

# 2003

*A 10 Year Journey*

# 2013

## TEACHING AS A REGULATED PROFESSION

On 31 December 2002, teaching in Victoria became a regulated profession for the first time. The Victorian Institute of Teaching became fully operational, and provided the first ever single register of all teachers eligible for employment in Victorian schools. 77,606 teachers received what became known as 'deemed' registration, and were joined by new graduates to form the first professionally regulated teaching body in Victoria.

Although there had been other forms of registration in the past through bodies such as the Registered Schools' Board for non-government schools, this was the first ever single, regularly updated register of all teachers in the state.

Prior to regulation, there was no assurance for the general public that every teacher in every classroom was appropriately qualified, met the standards of the profession on an ongoing basis, and had a current satisfactory criminal record check.

Regulation sought to establish a professional culture across the board for all Victorian teachers, based on certain assumptions: that teaching is a constantly evolving, complex and dynamic professional activity; that professional learning extends far beyond graduation; and that all teachers have a collective responsibility for the growth of their colleagues and of their profession. Today, after a decade as a regulated profession, there are nearly 119,000 teachers on the public Register.

professional  
PRACTICE



*Value learning. Value teaching.*

### NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 14 | MAY 2013

*Professional Practice* is the official newsletter of the Victorian Institute of Teaching and is used to communicate important policy decisions and developments that may affect a teacher's registration. It provides a forum for the discussion of professional issues most relevant to teachers: their learning, their practice and values. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not of the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

# 2003

## 82,055

### Registered Teachers

LEGISLATION

REGISTRATION

PROFESSIONAL  
STANDARDS

RECORD CHECKS

ACCREDITATION OF  
TEACHER EDUCATION

RENEWAL OF  
REGISTRATION

CODE OF ETHICS

CODE OF CONDUCT

SUPPORT FOR  
NEW TEACHERS

SUPPORT  
FOR CRTs

LEGISLATION  
CHANGES

FORMAL AND  
INFORMAL HEARINGS

NATIONAL  
CONSISTENCY

# 2013

## 119,000

### Registered Teachers

*Here are some of the significant events along that ten year journey...*

## 2002

- The first public Register of all teachers in Victoria was established on 31 December 2002.

## 2003

- Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration were developed through consultation with the whole of the profession, and given Ministerial approval in 2003.
- Review and approval of teacher education courses commenced.
- Formal hearings into allegations against registered teachers commenced.

## 2004

- An evidence-based process was implemented to enable provisionally registered teachers to demonstrate the Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration, and a support process was established, including the formal establishment of teacher mentors.

## 2005

- The Future Teachers Project was initiated to look at processes to accredit initial teacher education programs.
- The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Ethics was launched in September 2005.

## 2006

- The process of renewal of registration was introduced. Through consultation with key stakeholders, benchmarks were set for required days of teaching and hours of professional development necessary for teachers to meet the standards of the profession on an ongoing basis.

## 2007

- *The Education and Training Reform Act 2006* was proclaimed in July 2007. It amalgamated all of the Acts in relation to education and training.
- Routine criminal record checks for registered teachers were introduced.

## 2008

- The Australasian Teacher Registration Authorities (ATRA) was launched in February 2008 to ensure that all teacher regulation authorities worked together to progress national frameworks and create a sound platform for comprehensive research.
- The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct was launched in June 2008.
- Regular surveying of registered teachers commenced.

## 2009

- The National Partnership Agreement on Teacher Quality was implemented, with a view to establishing national consistency in teacher registration.

## 2011

- *The Education and Training Reform Amendment Act 2010* and *The Education and Training Reform Further Amendment Act 2010* were proclaimed January 2011. Amendments included changes to registration, renewal of registration, permission to teach and disciplinary processes. The amendments ensured that the Institute has relevant and contemporary powers to regulate the teaching profession in Victoria.
- The amendments also changed part of the function of the Victorian Institute of Teaching from 'promote the profession of teaching' to 'recognise and promote the role and activities of the Institute'.

- Registered teachers moved to a common annual payment date, and began moving toward annual renewal of registration, with revisions made to the required days of teaching and hours of professional development.
- Ongoing Victoria Police checks for registered teachers commenced.

## 2012

- English language requirements for registration increased, consistent with other Australian teacher regulation authorities.
- Preparations commenced for the move towards national consistencies in teacher registration.

# COMING UP IN 2013

## RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES

In 2013, the date for payment of the annual fee will be 30 September. If you also need to renew your registration or update your criminal record check, you'll do everything as part of one online process. This will occur in Term 3, and you'll receive more information in the coming weeks.

You will be required to renew once you have received your annual invoice in Term 3, but now it is important that you keep a record of your professional practice, including your hours of professional development. More information can be found on the Institute website < [www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au) > under 'I want to renew my registration.'



## TEACHERS WHO DON'T HAVE A MyVIT ACCOUNT

Not all teachers currently have a MyVIT account. If you don't have a MyVIT account, don't worry. You will be sent information about how to create your account before you receive your annual invoice. Remember that it is important to keep the Institute updated with your contact details – including your current email address – so that you always receive important information relating to your registration.



## CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS – SAME CHECK, NEW NAME

The next time you are required by the Institute to have a criminal record check, which is conducted by the Commonwealth agency CrimTrac, you may notice a change in the online form you use. In the near future we expect to be moving to a new-look form called the criminal record check (National Police History Check) form. There is no change to the information required, and all our forms will be updated to incorporate the name change.

Once the change occurs, anyone who is due for a criminal record check will use the updated form. A clear and satisfactory criminal record check conducted through the Institute will exempt you from requiring a Working With Children Check.





## A NEW PROCESS FOR GAINING FULL REGISTRATION IN 2013

For teachers who became provisionally registered or re-registered after 30 September 2012, there is a new process for gaining full registration, using an inquiry-focused approach to gathering evidence. This new process for 2013 meets national consistencies and references the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Last year the Institute trialled the new process with a group of teachers. One of those teachers was Samantha Masters. Having graduated as a mature aged student with an Undergraduate Degree in Primary Teaching (P-6) in 2010, she was working last year as a one year part-time family relief art teacher at Urquhart Park Primary School when she participated in the trial. Here are her thoughts about the process:

"The trial made reading a must and I was amazed at how much deeper thinking I was able to engage in after being prompted by the framework literature including the proficiency check-lists etc.

"We were asked through a process of self-reflection to choose a question for the purpose of investigation and deeper understanding. I chose 'classroom management' as I had found that the successful outcomes of the art classroom were determined on several factors including a blend of explicit teaching, targeted individual instruction, effective behaviour management and time management.

"The class that I chose to base my study on had a small focus group of four students, all with different learning needs including ADHD and limited learning ability due to mental insufficiency.

*"My lessons with this particular class had always been challenging and exhausting due to the opportunity for things to 'go wrong', resulting in a less than fulfilling experience for my students and for me."*

### How did Samantha feel about the outcomes?

"The outcomes of my study and the opportunity to reflect deeply on the structure of my lessons and the resulting changes, made me realise that I could have a profound effect on not only my enjoyment of teaching this class, but on the level of participation and satisfaction from the students.

"As a graduate teacher (and even beyond) we tend to 'cope' with the situations that we are confronted with rather than look for ways to improve on our own teaching because of the pressures and time constraints we are faced with. The trial presented us with questions that required further investigation and reference to the Standards and PoLT, hence allowing us

to be critical of our own practice.

"My lessons with the study class, and indeed my other classes, improved significantly in terms of time and behaviour management as I had developed strategies to maintain levels of engagement for individual students. This meant that the lessons ran smoothly and had clear time definitions so that the students were aware of how long would be devoted to my introductions, demonstrations and clean-up.

"My mentor teacher was required to sit in for a period of time in three of my lessons with the study class and his evaluations clearly acknowledged my own observations."

### Any reflections on the new process?

"I had not really familiarised myself too much with the old process. I do, however, feel that the new proficiency standards process is easier from the point of view of not having to choose from three options and it is certainly better adapted to suit the range of teachers that schools employ including CRTs and Specialists.

"The inclusion of a template to structure the process around was also very useful as it gave us a starting point and something that we could come back to so that we could be certain we had fulfilled all of the criteria necessary for investigation."

### Would you have any advice for provisionally registered teachers about to commence the process?

"If I had any advice to offer it would be to use the process as an aide rather than see it as extra work. Make sure the question that you base your investigation around is one that you really want to know more about and not one that will just impress your audience. Most of all, don't overwork it. Keep it simple and relevant.

"Mentors can help their graduates by ensuring that they are available to discuss observations and by providing relevant and helpful criticisms rather than negative criticisms that might foster self-doubt.

"Most of all, mentors need to fully understand the process so that they can be of assistance if the graduate is unclear, although I think that this will come with time after experienced teachers become familiar with the new process."

If you are a provisionally registered teacher who gained registration after 30 September 2012, find out more, by going to < [www.vit.vic.edu.au/prt](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/prt) > and click on the sections labelled: PROCESS FROM 1/1/13.





# victorian institute of teaching

## FORMAL HEARING DECISIONS

Here is a summary of a recent Formal Hearing decision and key learnings that can be useful for all teachers in their practice.

### Accessing inappropriate subjects on school supplied laptop

A teacher was found guilty of serious misconduct and unfit to teach as a result of accessing pornography on a school-supplied laptop where students were able to access these images. The teacher made it clear that they did not download or view the material during school time. This was confirmed by the Investigator. The Panel found credible the claims of three female students, recorded in the Investigator's report, that they were harassed by male students into accessing and viewing the offensive material while the class was temporarily unsupervised. The fact that students were able to photograph the videos and images with their mobile phones raised the distinct possibility of their content going viral throughout the school and beyond.

The Panel made it clear that the teacher's competence as a teacher was not an issue in the allegations. The allegations related to serious misconduct in first downloading the pornographic videos and images on to a leased notebook computer in contravention of employer policies related to notebook use, and then inadvertently allowing situations to occur in the teacher's classrooms which enabled students to access and copy them.

The Panel concluded that the actions constituted serious misconduct and had the potential to bring the profession as a whole into disrepute and that the teacher was not presently fit to teach. Their registration was cancelled.

### Key learnings

The teacher acknowledged that downloading this material to a school-supplied laptop was a breach of school policy. Aside from this issue, the teacher's actions in bringing a computer into the classroom and subsequently allowing students to use it, were foolish and careless in the extreme, given the teacher knew the contents of the computer. They showed little consideration for the professional standards and duty of care required in dealing with young people. They affected not only the students involved in the incidents referred to in the allegations, but had the potential to affect a myriad of other students who may have been exposed to the material recorded on mobile phones by the teacher's students.

Such actions have the potential to bring the profession itself into disrepute because they clearly transgress the ethical and professional behaviour expected of a teacher as codified in the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct. The teacher had not sufficiently understood or appreciated the full import of Principle 2.1;

*"The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and the profession as a whole."*



## HAVE YOU MOVED HOUSE OR CHANGED EMAIL ADDRESS RECENTLY?

During the year you will receive important information from the Victorian Institute of Teaching, including your annual invoice. Make sure you receive it, by updating your details with us.

*It's a good idea to update this regularly – don't just let your employer know, let us know too.*

To update your details go to < [www.vit.vic.edu.au/updatedetails](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/updatedetails) >.

## DID YOU BECOME FULLY REGISTERED ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 2012?

If so, don't worry, you won't need to renew your registration in 2013. When you become fully registered, the first time you will be expected to renew will be the common date of 30 September, but it must be at least 12 months from the date of your full registration.

So – you will renew on the 30 September on or after the first anniversary of the date when

you became fully registered. If you became fully registered between 1 October 2012 and 30 September 2013, you will be expected to renew on 30 September 2014.

**Editor:**  
Damian Cowell

**Design by:**  
Catherine Howarth Creative

**Published by:**  
Victorian Institute of Teaching  
©The State of Victoria  
Victorian Institute of Teaching  
May 2013

Copyright protects this publication. All rights reserved. Permission is given for copying of this document for use within all school sectors and for purposes permitted by the Copyright Act 1968.

Other reproduction by whatever means is prohibited without the prior written permission of the Victorian Institute of Teaching, Victoria.

**Contact us:**  
Telephone: 1300 888 067  
Fax: (03) 8601 5801  
Email: [vit@vit.vic.edu.au](mailto:vit@vit.vic.edu.au)

**Write:**  
PO Box 531  
Collins Street West  
Victoria 8007 Australia

**Visit:**  
Level 24 Marland House  
570 Bourke Street  
Melbourne 3000

**Website:**  
[www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)