

# A Fresh Start

Improving the preparation and quality  
of teachers for Queensland schools

# Message from the Minister



Our Government wants Queensland to have a world class education system: one that ensures the best possible outcomes for young people and is comparable to those in the highest-performing countries worldwide. To achieve this ambition, all Queensland school students, wherever they live and whatever school they attend, need great teachers.

Queensland has long been a national leader in matters relating to teacher professionalism; with teaching established as a standards-based profession, effective teacher registration processes and course accreditation practices that ensure all initial teacher education programs meet minimum requirements.

We now have the opportunity to move beyond this foundation and address issues identified through national research, such as the 2012 Productivity Commission's report on the School Workforce, and Queensland's own recent review of teacher education and school induction conducted in 2010. In particular, we have the opportunity to respond to the complex array of findings and recommendations from the review with a clear strategic approach that will enhance both the attractiveness of the profession and the quality of teacher preparation in Queensland.

This approach is the *A Fresh Start* strategy for improving the preparation and quality of teachers for Queensland schools.

*A Fresh Start* represents a renewed commitment to addressing issues that have existed over time across the interrelated areas of teacher supply, initial teacher education and effective supervision, mentoring and induction. *A Fresh Start* has been developed together with Catholic, Independent and Government schooling sectors and the Queensland College of Teachers. Collectively we acknowledge both the importance of delivering the strategic initiatives contained within the strategy and of effective partnerships with Queensland's higher education institutions to ensure our schools have access to the teachers they need.

Some proposals may be challenging and require significant changes to the way things have been done in the past, but the Queensland Government is committed to ensuring the teaching workforce in our schools is able to help boost student performance to ensure our schools are amongst the highest-performing schools globally.

I am confident the *A Fresh Start* strategy will help us to achieve that ambition, and will ensure our beginning teachers are ready to work in the classroom and school community and that public confidence in Queensland schools and teachers remains strong.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John-Paul Langbroek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

**Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
Minister for Education, Training  
and Employment

# A Fresh Start

Schools in the early 21st Century are complex environments, and our students increasingly diverse. This means our teachers need to be well prepared and inducted into the profession so they can be ready to meet the challenges they will face and get positive results from their teaching.

The *A Fresh Start* strategy comprises a suite of interconnected strategic initiatives focusing on the starting point in a teacher's career:

- attracting the best applicants into the teaching profession (teacher supply),
- ensuring they have the essential skills, knowledge and experience required for the diversity of contemporary schools (initial teacher education), and
- supporting their transition from preservice to beginning teacher (effective supervision, mentoring and induction).

These initiatives are inclusive of all schooling sectors yet flexible enough not to impose a 'one size fits all' approach. They seek to compliment the significant national and statewide reforms focused on teacher quality and preparation that have already been adopted in Queensland.

Key initiatives	Teacher supply	Initial teacher education	Supervision, mentoring and induction
New pathways into the teaching profession	✓	✓	
Professional Experience Partnership Agreements	✓	✓	✓
Explicit graduate expectations		✓	
Professional Experience Reporting Framework		✓	✓
Strengthen governance of initial teacher education programs	✓	✓	
Annual review of initial teacher education programs	✓	✓	
Professional development for mentors			✓
Supervision, mentoring and induction resources		✓	✓

To complement these initiatives, there will also be a number of state schooling specific programs, including enhanced recruitment processes, and a new teacher attraction campaign that encourages great teachers to serve rural communities away from the south-east corner of the state.

The following provides a brief overview of the key initiatives being implemented through the *A Fresh Start* strategy. Further information is available from: [www.flyingstart.qld.gov.au](http://www.flyingstart.qld.gov.au)

# A Fresh Start initiatives

The specific workforce demands of each school sector vary over time and across geographic locations. As such, there needs to be a mechanism for better meeting the needs of schools and more closely aligning the number and blend of graduates from initial teacher education programs with employment opportunities that exist in Queensland. We also need to acknowledge changing employment patterns and the opportunities presented by broadening the range of pathways into teaching, especially those that address teaching areas of high demand, or provide innovative and employment-based approaches.

The following initiatives will ensure a closer alignment with workforce needs and school capacity, while improving the quality of the practical experience preservice teachers receive.

<b>New pathways into the teaching profession</b>	The development of new and flexible pathways into teaching will ensure the profession remains an attractive career option, especially for motivated mid-career professionals seeking to share their knowledge, skills and experience with the younger generation of Queensland students.
<b>Professional Experience Partnership Agreements</b>	<p>Professional Experience Partnership Agreements will acknowledge the mutual responsibilities of both higher education institutions and schooling sectors in providing quality professional experiences, and will ensure that the interests and needs of all stakeholders are addressed.</p> <p>The agreements will facilitate a coordinated approach to professional experience placements, identifying opportunities for enhanced experiences and internships, managing the number and blend of placement types and settings, and improving the quality of the mentoring by supervising teachers. These agreements will be pivotal to better aligning the graduate teacher supply with demand.</p>

While the national education reform agenda ensures consistency in expectations and requirements across all states and territories, Queensland aspires to go beyond national benchmarks and become recognised as among the best-performing schooling systems in Australia and internationally. The following initiatives will further enhance the quality of graduates from Queensland teaching graduates and ensure the specific requirements and high expectations of teacher employers in Queensland are addressed.

<b>Explicit graduate expectations</b>	<p>Teacher employers will develop explicit statements of expectations of graduates, highlighting the capabilities, competencies and attributes critical to graduates' employment prospects for each sector.</p> <p>Initial teacher education programs that respond to these expectations will better position graduates for future employment in Queensland schools, and become more attractive to aspiring teachers.</p>
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<b>Professional Experience Reporting Framework</b>	<p>A common Professional Experience Reporting Framework will ensure a streamlined and moderated approach to the assessment of professional experience, and support supervising teachers and placement schools in their assessment of preservice teachers.</p> <p>The framework will reflect the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and provide a common language and understanding of the skills and knowledge that preservice teachers must demonstrate during professional experience placements.</p>
<b>Strengthened governance of initial teacher education programs</b>	<p>The governance of initial teacher education programs will be strengthened to provide sound oversight for implementation of the <i>Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: standards and procedures</i> within Queensland, and help ensure graduates from initial teacher education programs offered by Queensland higher education institutions meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.</p> <p>This will also ensure program approval processes incorporate school sector expectations and priorities, and will complement the Queensland College of Teachers' legislated program approval responsibilities.</p>
<b>Annual review of initial teacher education programs</b>	<p>The strengthened regulation of initial teacher education programs by the Queensland College of Teachers will be supported through annual review processes that will include formal feedback and evaluation mechanisms; with schooling systems and school leaders having increased opportunities to give feedback on initial teacher education programs and the quality of graduates.</p>

All schooling systems currently support school-based and regional induction and mentoring programs to ease the transition from preservice teacher to beginning teacher. These can be enhanced by the Queensland College of Teachers, teacher employers and higher education institutions working together to provide more opportunities for supervising and mentor teachers to undertake professional development in supervision and mentoring.

<b>Professional development for mentors</b>	<p>Promoting the formal professional development opportunities available to teachers and schools leaders will enable them to more effectively support the development of preservice and beginning teachers.</p> <p>These may include formal professional development programs, recognition of prior learning leading to postgraduate qualifications, information sessions and workshops conducted by higher education institutions or online resources and training opportunities.</p>
<b>Supervision, mentoring and induction resources</b>	<p>The availability of additional resources directly to all schools to improve preservice and beginning teacher supervision, mentoring and induction will be underpinned by a suite of online resources for enhancing the capacity of teachers to confidently supervise, mentor, support and assess preservice teachers and beginning teachers.</p>

## State schooling initiatives

In addition to the cross-sector initiatives for all schools contained within the *A Fresh Start* strategy, a suite of state schooling specific programs will also be implemented to enhance the way teachers are recruited for working in state schools, and to attract great teachers to work in rural and remote school communities.

<b>Talent Identification Framework</b>	<p>The state schooling sector will develop a talent identification framework to identify quality teachers whose skills, capabilities and personal attributes meet workforce demands and can be placed in schools that need them. This process will also help manage the thousands of applications for teacher employment received by the department each year.</p> <p>The framework will include a range of measures to assess the degree to which a graduate teacher possesses the capabilities, competencies and attributes required for effective teaching in Queensland state schools and acknowledge the increasing autonomy of schools in selecting teachers for their local context.</p>
<b>Teach rural campaign</b>	<p>The successful <i>Make a Difference – Teach</i> recruitment and marketing strategy will be broadened to incorporate a dedicated focus on attracting the best candidates to work in state schools in rural and remote areas.</p> <p>The campaign will highlight the opportunities in rural and remote communities and the benefits of employment in these locations. The campaign will incorporate targeted communication and marketing initiatives and materials, and will adopt a strong presence at relevant employment and career events.</p>

## Consultation and implementation

Consultation and stakeholder collaboration are essential to the success of the *A Fresh Start: Improving the preparation and quality of teachers for Queensland schools* strategy.

Strong partnerships between Independent Schools Queensland, the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Department of Education, Training and Employment, Queensland College of Teachers and Queensland's higher education providers will underpin the strategy's implementation.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment will lead the implementation of the *A Fresh Start* strategy, with actions being undertaken by all schooling sectors and the Queensland College of Teachers.

It is anticipated that the development of the initiatives will start in 2013, with broad implementation from 2015.