



NSW MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

&

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATORS

QUALITY TEACHING AWARDS, 2007

‘Learning From and Recognising Our Best Teachers’

Sponsored by

**THE
Daily Telegraph**

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE AWARDS

OVERVIEW

The *Quality Teaching Awards* are open to permanent, part-time and casual government and non-government pre-school, early childhood, primary, secondary, university, TAFE and community education teachers. The awards are conducted by the Australian College of Educators, a national professional association, and presented by the NSW Minister for Education and Training, Carmel Tebbutt MP. The *Quality Teaching Awards* recognise and applaud accomplished teaching practice through a rigorous process involving referees’ reports, professional learning portfolios and workplace visits. Teachers participate in the awards on a voluntary basis.

BACKGROUND

In July 2000, at an international conference of the Australian College of Educators, the NSW Minister for Education and Training announced he would make funding available to the NSW Branch of the College ‘to recognise and applaud the best teachers in our schools and learn from them’. Subsequently, the NSW Branch of the College developed a new prestigious award and research project to achieve these aims. A total of 253 teachers from NSW have now received a *Quality Teaching Award* from the Minister at functions at Government House, Sydney held each December since 2001. The Minister has indicated her strong support for the 2007 awards.

NUMBER OF AWARDS

Up to 60 awards will be made to teachers from educational institutions across NSW in 2007. There are, of course, other awards offered through employing authorities, professional associations and community groups as public recognition and affirmation of teachers and the quality of their work. This is to be encouraged. It is possible and permissible for a teacher to win more than one award in a year. However, it is not possible for a teacher to receive more than one Quality Teaching Award.

PRESENTATION

The awards will again be presented in December at a function jointly hosted by the NSW Minister for Education and Training and the NSW Branch of the Australian College of Educators.

Awards will be in the form of a testamur from the Australian College of Educators, presented by the NSW Minister for Education and Training, and an award of \$500 provided by *The Daily Telegraph*. Awardees will receive one year's free membership of the College.

ELIGIBILITY

The *Quality Teaching Awards* are open to permanent, part-time and casual teachers in NSW government and non-government pre-schools, early childhood centres, primary and secondary schools, TAFE institutes and universities. Qualities of excellence in teaching as measured against the published criteria for the awards (see below) need to have been demonstrated over at least **three** years. Where those nominated are in promotion positions or other areas of responsibility, the focus will still be on demonstration of high quality teaching expertise. For the purpose of the awards, the Early Childhood category refers to qualified teachers engaged in educational work with children prior to the commencement of compulsory schooling.

NOMINATION

Nomination, using the official **nomination form**, can be made by teachers themselves through self-nomination, or from other teachers, educators, students, community or industry members. Nominations must be received **by the Executive officer on or before the closing date of Friday 11 May 2007**. Where nominated by others, nominees must agree to their names being submitted and must sign the nomination form.

SELECTION PROCESS

There are five stages in the selection process for the *Quality Teaching Awards*, with the stated criteria being utilised for assessment at each stage.

- Stage 1:** **Nomination** of the candidate by **three** nominators. The form in this document is to be used.
- Stage 2:** Preparation of confidential **referees' reports** by the nominators. The forms for this are available on the ACE website. The nominee forwards the referee report to each of his or her nominators. Nominators return their reports directly to the College. The College is unable to follow up missing referees' forms. The nominee should ensure these have been submitted by consulting his or her referees. Missing referees' reports will disqualify the nominee at this stage.
- Stage 3:** Preparation of a **professional learning portfolio** by the nominee using the guidelines provided.
- Stage 4:** **Assessment** of referees' reports and professional portfolios by sub-groups of College members.
- Stage 5:** **Site visits** to the workplace of short-listed applicants after the assessment processes in stage 4.

The ways in which these stages develop are outlined below.

1. The official Nomination Form is completed and **forwarded to the Executive Officer (address p4), Quality Teaching Awards, by Friday 11 May 2007**. Information required on the form includes the name and contact details of the teacher being nominated and his/her signed permission for the nomination. The names, contact details, and signatures of **three** nominators to also act as referees need to be provided. One referee **must** be a workplace or organisation supervisor. The other two referees may be selected from those listed under 'Nomination' above.

2. Nominees are asked to forward the Referee's Report form available on the ACE website to their referees. Referees are then asked to confidentially rate the nominee against each of the stated criteria. There is provision for referees to make open-ended comments about the nominee's suitability for the award. **Referees post or fax the signed report directly to the relevant College sub-group chair (address p5).** The College may choose to contact referees for further information concerning the nomination. It is the nominees responsibility to ensure that the three Referees' Reports are submitted to the relevant Chair of the relevant sub-group by **Friday 22 June 2007.**
3. Each person nominated will be asked to prepare and submit a professional learning portfolio. The guidelines in this document assist in this regard.
4. The sub-groups of the NSW Branch of the Australian College of Educators will assess the professional learning portfolio using the stated criteria and guidelines. Members of the sub-groups are drawn from early-childhood, primary, secondary, TAFE NSW and university contexts. There are no quotas for the various education sectors or stages although it is hoped to have a representative spread of teachers for the final award recipients. Where possible, previous recipients of the *Quality Teaching Award* are involved in the work of the sub-groups.
5. The closing date for submission of portfolios is **Friday 29 June 2007 directly to the relevant College sub-group chair (address p5). Late submission of either Referees' Reports or portfolios will disqualify the nominee.**
6. Small teams of ACE members consisting of members of the steering committee, co-opted recipients of previous *Quality Teaching Awards*, or other co-opted educators will visit each short-listed nominee during the period from **16 July – 21 September 2007.** Teachers will be observed teaching at least two sessions/classes/ lessons/ tutorials and interviewed. Other interviews will also be carried out with students, other staff and community or industry representatives as appropriate. Data gained in this way will be pooled and analysed as part of the research component of the *Quality Teaching Awards*. Nominees organise the program for the day, including observations of teaching sessions, in keeping with guidelines provided by the steering committee to assist each applicant organise the day.
7. Final award recipients will be selected after the site-based visits.
8. Feedback will be provided, on request, by sub-group chairs to unsuccessful nominees.

CRITERIA

At all stages, the following set of criteria will be deployed in arriving at judgments. They are adapted from the descriptors suggested for accomplished teaching proposed in the National Discussion Paper *Standards of Professional Practice for Accomplished Teaching in Australian Classrooms* released under the auspices of the Australian College of Educators, the Australian Association for Research in Education, and the Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Accomplished teachers in Australia demonstrate their expertise by:

- having a broad, deep, and critically aware knowledge, understanding of and enthusiasm for the intellectual content, discourses, and values associated with disciplines from which the subjects (or curriculum areas) they teach are derived and as appropriate to the specific contexts within which they teach
- being both transmitters and critical interpreters of the knowledge, understanding, skills, and values associated with their subject areas, recognising that knowledge is often contestable; and by developing programs that fully implement the aims and objectives of the relevant curriculum
- enjoying teaching students and by holding the highest expectations of what each student is capable of achieving: being aware of the individual needs, interests, capacities of their students; and challenging their students accordingly by inspiring, motivating, correcting, and supporting their students, even in the face of temporary or apparent failure
- treating all students justly and equitably: recognising and appreciating the range of values held by individuals as well as within families, groups, cultures, and the wider school community; and abiding by all statutory, legal, and ethical obligations incumbent upon them as teachers
- having a sense of humour and being able to empathise with their students

- exemplifying the qualities that they seek to inspire in their students: including intellectual curiosity and rigour, tolerance, fairness, common sense, self-confidence, respect for self and others, empathy, compassion, appreciation of diversity, and acknowledgment of cultural differences
- being reflective practitioners who critique the impact of their teaching and professional values upon students, colleagues, and others in the wider learning community: by having a critical awareness of the role played by their own educational, social, cultural, religious, financial and other background experiences; and how these experiences may have helped to shape their own values, their approach to teaching, and their assumptions about education
- displaying adeptness and discernment in the creative use and critical evaluation of information technologies for assisting their own teaching and in advancing the learning of their students
- providing regular, accurate feedback to students and monitoring the growth in students' learning: not only to assist in the assessment of students' growth as a basis for reporting each student's achievements against the required learning outcomes regarding what students know, understand, can do, and value as specified by the formal curriculum; but also as a means of judging the effectiveness of their own teaching
- demonstrating excellence in the practical, pragmatic craft of teaching and in managing a learning environment that is interesting, challenging, purposeful, safe, supportive, positive, and enjoyable: which fosters co-operation and collaboration, independence, responsibility, and creativity
- exercising high communication and interpersonal skills
- being committed to their own professional development: seeking to deepen their knowledge, sharpen their judgment, expand their teaching repertoire, and to adapt their teaching to educationally sound developments arising from authentic research and scholarship
- exercising educational leadership: working collaboratively with their colleagues; and helping to ensure that the essential goals of their own educational institution are met
- taking due account of the educational implications of the community's cultural diversity: in particular, by including within their teaching those indigenous issues and perspectives necessary to help achieve reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians; and by being sensitive and responsive to the educational issues generated by and within Australia's multicultural society within the context of continuing to develop a socially cohesive Australian society. *It is not expected that every nominee will be outstanding on every single criterion.*

NOMINATION FORMS

The Nomination Form for the *Quality Teaching Awards (QTA)* should be sent to:

Cheryl Bell
Executive Officer, QTA
 Awards and Recognition Unit
 Locked Bag 53
 DARLINGHURST NSW 2010

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Cheryl Bell (**Executive Officer**)
 Awards and Recognition Unit
 Ph 02 9266 8967 Fax 02 9244 5646
cheryl.bell@det.nsw.edu.au

For further information on the Australian College of Educators, see:

<http://www.austcolled.com.au/>

**CHAIRS OF THE SUB-GROUPS
FOR THE RELEVANT STAGE OF EDUCATION (see over)**

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NSW *QUALITY TEACHING AWARDS* STEERING COMMITTEE

Further information is available from any of the following members of the Steering Committee.

Chair: Professor Steve Dinham,
Faculty of Education
University of Wollongong

Membership

- Cheryl Bell (**Executive Officer**)
- Alison Bray (**Chair, TAFE NSW Sub-group**)
TAFE Accreditation, Registration and Quality Services
- Dr Paul Brock AM
Director, Learning and Development Research
NSW Department of Education and Training
- Elizabeth O’Carrigan
Catholic Education Office
- Dr Ray Dart (**President, NSW Branch ACE**)
- Susan Gazis AM
NSW Institute of Teachers
- Tracey Hayne (**Chair, Primary Sub-group**)
Principal Liaison Officer
NSW Department of Education and Training
- Glynis Jones
Independent Education Union
- Bob Lipscombe
Senior Vice President
NSW Teachers’ Federation
- Laraine Lucas
Principal, Danebank Anglican School for Girls
- Dr Norman McCulla
Research Officer
- Allan Petersen (**Secretary, NSW Branch, ACE**)
- Dr Catherine Scott (**Chair, University Sub-group**)
- Barbara Stone AM
Principal, MLC School
- Professor Jennifer Sumsion (**Chair, Early Childhood Sub-group**)
Foundation Chair of Early Childhood
Charles Sturt University
- Doreen Wilson (**Chair, Secondary Sub-group**)
College Principal, Sydney Secondary College