

Great Teaching, Inspired Learning

A blueprint for action

Frequently asked questions



Why is the NSW Government doing this?

The research is clear, the quality of teaching matters to student learning. We can't improve student outcomes unless we improve the quality of teaching. We already have outstanding teachers in NSW, but we must focus on what else we could be doing to better support and enhance the teaching profession.

How will *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* improve teaching in NSW?

The blueprint provides a set of 16 reforms across the whole career cycle of a teacher. It looks not just at reform in one area, but at reforms to initial teacher training and induction for beginning teachers, through to how to best recognise and value experienced teachers and support potential school leaders.

We will attract the best and brightest to the profession and raise the standard of teacher education programs. We will provide beginning teachers with better support when they first start teaching. We will align the professional learning and performance management of all teachers to the professional teaching standards. We will recognise and share outstanding teaching and engage in research to ensure we know what works and what doesn't work.

What evidence informed the development of the blueprint?

In addition to the public consultation, the blueprint has been informed by a significant body of current research. The full analysis of the research underpinning the blueprint can be found in the report, *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning – What does the research tell us about teaching effectiveness*, produced by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation.

This report confirms that the Government's reforms in the blueprint are on the right track and are informed by what the world's best education systems do to improve the quality of teaching.

What consultation feedback informed the development of the blueprint?

The *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning discussion paper* was released on 31 July 2012 and started a three month consultation period. Consultation resulted in 98 submissions, over 2,800 people engaged in the online forum and 577 comments posted on the website.

The consultation had some clear messages for Government. It showed that we need to do more to lift the quality of entrants into teacher education. We need to strengthen the quality of teacher training that they receive. We need to provide better support for beginning teachers in their early years. We need to then offer them a career progression which recognises their achievements against professional teaching standards. We need simplified and streamlined processes and systems. And we need school leaders who can lead the professional collaboration and ongoing learning of teachers in their schools.

You can read about the consultation findings in the report, *Analysis of responses to the discussion paper*, found on the website.

What did the panel do and recommend?

The panel of experts was made up of: Dr Michele Bruniges, Director-General of the NSW Department of Education and Communities; Mr Patrick Lee, Chief Executive of the NSW Institute of Teachers; and Mr Tom Alegounarias, President of the Board of Studies NSW.

They were asked by the Minister for Education to prepare the *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning discussion paper* and to then, on the basis of the feedback from the consultation and the evidence presented to them, provide recommendations to the Minister for reforms and actions that could consolidate and improve teaching and learning in NSW schools. These reforms and actions are contained in the *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning: a blueprint for action*.

What are some of the key reforms?

The blueprint includes a set of 16 key reforms and 47 specific actions. Some of the most significant reforms are:

- Entrants into NSW undergraduate programs will require HSC Band 5 results in a minimum of three subjects, one of which must be English.
- Teacher education graduates will need to pass a literacy and numeracy test to embark on their final-year professional experience placement.
- Teacher education programs at universities will be assessed annually to ensure they prepare teachers to teach the school curriculum.
- The quality of a teacher graduate's professional experience will be strengthened through partnerships between schools, school authorities and universities.
- The "teaching load" and/or responsibilities of new teachers in their first year of permanent teaching should be reduced and they should have access to support from trained mentors.
- Existing performance management processes dealing with underperformance will be simplified, and teachers that are found unable to meet the professional teaching standards will be removed from the profession.
- Legislation and policy will be amended to bring all NSW teachers within the scope of the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*. Currently teachers appointed prior to October 2004 are not required to maintain accreditation and meet the professional teaching standards.
- Teacher career pathways should be expanded to provide new roles and salary progression based on the attainment of the professional teaching standards.
- Professional learning for teachers will be focussed on the priorities for teaching effectiveness in the classroom, as identified in research
- New processes will be developed to better prepare the next generation of school leaders.

What are the next steps?

The Minister has already asked the Department of Education and Communities (the Department), the Board of Studies NSW (the Board) and the NSW Institute of Teachers (the Institute) to prepare implementation plans based on the blueprint.

In acknowledging the independence of the non-government sector and the Council of Deans of Education, the Minister will seek their advice about implementation in their context. All implementation plans will be provided to the Minister within three months.

Some actions can start immediately and do not have to wait for implementation plans. Many actions that involve the Department, the Institute and the Board can start straight away.

The NSW Institute of Teachers will, for example, start:

- to work with universities on how to incorporate the new entry requirements (action 1.1), to develop a framework of attributes for suitability for teaching (action 1.3), and to develop the guides to improve the assessment of in-school practical experience (action 4.7)
- to work with school authorities and universities on options for attracting career changers into teaching (action 2.2)
- the annual process of assessing and publicly reporting on the content of teacher education programs, starting with an assessment of classroom management and special education needs (action 3.1)
- to develop proposals for ways to apply the professional teaching standards to all teachers in NSW (action 10.1)
- consultation with the early childhood sector to see if they should be accredited against the professional teaching standards (action 10.2).

The Board of Studies NSW will start immediately to work with the Institute and universities on the design of the literacy and numeracy assessment (action 1.2).

The Department will, for example:

- look at how it can target its scholarship programs to attract the brightest school leavers into teaching (action 2.1)
- work with universities to put in place agreements about professional placements (actions 4.1-4.4)
- look at ways it can improve the provision of induction support (action 6.1)
- start to review its processes for addressing underperforming teachers (action 13.1)
- start to consider the development of new salary structures based on the achievement of professional teaching standards and responsibilities (action 14.1)
- look at how it might better support collaborative lesson preparation, observation and feedback in schools (actions 16.1 and 16.2).

The Department's Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation will also commence scoping for the workforce profile project (action 5.1).

When will the changes take place?

Work on many of the actions will start immediately this year, with a number of changes in place by 2014. Other changes will be gradually implemented over three to five years.

This process will involve further consultation and collaboration between and among government and non-government school authorities, the Institute, the Board, NSW teacher education providers, teacher and principal professional associations, teacher unions, parent groups and other key stakeholders.

For more information go to:

www.schools.nsw.edu.au/greatteaching