

Review of the Victorian Institute of Teaching's Permission to Teach policy and processes

Background

On 18 December 2024, the Victorian Institute of Teaching (the Institute) received a Direction from the Minister for Education to undertake a review of

- a. the Institute's approach to assessing applications for registration as a teacher from applicants who have completed overseas teaching qualifications and taught overseas (**Report 1**); and
- b. the Institute's approach to granting permission to teach, its permission to teach policy and the application of that policy (**Report 2**).

Report 1 was submitted to the Minister on 28 February 2025 and Report 2 is due to 30 April 2025.

The Institute will undertake further targeted consultation on any supported recommendations arising from the reports.

Written submissions

Written submissions responding to the elements related to Permission to Teach are invited from key stakeholders. Respondents are welcome to address all questions or only those of particular relevance or interest.

Respondents are also invited to share any additional feedback that is not encompassed in their responses to these questions.

Respondents can share their feedback by e-mailing responses in the attached form to Hannah.Galloway@vit.vic.edu.au by **COB 21 March 2025**.

Elements for review

The review related to PTT is to address the following

1. the Institute's approach to granting PTT, its PTT policy and the application of that policy, including by having regard to
 - a. whether the PTT policy is fit for purpose and whether the requirements for a grant of each category of PTT are clear and appropriate
 - b. opportunities to streamline the PTT policy and whether any categories of PTT could be consolidated
 - c. possible options for improving the PTT policy, including improving the clarity and readability of the policy so that it is accessible and clear to stakeholders
 - d. possible options to improve consistency in the Institute's assessment of applications for PTT and the outcomes of these assessments
 - e. the Institute's approach to imposing conditions under section 2.6.14(2) of the Act when granting PTT, in particular
 - i. whether conditions are imposed consistently
 - ii. whether conditions are imposed and designed having regard to the individual circumstances of the applicant; and
 - iii. the Institute's approach to determining what subjects or subject areas an applicant is permitted to teach, including evidentiary requirements; and
 - f. possible options to improve the way decisions on applications for PTT are communicated to applicants and provide them with clear reasons and information on
 - i. any conditions imposed on a grant of PTT under section 2.6.14(2) of the Act and why those conditions have been imposed; and
 - ii. in the case of unsuccessful applicants
 1. why their application was unsuccessful; and
 2. what is required in order for the applicant to be eligible for a grant of PTT.

Background and context

1. Permission to Teach

Division 4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2005* outlines the requirements for an applicant to apply for, and the Institute to grant, Permission to Teach (PTT).

To teach in Victoria, a person must be appropriately qualified and suitable to teach and hold registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

PTT is an alternative authorisation to teach that exists primarily to address a workforce shortage within Victorian schools.

PTT enables an individual who does not meet the qualification requirements for registration to undertake the duties of a teacher in a limited capacity based on their skills and experience.

Permission to Teach policy

The requirements of PTT are articulated in [VIT's Permission to Teach Policy](#), last approved by the Minister for Education on 31 October 2022.

There are 10 categories of PTT in the policy.

PTT category	Intent of category of PTT
PTT (General)	This is a general category of PTT and applies to individuals seeking permission to teach a particular subject (or subjects) at a particular school.
PTT (Internship)	This category applies to applicants undertaking an accredited employment-based Internship to teacher registration such as the Teach for Australia (TFA) program or the Master of Teaching (Internship) at the University of Melbourne. This category only applies to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs accredited by the Institute as an Internship ITE program. PTT (Internship) cannot be granted to an individual for two or more schools concurrently. PTT (Internship) is granted for the duration of the ITE program up to the maximum permissible 3 year grant period. PTT (Internship) applies to a particular subject/s (or subject areas) at a particular school.
PTT (VET)	This category applies to applicants seeking permission to teach a Vocational Education and Training (VET) subject/s in a school. Holders of PTT (VET) are able to teach a particular subject/s in any Victorian school.
PTT (Exchange)	This category applies to the Victorian International Teaching Fellowship (VITF) coordinated by the Department of Education and Training. Holders of this category cannot be granted PTT to teach a specific subject as the teachers engaged through the VITF have exchanged roles with Victorian registered teachers. PTT (Exchange) is granted only for a maximum period of 12 months. Individuals holding PTT (Exchange) who wish to continue to teach beyond the 12-month grant are required to make an application for registration or PTT. Future exchange programs will be considered on a case by case basis.
PTT (JSM)	This category of PTT applies only to those teachers appointed by the Japanese Government to teach the Japanese curriculum at the Japanese School of Melbourne (JSM). Holders of this category cannot be granted PTT to

	teach a specific subject as the teachers are engaged as generalist teachers within the school. The JSM is registered as a 'specific purpose' school by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) to deliver an overseas curriculum. Future 'specific purpose' schools registered by the VRQA to deliver an overseas curriculum will be considered on a case by case basis.
PTT (VCASS)	This category of PTT applies only to individuals seeking permission to teach dance and music at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS).
PTT (Deemed)	This category only applies to applicants who were deemed to hold PTT when the VIT was established in 2002 and who have maintained this status ever since. Individuals holding this category of PTT are required to make an annual declaration in order to continue to hold this category of PTT.
PTT (Teacher tutor)	This category of PTT is granted to individuals to support students in catching up with any learning they may have missed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Holders of PTT (Teacher Tutor) are able to tutor in one or more subject areas / key learning areas in any Victorian school, under the Victorian Government's Tutor Learning Initiative.
PTT (Aboriginal languages)	This category of PTT is granted to applicants delivering an Aboriginal language program in any Victorian school.
PTT (Higher Education Studies)	This category of PTT is granted to applicants seeking permission to teach one or more higher education studies subjects to school aged learners in a Victorian school setting. This category only applies to currently practising academic staff from Victorian higher education providers employed in an approved school setting such as the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES).

Each category of PTT was designed for a specific purpose and has minor differences in eligibility requirements and the conditions that apply.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for a grant of PTT, an applicant will generally need to provide the following

1. evidence of appropriate content knowledge of the subject area/s that they will be teaching
2. evidence of their skills and experience to build positive relationships with students
3. evidence of their ability to maintain safe learning environments
4. evidence of their ability use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective learning
5. evidence of English language competency
6. evidence of their suitability to be registered as a teacher.

An employer may also be required to demonstrate proven teacher workforce shortage prior to commencing an application for PTT.

Conditions

The Institute is able to apply any condition on a grant of PTT under section 2.6.14(2) of the Act, with the most common being

- the grant is limited to teach specific subjects or subject areas at a particular school, and therefore cannot be used to undertake casual relief teaching

- the PTT holder is expected to [progress toward teacher registration](#), which most commonly means completing an accredited ITE program.
- professional learning activities.

Additional conditions may vary depending on the individual circumstance of the applicant, these may include

- requirement to improve English language skills if below requisite standard
- specified professional learning activities
- suitability conditions.

Written submission form

Relevant elements for review	Question	Response
Permission to Teach		
1 (i, ii, iii)	<p>Do you consider the PTT policy is fit for purpose?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are the categories of PTT clear and appropriate? are there any opportunities consolidate categories of PTT? could the PTT policy be revised to improve the clarity and readability of the policy so that it is accessible and clear to stakeholders? 	<p>Communication of the policy and expectations</p> <p>Whilst the policy is detailed and substantial in length it provides clarity related to the approval of PTT.</p> <p>There could be opportunities to better engage stakeholders (Principals) ensuring that the policy is easily accessible to both Principals and staff seeking permission to teach as the policy will help inform process. Any opportunity to build this into the process would be useful as the document is very long.</p> <p>To support the Policy a Fact Sheet is available, which outlines information for the application process and terms by which application can be made. Again, drawing attention to the Fact Sheet for stakeholders would help reduce potential confusion re what those with PTT can and cannot do.</p> <p>With regards to consolidating categories, DOSCEL has only applied and been granted PTT (General) and PTT (VET). In 2027 DOSCEL Accelerated Bachelor of Education (Primary) participants will be granted PTT (Internship).</p> <p>Keeping the categories separate is recommended, to make clear the different PTT types thus ensuring Principals are applying appropriately for what they require.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p><i>A compulsory step within the VIT Employer Portal, when completing the PTT application, to ask "Have you read the PTT Fact Sheet", and provide a link at this step.</i></p>

1(iv, v)	<p>To what extent do you consider the Institute could improve its consistency of assessments of applications for PTT? Are there example(s) that you are aware of where consistency of decision making has been an identified issue.</p>	<p>DOSCEL assumes that an increase in applications over recent years has impacted the processing time for applications – especially over the peak period of December, January and February. Some schools report that it can take up to six weeks for some approvals. This time frame presents difficulty for principals seeking to confirm staffing. There have been other examples of inconsistencies re approvals. One school was approved at 1.0 for a 3rd year candidate application and another only 0.6 FTE. VIT confirmed this as an error.</p> <p>Principals utilise their VIT Employer Portal to submit their PTT application. Once this is submitted, VIT will review the application to ensure it meets criteria. If the principal application meets criteria, communication is sent to the PTT candidate for their required documentation. Principals report frustration at the inability to track progress of applications with limited feedback during the application phase. No updates are available for the duration of the application, only that it is pending, or it has finally been granted/rejected, upon completion. This is further complicated when PTT candidate's correspondence has gone to Junk email. Stakeholders (VIT, Principals, Candidate) wait unknowingly, for the next move. This could be weeks, before the principal contacts VIT for an update on the progress of the application as there are no notifications during the application process.</p> <p>There have been wonderings why each application is treated the same, even when prior approval has been granted. The question has been asked if there should be a modified process for repeat applications and if this would improve the timing and approval for application.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p><i>To have a dated progress bar within the VIT Employer Portal to advise which step the application has progressed to. If the principal sees communication has been sent to the PTT candidate, they can prompt the Candidate for action. If time has progressed with little to no action, the principal could follow up.</i></p>
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1(iv, v)	<p>To what extent are conditions on Permission to Teach understood? For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restrictions on the duties of a teacher that a PTT holder can undertake (including subject areas) • the requirement to progress towards teacher registration • the requirements for supervision and mentoring from the employer. 	<p>The conditions are articulated through policy however it is perceived that some of these conditions are limiting opportunity to engage PTTs in different experiences e.g. Emergency Teaching, camps etc.</p> <p>DOSCEL is aware of circumstances in some jurisdictions where PTT registered teachers are asked to complete more tasks than are allowed by the PTT holder i.e. yard duties, other methods of teaching, more days than allowed. It is clear that some daily organisers are not aware of the conditions under which a PTT holder is employed and unknowingly schedule tasks outside of these conditions.</p> <p>Supporting schools (Principals) to understand these conditions and why they are in place may be useful, particularly as there is the real need to balance the role of PTT with successful completion of ITE training.</p> <p>In 2024 DOSCEL initiated a PTT online forum to support DOSCEL schools to understand relevant conditions.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p><i>PTTs are not qualified teachers; therefore the role of a mentor is both critical and different to a Graduate Teacher. A requirement as part of the application could be to nominate a supervising/mentor teacher who has or will participate in a VIT Mentor Program in support of the PTT candidate. Naming this person at the time of application will provide the first step to consider the greater needs for a PTT to be mentored, effectively and objectively driven.</i></p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p><i>VIT follow up a random sample of PTT holders to review the expectations and support provided by schools to assist the development of further FAQs that provide details of supportive practice in schools.</i></p>
1(vi)	<p>Are there any areas where the Institute could improve communications with unsuccessful applicants and their employers on the way decisions are made and provide them with clear information on</p>	<p>Feedback indicates confusion in relation to the language of third year and fourth year ITE. There are examples where applications have not been approved despite people being in their third year of a four-year program. Clarity related to units completed as a measure would be useful, particularly with online ITE courses as some applicants maybe in their third year however have only completed one unit within each year i.e. years vs completed credited units. This may support reduced confusion as to why some applications are not approved.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> any conditions imposed on a grant of PTT under section 2.6.14(2) of the Act and why those conditions have been imposed; and in the case of unsuccessful applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> why their application was unsuccessful; and what is required in order for the applicant to be eligible for a grant of PTT. 	
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Please provide a summary of no more than 500 words for your responses to the above questions

Clearly PTT applications and approvals have increased as a response to COVID and the teacher shortage. This represents a challenge for schools given the priority to have qualified staff working within the school. However, a tension exists between this need and the intent of PTT as a temporary measure.

With an increase of PTT applications due to teacher shortage it remains critical that PTT not be viewed as an enduring registration category. PTT must be short-term with the intent that the registrant become a fully qualified teacher through an accredited ITE. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is clearly the intent of VIT, communication at all stages of the application process to reinforce this intent would be helpful.

Finally, the process of application would be enhanced with the provision of prompts within the application process to ensure Principals fully understand the requirements and conditions under which the PTT will be granted. A dated progress bar within the VIT Employer Portal to advise the progression of the application would be a welcomed enhancement to the process for principals.