



(left) Institute Manager, Professional Standards, Rhonda McPhee talks about registration renewal at a recent seminar.

## A TIME FOR RENEWAL

From 2011 onwards, September 30 will be a significant date in the teaching profession calendar. All teachers with full registration are required to renew their registration regularly but the time frame is changing. What was previously a five-year process will become an annual process. As teachers are granted full registration or end their current renewal period, they will move to an annual process that will occur on 30 September every year.

Teachers currently granted a five-year period of renewal of registration will move to annual renewal when their five year period of registration expires.

Teachers newly granted full registration will also renew their registration on 30 September of that year and annually after that.

This issue of *Professional Practice* looks at renewal of registration and some of the most frequently asked questions.

# Professional PRACTICE



victorian institute  
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*Value learning. Value teaching.*

## NEWSLETTER

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*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.



Renewal of registration

# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR TEACHERS

In seeking to create productive learning experiences for their students, teachers constantly review and reflect on their professional knowledge and the effectiveness of their teaching practice. They utilise opportunities to expand their knowledge and develop further as practitioners. Renewal of registration articulates the importance of teachers remaining current in their knowledge and practice, and acknowledges the learning teachers undertake to do this.

## What is required for renewal of registration?

Teachers apply for renewal of registration by completing a simple self declaration about their continuing suitability to teach and their maintenance of professional practice

Continuing suitability to teach requires teachers to have:

- a current and satisfactory National Criminal History Record Check
- made declarations related to any relevant charges or convictions of offences and disciplinary action in relation to professional conduct, competence or capacity as a teacher that have occurred since their last renewal of registration application
- given authorisation for the Institute to conduct ongoing police record checks during the period of registration.

Continuing maintenance of professional practice requires teachers to declare that they have undertaken a defined number of:

- days teaching, equivalent practice or educational leadership
- hours of standards referenced professional development activities that update knowledge about pedagogy, content and/or practice.

As occurs in most professions, a random selection of teachers will be asked to provide evidence to verify their professional practice declarations.

### Teaching, equivalent practice or educational leadership

Teachers maintain their currency of practice by working, in a paid or voluntary capacity, with students in Victorian primary, secondary or special schools.

In some circumstances teachers will be teaching children in other settings and may be teaching adults. Where the work they undertake involves making judgements about student learning and modifying and adapting content and teaching practice to engage students in learning, then there is direct relationship with the professional standards and this is recognised as equivalent practice.

Some teachers do not teach students but the work they do in leadership has a direct influence on the teaching and learning of students. The practice of these teachers is recognised as educational leadership for renewal of registration.

### Standards referenced professional development activities

All registered teachers are required to engage in standards-referenced professional development activities that update knowledge about pedagogy, content and/or practice. There is no list of recommended activities because the teaching context and stage of development of every teacher will be different. The Institute believes that teachers are best able to articulate their professional needs by considering their knowledge and practice in relation to the students they teach and the standards of professional practice.

Teachers can search for standards referenced professional development activities at *Pdi*, the Institute managed PD database. Go to <[www.pdi.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.pdi.vit.vic.edu.au)>

However, the Institute does require a minimum number of hours of professional development activities as shown in the following table below;

Registration renewal period	Professional development hours*
5 years	At least 100 hours
1 year	At least 20 hours

\*Standards referenced professional development activities updating knowledge about pedagogy, content and/or practice.



### Keeping records of professional development activities and professional practice

It's important that teachers are able to verify the declarations they make when applying for renewal of registration. Therefore, they should keep records of their teaching practice and the professional development activities they undertake.

### Currency of practice

Currency of practice can be verified through statements of service, letters from school principals or employers, pay slips, group certificates and similar documents. A letter of appointment is useful but there also needs to be evidence of having continued in the position for the days required.

### Professional development hours

Professional development hours require both evidence of PD activities having been undertaken and evidence that they relate to the standards of professional practice.

Evidence of the PD activity being undertaken can be provided through certificates of attendance, school principal or employer verification or certification where a formally recognised program or course is completed.

Evidence a PD activity relates to the standards can be provided through either:

- accessing the activity from the Pdi website because every activity is referenced to the standards; or
- documenting a reflection about the nature of the activity, the knowledge gained and how this has or will be applied to teaching practice to improve student learning.

Detailed information about the renewal of registration requirements can be found on the Institute website at <[www.vit.vic.edu.au/registration/i-want-to-renew-my-registration](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registration/i-want-to-renew-my-registration)>.

### Teachers unable to renew their registration

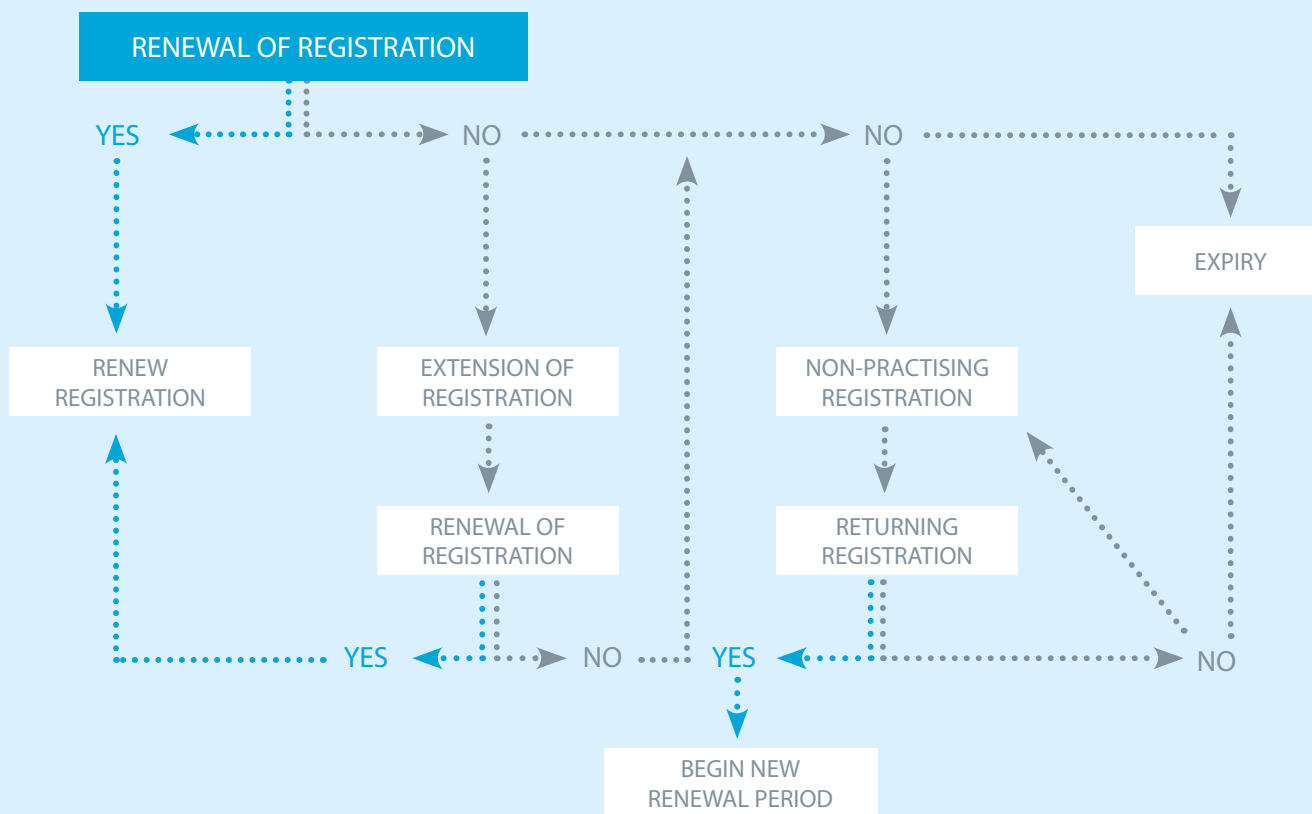
If a teacher cannot meet the professional practice requirement for renewal of registration when completing their application they have a number of options available to them.

- Where there are extenuating circumstances and this has not previously been given, they may request an extension of their registration for a further 12 months. At the end of the 12 months they will be required to apply for renewal of registration in relation to the requirements applying when they were granted an extension.  
Circumstances such as caring for family and illness would be considered extenuating.
- They may apply for 'non-practising' registration. This registration category allows a teacher to remain registered, with their suitability to be a teacher and National Criminal History Record Check (NCHRC) recognised. However, they are unable to work in Victorian primary, secondary or special schools while holding 'non-practising' registration.

Teachers with 'non-practising' registration who want to teach in a Victorian primary, secondary or special school need to request from the Institute 'returning' registration, which is granted for up to 12 months. During that time a teacher would need to complete at least 10 days or pro rata teaching, educational leadership or equivalent practice and 20 hours or pro rata of standards referenced professional development activities to be granted full registration and begin a new renewal cycle.

- They can let their registration lapse. When they want to teach in a Victorian primary, secondary or special school they will need to submit a new registration application.

### Flow chart for teachers renewing registration





## Renewal of registration

# TEACHERS' PRACTICE

With the pace of change in teaching and learning increasing, it's only natural that schools are also changing. The flow-on effect for teachers is the need to rethink what happens in the classroom to accommodate change and to ensure their students are equipped for the future. While some traditional teaching practices and approaches stand the test of time, others will need to be modified or even discarded. For educators this presents a challenge, the importance of which is confirmed in recent studies by researchers such as John Hattie, whose work shows that teachers make a difference to the learning of students.

This is the understanding that lies at the heart of teacher renewal of registration. When teachers update their knowledge of pedagogy, content and/or practice and transfer it to their teaching context, they support effective and relevant learning for their students.

## Renewal IS Professional Development and Learning

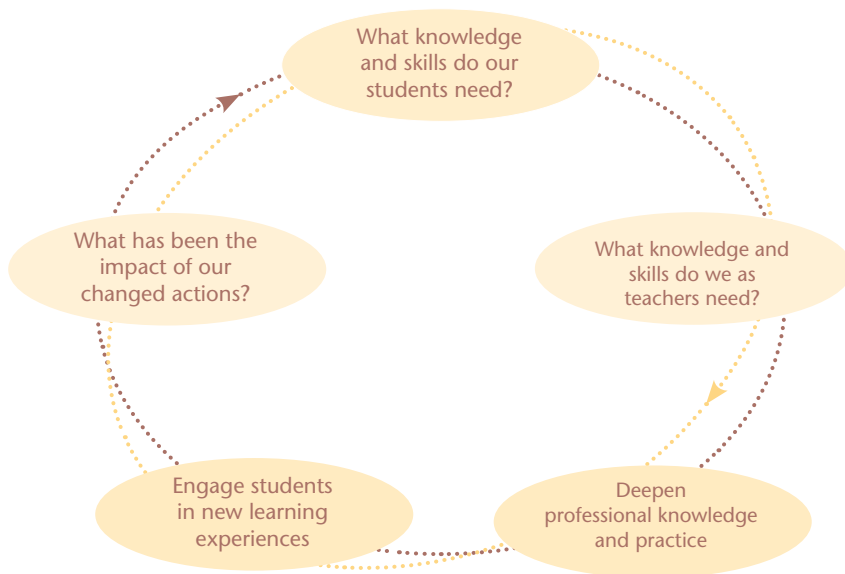
This rapid change has resulted in a plethora of professional development and learning opportunities. With this comes discussion around what constitutes the best professional development and what will be accepted by the Institute for renewal of registration requirements. Teachers may ask: *Is the after school PD session best? What about the conference I attend? What about the professional reading that I undertake?* Determination of the value of any professional development activity undertaken by a teacher rests with the teacher. If the activity updates knowledge of pedagogy, content and/or practice and is critically appraised by the teacher in the context of their current and future students' learning needs, then it will be acknowledged by the Institute for the purpose of renewal of registration.

When a teacher with full registration renews their registration they declare their completion of a designated number of hours of professional development activities. This requirement is not an 'add on' to the work of a teacher but integral to their work. Those aspects of being part of a professional school community such as curriculum days, peer coaching, classroom observations and professional reading can constitute the professional development hours required for renewal.

Professional development activities outside a school can also contribute to teacher knowledge and practice and when teachers make the connection between this learning and apply it to improve the learning of their students, then it can also contribute to renewal of registration.

## Using Standards of Professional Practice

All professional development activities teachers undertake to renew their registration must reference the Institute standards of professional practice. The standards give the profession a language to describe expectations about teacher knowledge and practice and provide the basis for collegial interaction. When used in conjunction with an inquiry and knowledge-building cycle, as represented below, they become sign-posts for teachers.



(Timperley et al., 2008)

Teachers use the standards as a reference point for their knowledge and practice in an inquiry and knowledge-building cycle. This provides a way for teachers to select relevant professional development activities and review their value in relation to the learning needs of their students.

Teachers who are able to integrate assessment of student learning and reflection on their practice into their day-to-day work will be continually learning as professional educators. When this happens renewal of professional practice is not a one-off rather something that is constantly visible in a teacher's practice.

Teachers who do this will be able to articulate the purpose for engaging in professional development activities and the effect on their practice and the learning of their students. When the time for renewal of registration rolls around, there won't be a scramble to document ad hoc PD activities to ensure the necessary hours have been achieved. A clear purpose and outcome for the teacher's professional learning will be apparent and if reflections on practice have been kept, this will be easily evidenced.

### References

Calnin, G (2006) – Principles of Effective Professional Learning (AISV Research) <[www.independentschools.vic.edu.au/schools/pubs/RSnov06v1iss2.pdf](http://www.independentschools.vic.edu.au/schools/pubs/RSnov06v1iss2.pdf)>

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Timperley, H and Parr, J (2010) - Weaving Evidence, Inquiry and Standards to Build Better Schools

*'What we want for our children, we should also want for their teachers-that schools be places of learning for both of them and that such learning be suffused with excitement, engagement, passion, challenge, creativity and joy.'*

*Andy Hargreaves*

*'What teachers know and do, what they care about and how they manage the learning for their students will have a significant effect on what those students learn'*

*John Hattie*

Institute Manager,  
Professional Learning  
Dawn Colcott talks  
to CRTs about the  
requirements for  
registration renewal



Registration Renewal for

# CASUAL RELIEF TEACHERS AND TEACHERS NOT IN SCHOOLS

Full registration requires all teachers to maintain their professional practice and suitability to be a teacher through the renewal of registration process. The currency of knowledge and practice expected of a teacher applies to all fully registered teachers regardless of their employment situation. To be able to teach effectively for student learning, a teacher working part time or in casual relief teaching should have current professional knowledge and practice. This is a public expectation of all people working in professions.

The Institute recognises that casual relief teachers and teachers returning to the workforce (CRTs) sometimes have less opportunity to know about and engage in professional development activities. As a consequence, the Institute has established a supporting CRT program. This aims to provide information about professional development activities CRTs can access to support their maintenance of professional practice for renewal of registration.

## Seminars

Full-day seminars at no cost to teachers are provided across metropolitan and country regions of Victoria for CRTs. These all follow the same program and are provided as a way to organise and conceptualise professional learning for teachers who are working occasionally and across a number of schools or classes. Teachers are invited to register for these and information can be found on the Institute website.

Due to considerable interest and because the seminar program remains the same over a number of years, teachers may only attend one seminar every two years. The seminars also provide an opportunity for CRTs to become involved in networks.

## Networks

CRT Networks have been established as a way for CRTs to develop local professional learning communities where professional development activities can be sourced and shared. These are self supporting and rely on input from all members of the network. The Institute supports the learning and development of administrative skills of network leaders who guide and organise the group. Where possible the networks build a relationship with a school where they can meet, access resources and share expertise with school colleagues in the school community. Currently there are 25 networks operating throughout Victoria.

## Where to find information for CRTs

All information about seminars and CRT networks are listed on the CRT page of the Institute website: <[www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)> You will find information under Teacher Support/Support available to casual relief teachers.

If you want to join a network click into this section and you will be able to contact the relevant network leader through their email address. If you wish to become a network leader please contact Dawn Colcott at <[dawn.colcott@vit.vic.edu.au](mailto:dawn.colcott@vit.vic.edu.au)>

## Renewal of registration HOW Pdi CAN HELP YOU

*Professional development is an integral part of the registration renewal process. However, finding the time and having access to accurate, up to date information can be difficult and can even seem daunting to an inexperienced practitioner. That's where Pdi can help.*



### What is Pdi?

Pdi is a search engine for professional development activities. But Pdi is more than that. You can use Pdi as a tool to make your registration renewal process easier.

Pdi is a resource that guarantees quality-assured professional development activities. Every course or program available through Pdi references the standards of professional practice and is based upon principles of effective professional learning. The Pdi team conduct annual quality assurance discussions with providers of professional development to ensure they maintain the required standards.

If you choose a PD activity through Pdi there are clear and immediate benefits. Simply by following the instructions outlined below, your PD will be recognised towards your renewal of registration requirements.

When you select a professional development activity from Pdi and complete it, you will receive your certificate and be given a program code. Your next step is to go to your MyVIT site, linked from the VIT website, and go to 'MyPD'. This is, in effect, your own electronic filing cabinet for evidence of professional development undertaken. Once there, you type in the code and complete a reflection and evaluation of the activity. Then you will be automatically credited for the PD hours you have undertaken without having to do any more paperwork.

If the PD activity you undertake was not on Pdi, you won't have a code so you will need to provide the relevant information concerning how the activity relates to the standards of professional practice, including uploading any certificates or documentation. If you are selected to verify the declarations on your renewal of registration application, these activities will be checked by the Institute before they are accepted towards your PD hours.

Tony Brandenburg, Manager Professional Development at the Victorian Institute of Teaching, outlines what teachers should look for when making a decision about PD:

*'The Pdi logo is a stamp of approval. Teachers should keep an eye out for that logo on PD advertising, because it shows that the program has been quality assured by the Institute. Why not make it easier for yourself? You can go to Pdi on the website, find the PD you want, get the program code, and trust in the quality of the PD you undertake.'*

Using simple or advanced searches, you can use Pdi to find PD from a diverse range of providers including school sectors and regional offices, universities, teaching associations, TAFEs and consultants. There is even online PD and a professional reading section.

### How does the Institute monitor the quality of courses listed on Pdi?

'In conjunction with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) we do what we call QADs – quality assurance discussions. We randomly select providers and physically audit their PD. This is vital to maintain the standards of PD available on Pdi, which is an advantage for teachers and for the providers of PD, who know that the Pdi stamp of approval will attract teachers to their programs.

'The number of providers on Pdi is steadily increasing. In the last 12 months, 1145 programs have been added to the site, and there have been approximately 10,000 views during that period. It's a message we want to get out there to teachers: Pdi can really help you with your registration renewal.'



# LATEST UPDATES



## Teachers Matter – World Teachers' Day 2011

UNESCO's World Teachers' Day was established to draw public attention to the vital contribution teachers make to education. To celebrate World Teachers' Day on Friday 28 October 2011, the Victorian Institute of Teaching is inviting students, parents and community members to nominate a teacher who matters. It might be a teacher who inspires colleagues, or expands students' horizons. It might be a teacher who challenges a community to engage in a particular project.

Entries can be submitted at <[www.vit.vic.edu.au/wtd11](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/wtd11)> and should include a brief description of why the chosen teacher has made or is making a difference. Closing date is 14 October 2011. A panel selected by the Institute will select the ten nominees who best embody the theme 'Teachers matter'. Winners will be announced to coincide with World Teachers' Day. Each successful nominee will receive a certificate of recognition and an iPad, as well as professional development opportunities for iPad usage.

## Institute Council elections 2011

On 20 October 2011, elections will be held for six members of the Institute Council. Council members undertake their work in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, to administer the provisions of the Act.

In fulfilling this role, Council members:

- act on an informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, in the best interests of the Institute, the profession and the public
- fulfil the key functions of the Council and governance of the Institute: guiding policy and strategy development, developing plans of action, and contributing to the formulation of the annual budget and business plan
- exercise independent, objective judgement without fear, favour or affection
- ensure compliance with all applicable laws
- take into account the views and interests of stakeholders: the profession, parents, students, employers, and government
- treat all members of the profession with equity, being mindful of the principles of natural justice.

All registered teachers were mailed information to verify data for the electoral rolls for the elections. On 12 September 2011, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) called for nominations to the six elected positions on Council, with nominations closing on 20 September 2011.

The VEC will mail the ballot papers on 4 October 2011, with polls closing at 5.00 pm Thursday 20 October 2011.

Results of the poll will be declared Saturday 22 October 2011.

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