

professional PRACTICE

Welcome to *Professional Practice*

The official newsletter of the Victorian Institute of Teaching

NEWSLETTER – Issue #2 July 2014

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NEED FURTHER INFORMATION?

If you have any questions regarding your registration please visit the [Institute's website](#):

@ www.vit.vic.edu.au

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WHAT YOUR INVOICE WILL LOOK LIKE

During the coming weeks you will be receiving your annual invoice by post. Your invoice will show you the registration tasks you need to complete to update your registration online, in your MyVIT account.

YOUR INVOICE WILL LOOK LIKE THIS:

TAX INVOICE
ABN 12 386 253 536

Registration number **268722**
Due date **30 Sep 2014**

Jane Citizen
158 Citizen Lane
CITIZEN VIC 3705

Dear Jane

You need to log in to your MyVIT account (further information on the back of this invoice) and complete the following task(s):

- 1** Criminal Record Check Consent Form
Incomplete
Consent Form
Complete your online Criminal Record Check Consent Form
- 2** Registration Renewal Form
Incomplete
Renewal Form
Complete your online Registration Renewal Form
- 3** Payment Amount Due
Outstanding
Payment
Pay this invoice online (details below)

Please ensure all tasks are completed by 30 Sep 2014

THIS INVOICE IS FOR:

Registration Fee	\$89.00
Criminal Record Check Fee (known as National Police History Check)	\$50.00
Previous amount owing	\$0.00
BALANCE DUE before 30 Sep 2014	\$139.00
BALANCE DUE if paid after 30 Sep 2014 Includes a late processing fee	\$169.00

INVOICE REFERENCE NO: 26872200. No GST has been charged.
PAYMENT OPTIONS: payment must be made through your MyVIT account by credit or debit card, cheque or money order.

This example shows a teacher who has three tasks: completing their online Registration Renewal Form, paying their registration fee and updating their criminal record check. Not all teachers will have three tasks to complete. Your invoice will indicate what you need to do.

To complete your registration tasks, you'll need to log in to your MyVIT account, where you'll see the same registration tasks displayed on your invoice. You will need to click on the buttons and complete the tasks in the order they are presented.

The back of your invoice will contain instructions on how to access MyVIT.

All teachers must pay the registration fee. Payment must be made through your MyVIT account by credit or debit card, cheque or money order.

WHEN CAN I PAY MY FEE AND COMPLETE MY REGISTRATION TASKS?

You can only pay your fee and complete your registration tasks when they are visible in your MyVIT account. You will need to wait until you receive your invoice by post, then log in to MyVIT and complete the process.

CAN I JUST POST A CHEQUE AND NOT LOG INTO MY MyVIT ACCOUNT?

No. If you don't want to pay by credit card, you can pay using cheque or money order, but you MUST log in to your MyVIT account and click the 'Payment' button to begin the process. When you follow the steps, you will be emailed a payment slip, which you attach to your cheque or money order before posting to the Institute.

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CHANGES TO LEGISLATION AND HOW THEY AFFECT THE INSTITUTE

The Victorian Institute of Teaching is governed by legislation, and earlier this year, amendments to that legislation were passed by parliament. The *Education and Training Reform Amendment (Registration of Early Childhood Teachers and Victorian Institute of Teaching) Act 2014* (the Act) includes four significant changes that will affect the way the Institute operates: amendments relating to criminal record checks, a Register of Disciplinary Action, changes to the membership of the Council, and the registration of Early Childhood teachers.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

While the original legislation referred to a criminal record check, it did not define what constitutes a check nor did it provide any mechanism to enforce a criminal record check. The amendments clarify that there are different types of criminal record check and gives the Institute the authority to enforce a criminal record check.

The Institute meets its statutory obligation in two ways. First, it conducts a national record check through CrimTrac, which co-ordinates a search of all state and territory criminal records. The check is conducted at least every five years against each registered teacher. Secondly the Institute checks its register against the Victorian Police's LEAP database weekly.

The amending Act provides clear support for the Institute's current practice. The legislation defines two distinct types of record check; a 'national criminal history check' and a 'state police record check'. It states that the Institute may conduct

a criminal record check at any time and is not confined to checking every five years. The Act also makes it clear that the failure of a teacher to provide consent to the Institute to undertake a check allows the Institute to suspend the teacher's registration.

REGISTER OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION (RODA)

The Act establishes a new register which records disciplinary action taken against a teacher including: the imposition of conditions, limitations or restrictions on registration; cautioning; reprimanding; suspension or cancellation of registration; and cessation of a teacher's registration as a result of a conviction or finding of guilt for a sexual offence.

This information is currently available on the public register and on the Institute's website, however the RODA will collect this material in one register making it easier to check the history of a teacher who has been subject to disciplinary action. An entry will remain on the register for the longer of

CHANGES TO LEGISLATION AND HOW THEY AFFECT THE INSTITUTE (CONT.)

five years or the period for which the effect of the action lasts: i.e. a period of suspension for two years will remain for a further three years after the suspension is lifted. The provisions are modelled on a similar register maintained in respect of Victorian legal practitioners.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The legislation alters the way in which the Council is formed, removing elected members and adding further appointed positions. The requirements for Board appointments are set out in the Victorian Government's 'Appointment and Remuneration Guidelines for Victorian Government Boards Statutory Bodies and Advisory Committees' July 2011. Those guidelines require selection on the basis of skills, experience or qualifications in board governance, as is the norm for other government boards.

Council will continue to secure the contribution of the profession through reference groups, outreach programs and consultation with stakeholders on important issues.

REGISTRATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

In essence, the Act aims to replicate the legislative framework used in registration of teachers and applies it to early childhood teachers. There are differences relating to qualifications. Assessment of early childhood teacher education programs is not only outside the Institute's purview but also outside that of the State Minister. This means that Early Childhood teachers not meeting general qualifications for registration will be listed on a separate section of the Institute register. A small number of Early Childhood teachers will hold dual

registration, allowing them to teach across Early Childhood and school settings.

Early Childhood teachers will not require registration until 30 September 2015.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Another recent amendment to legislation stipulates that teachers who have changed their contact details must inform the Institute within 30 days. The simplest way to do this is to go into your MyVIT account and change the details as displayed there. This automatically updates the Institute's records accordingly.

You can read the full amendments [here](#).

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A CLOSER LOOK AT THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS STANDARD 2: KNOW THE CONTENT AND HOW TO TEACH IT

During 2014, each Professional Practice will focus on a specific standard or focus area of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). This Professional Practice will focus on – Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it.

Standard 2 recognises that a key characteristic of an effective teacher is their in-depth content and pedagogical content knowledge. The focus areas within Standard 2 describe how a teacher's discerning knowledge of the content area, the relevant curriculum and assessment are used to organise the content and teaching strategies into a coherent learning and teaching program. In developing and sequencing teaching activities, teachers also understand and consider the application of relevant literacy and numeracy strategies, the appropriate integration of technology and the embedding of Indigenous perspectives. This knowledge is also identified in the focus areas of Standard 2. The following three examples from the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL's) Illustrations of Practice show how Standard 2 is enacted at the proficient level across three different settings. Each illustration is also relevant to another standard. They demonstrate the connectedness of the APST to the complexity of teachers' practice.

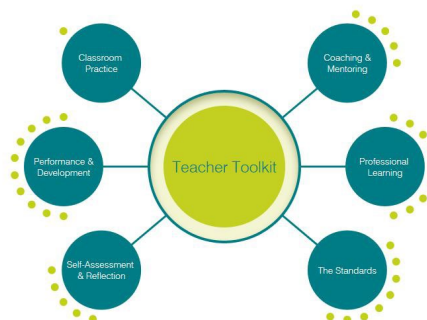
EXAMPLE OF FOCUS AREA 2.1 *Links to prior learning* – Here the teacher asks students to connect the new skill he is teaching them with other ball game skills learned previously. He builds on the students' responses by elaborating in technical terms that describe each skill.

EXAMPLE OF FOCUS AREA 2.4 *Becoming a 'mini' historian* – This lesson plan describes a lesson sequence in which students engage in a research project based on the life of a notable Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to produce a digital timeline.

EXAMPLE OF FOCUS AREA 2.5 *Sentence structure* – A classroom teacher models teaching strategies to a

colleague that she uses in a year one literacy lesson that aims to address the individual learning needs of her students.

TEACHER TOOLKIT IS AVAILABLE



AITSL has developed the Teacher Toolkit, an online platform of resources that support quality teaching. It was developed in response to feedback from the profession indicating that a website housing all AITSL's tools that are aligned to the APST would be beneficial in supporting teachers to improve their practice. The Toolkit provides easy access to practical and interactive tools, templates and modules, including Change and Supervising Preservice Teachers programs. Resources are freely available, aligned to the APST and organised by category for easy access.

The free *My Standards* app makes the APST accessible anywhere, anytime. It will be available for Apple and Android devices. The AITSL teacher toolkit and website is easily accessed from within this app.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT — A BRIEF GUIDE

Teachers renewing their registration this year should be collecting evidence of the professional development activities they have undertaken.

Professional development (PD) activities for registration and renewal purposes can be in many forms provided they can be referenced to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and update knowledge about pedagogy, content and/or practice. Teachers are required to address **at least one standard in each domain** of knowledge, practice and engagement through the PD they undertake each year. You can read more about the APST in last month's [Professional Practice](#) and we explore the 'knowledge of content' standard in detail [elsewhere in this issue](#).

The following diagram outlines some activities that could be categorised as PD:



Please note that these are examples only. Each teacher must make judgements about the PD and evidence they select to meet renewal of registration requirements. Teachers are required to undertake at least 20 hours of PD annually. For teachers still on the five year renewal cycle, 100 hours of PD is required over a five year period.

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PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT UPDATE

This is the second in our ongoing quarterly updates about the Institute's professional conduct and practice activities. These updates will give you information about the types of concerns we deal with, case studies and examples of how we respond to conduct and practice issues.

THE INSTITUTE'S HEARING PANELS

FORMAL HEARINGS

An important part of the Institute's role is to hold hearings where a teacher has a case to answer in relation to their conduct (we can also hold hearings to manage serious competence or health related matters).

Formal hearings consider serious matters and are open to the public. A formal hearing panel may summons witnesses and require the teacher and other witnesses to give sworn evidence. A formal hearing panel can caution or reprimand a teacher, impose conditions on registration or suspend or cancel a teacher's registration.

Formal hearing decisions are published on the [Institute website](#).

INFORMAL HEARINGS

Informal hearings are held to determine whether a teacher has engaged in misconduct (as opposed to serious misconduct at a formal hearing). Misconduct is defined as conduct of a lesser standard than a member of the public or members of the professions are entitled to expect from a reasonably proficient teacher.

An informal hearing panel can: impose conditions on a teacher's registration (i.e. to undertake further education or counselling); caution or reprimand a teacher; or if the matter is serious, refer it to a formal hearing panel for consideration.

Examples of the types of concerns recently considered by informal hearing panels include:

- Teachers engaging in conversations with students of an inappropriate and personal nature
 - Trying to provide pastoral care but overstepping professional boundaries
 - Making inappropriate sexual innuendo and using profanities
 - Inappropriately recounting personal issues and experiences
- A teacher corresponding with students via social media without a valid context
- A teacher taking sick leave from one school while working at another school at the same time
- A teacher using inappropriate disciplinary strategies.

These issues present a timely reminder for teachers to think carefully about situations that, despite good intentions, can result in a breach of the expected standards (i.e. your use of social media; the content and style of your communication with students).

Maintaining familiarity with, and abiding by, the [Code of Conduct](#) will ensure you do not inadvertently engage in conduct that falls short of expectations.

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We've moved. **Have you?**

The Victorian Institute of Teaching recently moved to new offices at:
Level 9, 628 Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000.

Our postal address remains as **PO Box 531 Collins Street West, Melbourne 8007**,
and you can continue to contact us by phone on 1300 888 067.



IF YOU HAVE CHANGED YOUR CONTACT DETAILS, YOU NEED TO LET US KNOW.

You are required by law to do so. That way you make sure you get your invoice and any other information you need to maintain your registration.

It's easy to do – just log into your **MyVIT account and change your details.**

DON'T FORGET: the due date for all registration tasks is 30 SEPTEMBER.

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