

## VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF TEACHING SPECIALIST AREA GUIDELINES

These guidelines supersede the Institute's 2003 guidelines.

Nothing in the following implies a requirement by the Institute for employers to insist that a registered teacher should hold particular specialist area qualifications to teach in particular areas.

### PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

The *Specialist Area Guidelines* are intended to be used by:

- Institute Assessment Officers
  - to assess qualifications and make recommendations about the suitability of qualifications to the Institute's Registration Committee for persons applying for registration
  - to provide advice to teachers seeking to upgrade their qualifications and teach in a different specialist area
  - to provide advice to intending teachers about the suitability of their qualifications for entry into postgraduate initial teacher education programs and teaching in specialist areas
- the Accreditation Committee
  - to ensure that graduates from accredited programs will meet the minimum discipline requirements for teaching in specialist areas
  - to endorse programs for already qualified teachers to gain further qualifications in a different specialist area
- Higher Education Providers
  - to select candidates for admission into postgraduate initial teacher education programs
  - to design undergraduate initial teacher education programs that prepare specialist area teachers.

### PREAMBLE

1. The *Specialist Area Guidelines* are applicable to specialist area teachers in primary, secondary and P–12 schools. It is understood that all will be qualified teachers. The guidelines will also be applicable to prospective specialist area teachers.

The general expectations for the initial preparation of teachers (including program standards and the standards for graduating teachers) are described in *Preparing Future Teachers, June 2007*.

2. The *Specialist Area Guidelines* set out what might reasonably be regarded as the minimum level of discipline study applicable for preparation as a specialist area teacher in Victorian schools.

Specialist area teachers are expected to have a sound understanding of the key concepts, structure and developments in the subject or discipline area; to be well versed in the knowledge and concepts required for teaching students in Victorian schools; and provide a variety of methodologies for addressing the needs of individual students.

**Those teaching at VCE level may need a higher level of study than the minimum set out on the next page.**

3. The studies listed below may have been undertaken prior to, or as part of an initial teacher education course, or they may be taken as subsequent undergraduate or postgraduate study. The following definitions allow sufficient flexibility to permit this study to be taken in a range of formal program options.

### Teaching methodology

4. While all teachers will have completed general studies in the theory and practice of teaching, particular specialist areas may require particular approaches and understandings for successful teaching. This will include aspects of subject-specific assessment and program planning. It is important that specialist teachers understand the teaching methodologies appropriate to their specialist area. **It is therefore expected that specialist teachers will have undertaken appropriate teaching methodology studies.**

All teaching methodology studies must include, or be associated with, supervised teaching practice in the specialist area.

5. In initial teacher education programs, Middle Years teachers generally prepare for teaching in the general primary classroom and in at least two specialist secondary subject areas. Secondary teachers, on the other hand, generally prepare for teaching in two specialist areas, with at least one to senior school level. It is expected that this preparation will include subject-specific teaching methodologies and that there will be supervised teaching practice appropriate to these specialist areas and levels within the overall supervised teaching practice program.

Some primary teachers also prepare as specialist teachers during their initial primary teacher education courses, e.g. Physical Education. It is expected that this preparation will include teaching methodology and supervised teaching practice in the specialist area.

6. For teachers seeking to qualify for an additional teaching subject or specialist area after completing their initial teacher education, it is desirable to undertake teaching methodology studies in addition to the discipline studies listed below. In these instances, **where subject-specific teaching practice is to be taken, the appropriate amount is twenty-two days of supervised teaching practice** (unless otherwise stated).

### Definitions

7. In these guidelines, the following terms have the specific meanings as defined:

**Higher Education study:** A program of study at a university or other approved institution for which Year 12 or its equivalent is the general prerequisite for entry.

**Part:** Successful higher education study in a subject having the weighting of at least one quarter of a year of full-time study (or equivalent) in the program from which it is derived. In most programs, this equates to two first year units.

**Sub-major:** A total of half a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline studies taken over two years, e.g. a part in each of the first and second years of study, *or* equivalent study. In most programs this equates to four units, with no more than two at first year level.

**Major:** A total of three-quarters of a year of successful full-time higher education studies, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years, e.g. a part in each of the first, second and third years of study, *or* equivalent study. In most programs this equates to six units, with no more than two at first year level and no less than two units at third year level.

**One year of study:** One year equivalent full-time higher education study.

**Teaching methodology:** Methods of teaching which are specific to the subject or similar groups of subjects, including student assessment, planning and curriculum.

## **SPECIALIST AREAS**

### **ACCOUNTING**

Sub-major study in Accounting

### **ART** (*Including the areas of Art, Craft, Computer-generated Art, Sculpture, Photography, and recognising expertise in materials such as pottery, ceramics, textiles, wood and metal*)

Major study in relevant area(s) of Art which includes at least one quarter of a year of practical Art content

### **BUSINESS**

Two sub-major studies in Business Studies selected from: Accounting, Business Management, Data Processing, Economics, Human Resource Management, Legal Studies, Marketing, Secretarial Studies

### **CAREERS**

Sub-major study in Careers *or* a year of successful experience in careers-related areas

### **DANCE**

Sub-major study in Dance *or* Performance Studies (Dance)

### **DRAMA** (*including THEATRE STUDIES*)

Sub-major study in Drama, Performance Studies (Drama) *or* Theatre Studies (including practical Drama)

### **ECONOMICS**

Sub-major study in Economics

### **ENGLISH**

(a) Sub-major study in English (Literature or Literary Studies) *or*  
(b) Sub-major study in Writing, English Language Studies or Linguistics *together with* a Part in English (Literature or Literary Studies)

### **GEOGRAPHY**

Sub-major study in Geography

### **GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION** (*including Visual Communication and Design*)

Sub-major study in Graphic Communication

### **HEALTH** (*including Human Development*)

Sub-major study covering the areas of Health, Human Development, Family and Nutrition

### **HISTORY**

Sub-major study in History

### **HOME ECONOMICS**

Sub-major study in Home Economics with studies which include:

- (a) Food (Food Preparation and Food Science) *or* Nutrition *and*
- (b) Health *or* Human Development *or* Family

### **HUMANITIES**

Sub-major study in *one* of the specialist Humanities areas:

Economics  
Geography  
History

*together with* a Part in another area of study: Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Economics, Environmental Studies, Geography, History, Indigenous Studies, Legal Studies, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Sub-major study in Information Technology

**LEGAL STUDIES**

Sub-major study in Legal Studies

**LIBRARY**

Study as required for Associate (Professional) Membership of the Australian Library and Information Association

**LOTE (Languages other than English)**

An Advanced level major study in the language requiring successful completion of Year 12 studies in the language for entry into the program

NOTE: Native speakers of the language may seek a statement of equivalence from an Australian university, to verify that their knowledge and competence in the language meets the standard of a post-Year 12 Advanced level major study in the language

All programs or program combinations should equip prospective teachers of languages with:

- a sufficient level of competence in a range of acceptable spoken and written uses of the standard variety of the language so that they can provide their students with a reliable language model. This includes the ability to use the language:
  - in an appropriate range of registers and contexts
  - as the medium of instruction for classroom and instructional purposes
  - with users from a range of ages, regions and/or social groups, both in Australia and overseas
- an understanding of the significant works of the language (poetry, prose, drama, song, film etc), both contemporary and traditional, and insights into its related history, culture and social life, including in Australia
- knowledge of the formal properties of the phonology, syntax and discourse patterns of the standard language; an understanding of the significant features of the main varieties of the language (regional and social); an understanding of the legitimacy of a range of varieties/settings of the language; and an understanding of the contrastive features of English and the language
- a sound understanding of the pedagogy for teaching languages in the primary and/or secondary schools, including the ability to implement various program models for teaching languages
- an understanding of contemporary research findings in language acquisition, including oracy and literacy development in the first and second languages
- educational theory and practice in Australian schools as it relates to the teaching of languages.

**MATHEMATICS**

Sub-major study in Mathematics (Statistics is accepted as Mathematics provided it is taken within a Mathematics Department)

**MEDIA**

Sub-major study in Media Studies

**MUSIC**

- (a) Major study in Music which includes Practical Music *or*
- (b) Major study in Music *together with* AMEB Grade VI or Year 12 Practical music *or*
- (c) Major study in Music which includes Practical Music specialising in one or more musical instruments

**OUTDOOR EDUCATION (including Environmental Studies)**

One year of study in Outdoor Education which includes environmental studies and outdoor recreational activities

A current first aid certificate (Emergency First Aid Level 2) is required

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Primary Teaching)**

Major study in Physical Education

The major study in Physical Education should include study in Human Movement (e.g. growth and motor development, exercise physiology, skill acquisition) and in the skill activity areas of aquatics, games, fundamental motor skills, fitness education, dance, athletics, ball handling and sport education

A current first aid certificate (Emergency First Aid Level 2) and current AustSwim Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate are required

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Secondary Teaching)**

One and a half years of study in Physical Education

The one and a half years of study should include study in the following areas:

- (a) Discipline Study: Human Movement (e.g. anatomy, physiology, exercise physiology, biomechanics, growth and motor development, skill acquisition and psycho-social aspects of physical activity), Health and Nutrition
- (b) Skills: fundamental motor skills, ball handling, dance, games, fitness education, athletics, aquatics, sport education

A current first aid certificate (Emergency First Aid Level 2) and a current AustSwim Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate are required

**PHILOSOPHY**

Sub-major study in Philosophy

**POLITICS (including International Relations)**

Sub-major study in Politics

**PSYCHOLOGY**

Sub-major study in Psychology

**SCIENCE—General**

- (a) Sub-major study in one of Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science (Geology), Environmental Science, Physics

*together with* a Part in another of these areas of study

- (b) Sub-major in General Science

**SCIENCE—Senior Secondary**

Sub-major study in one of the following specialist science areas:

Biology – includes genetics, human biology, microbiology, botany, zoology

Chemistry – includes biochemistry

Earth Science – includes geology

Environmental Science – includes areas such as environmental science, environmental engineering, natural resource management, environmental management, biological sciences, chemistry, geography, earth science

Physics – includes electronics

### **STUDIES OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT (SOSE)**

Sub-major study in one of the following: Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Economics, Environmental Studies, Geography, History, Indigenous Studies, Legal Studies, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology

*together with a Part in another of these areas of study*

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION or SPECIAL EDUCATION (Hearing Impaired)**

One year of appropriate higher education study in Special Education

All programs or program combinations should equip prospective special education teachers with:

- a sound knowledge and first-hand experience of working with students with disabilities/impairments
- knowledge and skills in behavioural management
- knowledge and skills in educational assessment and specific assessments (as appropriate for various settings)
- a knowledge of relevant support services and communication systems for students with disabilities/impairments
- knowledge and skills in curriculum development relevant for students with particular disabilities
- some experience in the skills of consulting/negotiating/facilitating as related to the role of an integration teacher
- the ability to communicate with students with disabilities or impairments (including deaf or visually impaired students as appropriate), their parents and support staff.

Special education graduates should have completed at least forty-five days of appropriate practical experiences, including a minimum of thirty days of supervised special education school experience in a variety of settings

### **STUDENT WELFARE**

Sub-major study in Student Welfare or related area such as Counselling, Social Work, Youth Work

### **TECHNOLOGY STUDIES**

One year of study in Technology Studies which includes studies in a range of materials and systems

Teachers who wish to specialise in a particular material or system, such as Agriculture, Automotive Studies, Electronics, Food (including Food Preparation and Food Technology), Horticulture, Metalwork, Textiles/Clothing or Wood, must hold one of the following in the specialist area:

- (a) Sub-major study in the specialist area *or*
- (b) Industry or Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications equivalent to Certificate IV or higher in the specialist area *or*
- (c) Certificate of Proficiency in a relevant trade area

### **TESOL (Teaching English to Speaker of Other Languages)**

Sub-major study in one of Linguistics *or* a second language (i.e. not the teacher's first language) *or*

Appropriate TESOL Studies that includes the following core content:

- the nature of the English language and the learning of English including formal systems, spoken and written discourse, language and social context, and bi/multilingual language and literacy development
- the socio-cultural context of TESOL including educational, cultural, historical and inter-group issues and the implications for teaching and learning
- acquisition of English as a second or additional language. The study of how a second or additional language is acquired with reference to English with implications for TESOL pedagogy
- the institutional context of TESOL including the role of the TESOL teacher in the school organisation, with parents (as appropriate) and the wider community.

*together with* teaching methodology which covers TESOL principles and approaches for a range of educational contexts, including factors affecting the development of language proficiency, and assessment procedures to facilitate appropriate placement of students with ESL needs

### **VET (Vocational Education and Training)**

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or an approved equivalent

Occupational Health and Safety knowledge to deliver the particular Certificate units of competence, where appropriate

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