must:

- ▶ have completed the Faith Story Witness module
- ▶ be accredited to teach **Religion (Category D)** and have completed the necessary **four** units of postgraduate study in RE or Theology required for this category.
- ▶ have completed an additional **four** approved units of study at a postgraduate level in Religious Education/Theology/Catholic Leadership at a Catholic tertiary institution or as part of an approved program of study at a secular tertiary institution. The units would be in addition to any subjects covered to achieve accreditation at Category D.

Currency

In addition to these requirements it is expected that all senior leaders will complete a minimum of

75 hours of formation over a period of **five years** as a means of maintaining their ongoing accreditation.

Typically, this formation would consist of attendance at staff formation days, participation in appropriate conferences and additional professional development in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership.

It may also include approved experiences at Parish level (adult formation courses, Parish ministry formation) or diocesan level (immersion programs, pilgrimages and retreat experiences). This may include relevant formal tertiary study.

Provisional Accreditation

Provisional Accreditation is premised on the underlying philosophy that all teachers of Religious Education and leaders in Catholic schools are acting in these specific roles on behalf of the Bishop. In essence, the Bishop mandates teachers to proclaim the Gospel message within the Catholic tradition in his name. Hence, it is inconsistent to have those who are non-accredited teaching Religious Education or holding leadership positions in Catholic schools. It is proposed therefore to introduce Provisional Accreditation.

The category of Provisional Accreditation applies to those who are yet to satisfy their specific accreditation requirements in the following categories:

Category D: Accreditation to Teach Religion All permanent primary and secondary teachers of Religious Education, Primary Coordinators and all Secondary RSCs.

Category E: Accreditation for Senior Leadership Principals, APs, Primary RECs, Secondary Ministry Coordinators, the Director of Schools, Assistant Directors, the Head of Teaching and Learning Services and the RE and Spirituality Team.

The status of Provisional Accreditation is granted for a **maximum of four years** and will be detailed in the employee's individual contract and/or letter of appointment. The Provisional Accreditation of Teachers of Religion and Senior Leaders will be monitored by the CSO.



Accreditation requirements at a glance

Cat	Target Group	Minimum Requirements Formation & Qualification	Currency	Provisional Accreditation
A	Accreditation to Work ----- ▶ School Support Staff ▶ CSO Administration Staff ▶ CSO Professional Officers	Catholic/committed to Catholic Ethos ----- Faith Story Witness (6 hours of faith formation in first year)	15 hours over 5 years	N/A
B	Accreditation to Teach ----- All teachers who DON'T teach religion	Catholic/committed to Catholic Ethos ----- ▶ Faith Story Witness plus ▶ 1 other CSO approved module (12 hours of faith formation in first two years)	30 hours over 5 years	N/A
C	Accreditation for Leadership ----- ▶ Primary Coordinators ▶ Secondary Administration Coordinators ▶ Secondary Student Coordinators ▶ Secondary Studies Coordinators ▶ CSO Education Officers	Catholic/committed to Catholic Ethos ----- ▶ Faith Story Witness plus ▶ 3 other CSO-approved modules ▶ (24 hours of faith formation in first two years)	45 hours over 5 years	N/A
D	Accreditation to Teach Religion ----- ▶ Secondary Religious Studies Coordinators ▶ Teachers of Religion (primary and secondary)	Catholic ----- ▶ Faith Story Witness (In first year) ----- ▶ K-12 Syllabus module (Beginning teachers only) ----- ▶ 6 Units Undergraduate (RE/Theology) OR ▶ 4 units postgraduate RE/Theology (50% completed in two years; fully completed in six years)	45 hours over 5 years	4 years max.
E	Accreditation for Senior Leadership ----- ▶ Principals ▶ Assistant Principals ▶ Primary Religious Education Coordinators ▶ Secondary Ministry Coordinators ▶ RE & Spirituality Team ▶ CSO Assistant Directors ▶ Head of Teaching & Learning Services ▶ Director of Schools	Catholic ----- Faith Story Witness ----- Category D: Accredited to Teach Religion ----- ▶ 4 units at postgraduate level in RE/Theology/Catholic leadership which can be made up of: i) 4 units postgraduate RE/Theology (additional to the 4 units completed for Category D) OR ii) Minimum 4 units approved postgraduate study in Catholic Leadership/Theology	75 hours over 5 years	4 years max.

Possible Postgraduate Study Options

Information provided on this page is a guide only. Staff are strongly recommended to discuss possible programs of study with BBI or the ACU.

Staff have the option of studying through the following programs.

Australian Catholic University

► **Educational Leadership**

Graduate Certificate

Successful completion of four (4) units of study through approved pathway.

Graduate Diploma

Successful completion of eight (8) units of study through approved pathway.

Master in Religious Education

Successful completion of twelve (12) units of study through approved pathway.

Postgraduate Certificate in Religious Education

Successful completion of four (4) units of study through approved pathway. Staff need to check with ACU if this course will satisfy accreditation requirements.

Graduate Certificate in Religious Education

Successful completion of eight (8) units of study through approved pathway.

Master of Religious Education

Successful completion of twelve (12) units of study through approved pathway.

Broken Bay Institute – The Australian Institute of Theological Education

► **Religious Education**

Graduate Certificate

Successful completion of four (4) units of study through approved pathway.

Graduate Diploma

Successful completion of eight (8) units of study through approved pathway. This course is recommended for teachers applying for accreditation at Category E – Senior Leadership.

Master in Educational Leadership

Successful completion of twelve (12) units of study through approved pathway.

► **Leadership and Theology, Theological Studies, Governance and Canon Law**

Graduate Certificate

Successful completion of four (4) units of study through approved pathway.

Graduate Diploma

Successful completion of eight (8) units of study through approved pathway.

Master's Degree

Successful completion of twelve (12) units of study through approved pathway.

This information has been taken from the BBI and ACU websites and was correct as of July 2018.



A–Z of Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead

Casual Staff and Temporary Staff

It is highly desirable and advisable that temporary staff obtain accreditation. Casual staff are not required to complete categories of Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead.

Catholic Identity and Mission

For Categories D and E employees 'must be Catholic'. It is generally expected that all teachers of Religion and senior leaders of Catholic schools are baptised Catholic. Teachers and leaders are invited to deepen their knowledge of Catholic life and faith in the course of their career and faith journey. Teachers of Religion and senior leaders are required to have an openness to ongoing spiritual formation and programs that enable staff to further explore our Catholic faith. Teachers of Religion and senior leaders will have a commitment towards fuller and active participation in Sunday Eucharist and the life of the Parish community. All staff employed in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will have a commitment to scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church in the area of faith and morals.

Courses for Gaining Accreditation to Teach Religion

Those wishing to gain Accreditation to Teach Religion can enrol in one of the following courses:

- ▶ a major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of six approved units of study) OR
- ▶ an approved major undergraduate course of study in Religious Education/Theology in the B Ed or other undergraduate teaching degree at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of six approved units of study) OR
- ▶ a degree in Theology or allied disciplines at a Catholic tertiary institution OR
- ▶ a postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a Catholic tertiary institution (minimum of four postgraduate units of study) OR
- ▶ a CSO approved postgraduate qualification in Religious Education/Theology at a secular tertiary institution (minimum of four postgraduate units of study); OR
- ▶ a CSO approved qualification in Religious Education/Theology from an endorsed provider (minimum of four postgraduate units of study).

Courses for Gaining Accreditation for Senior Leadership

The requirements for Accreditation for Senior Leadership are as follows:

- ▶ have completed the Faith Story Witness module
- ▶ be Accredited to Teach Religion (Category D)
- ▶ have completed a minimum of 4 additional units of study at a

postgraduate level in Religious Education/Theology/Catholic Leadership at a Catholic tertiary institution or as part of an approved program of study at a secular tertiary institution. The units would be in addition to any subjects covered to achieve Accreditation to Teach Religion.

It is recommended that staff who are undertaking a Master of Educational Leadership degree for Senior Leadership Accreditation seek advice from the Head of RE and Spirituality Services or Assistant Director and university about their choice of units prior to enrolment to ensure they meet accreditation requirements. This is especially recommended for anyone considering study at a secular university as not all units offered in these courses can be used as part of Accreditation for Senior Leadership.

Courses for Maintaining Currency

Any courses or professional development related to the 'Catholic faith dimension' can contribute towards ongoing accreditation. This includes courses or PD focusing on Theology, scripture, RE, Christian leadership, spirituality, the Catholic school etc. Examples of this may include:

- ▶ Staff formation days with an RE or spirituality focus – usually one a year (15 hours over three years) e.g. staff retreats, spiritual formation days
- ▶ RE and spirituality PD courses provided by the CSO
- ▶ Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead modules if not already completed as a new permanent staff member
- ▶ Assembly Days with an RE or spirituality focus
- ▶ Approved parish or diocesan-conducted courses e.g. Beginning Theology, Lenten or sacramental programs

Currency

Maintaining currency of your accreditation begins once you have completed the requirements to gain accreditation. Details about the hours for currency at each level are detailed in Accreditation at a Glance.

Accreditation modules and courses of study that are being taken as part of your initial accreditation requirements are not eligible as currency hours.

Early Career Teachers

Early career teachers will be given additional time (normally two to four years) to complete their accreditation requirements in consideration of the workload required by government regulations.

Equivalent Accreditation from Other Dioceses

All those who are accredited at the equivalent in another diocese will be recognised at the appropriate level in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Documentation will be required to satisfy accreditation recognition. All new permanently appointed staff will still be required to attend the one-day Faith Story Witness module as part of their introduction to working in the Diocese.

Faith Story Witness

All newly appointed permanent School Support Staff, CSO Administration Staff and CSO Professional Officers do this 6-hour module to achieve Category A: Accreditation to Work.

All newly appointed permanent staff are required to attend the Faith Story Witness module as part of their introduction to working in the Diocese and Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead.

Financial Support Offered by the CSO

The CSO currently remunerates one-half (50%) of Accreditation to Teach Religion and Accreditation for Senior Leadership course fees for students who are undertaking approved courses of study in RE/Theology/Catholic Leadership and who are permanently employed in diocesan schools.

Study leave of one day per unit per semester is offered for those undertaking Accreditation to Teach Religion and Accreditation for Senior Leadership. Some casual release is provided for those undertaking accreditation modules in categories A to C.

To claim remuneration, staff should present a copy of their transcript and receipt of payment of fees after successful completion of each unit to the RE and Spirituality Services team at the CSO to receive their remuneration.

Senior Leadership

Applying for an Executive Position without Accreditation for Senior Leadership

This is possible, but on appointment, school leaders will be required to sign an agreement to undertake and complete Category E: Accreditation for Senior Leadership requirements in their first five years.

It is recommended that staff who are undertaking a Master of Educational Leadership degree for Category E: Accreditation for Senior Leadership seek advice from the Head of RE and Spirituality Services or Assistant Director and university about their choice of units prior to enrolment to ensure they meet accreditation requirements. This is especially recommended for anyone considering study at a secular university as not all units offered in these courses can be used as part of Accreditation for Senior Leadership.

If you participate in a performance review or are appointed to a new position you are still required to seek accreditation as required.

Master's Degrees and Senior Leadership

If you are interested in working towards your Accreditation for Senior Leadership and completing a Master's degree the CSO recommends you consider studying through the pathway below.

- ▶ To get accreditation at **Category D: Accreditation to Teach Religion** it is recommended you complete a Graduate Certificate in Religious Education (through BBI or ACU). This

will give you the 4 approved units of postgraduate study required for this category.

- ▶ Once you have completed a Graduate Certificate you can complete another 4 units and qualify for a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education. This will also satisfy requirements for **Category E: Accreditation for Senior Leadership**.
- ▶ Once you have a Graduate Diploma (with the completion of eight units of study in RE) you will then be able to complete another four units to qualify for a Master's Degree in Religious Education.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Head of RE and Spirituality or your Assistant Director if you have any questions about your course of study.

Prerequisites for Accreditation for Senior Leadership

Those wishing to enrol in courses for Accreditation for Senior Leadership will need to have completed a Bachelor's degree and a Graduate Certificate of Religion/Theology or its equivalent.

Prior Learning

If you have prior learning that is not listed in this document you may apply for consideration by supplying evidence of equivalent prior learning in writing to the Head of Religious Education and Spirituality Services at the CSO. Consideration will be given on a case-by-case basis.

Prior to Employment

You are not required to have accreditation prior to employment, but you will be required to obtain the necessary level of accreditation once you begin your employment and complete these requirements within a specified period of time. Provisional Accreditation will be available while you are undertaking accreditation. Your contract will have details of the time required for attainment of accreditation. Undergraduates who are intending to apply for employment are recommended to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Religious Education from the Broken Bay Institute – The Australian Institute of Theological Education or ACU concurrently with their teaching degree.

Staff Formation Days

All modules offered as part of the accreditation requirements may also be used by schools for staff days as part of currency requirements.

All school-based PD days to be included for currency need to be fully documented with details of the course, leader and evidence of participation, and forwarded to the Head of RE & Spirituality Services at the CSO so that records can be maintained. It is suggested that Principals negotiate the suitability of the program with a member of the RE and Spirituality Services team prior to the staff formation day.



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