

Media Release

AITSL inquiry must ensure more quality teachers, not lower standards

Catholic Schools NSW said it welcomes the Australian Government's review of teacher registration requirements and hoped it would lead to more quality teachers without lowering national standards.

The Federal Minister for Education and Training, Simon Birmingham, commissioned the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to review national teacher registration, with particular emphasis on vocational education and early learning teachers.

CSNSW Chief Executive Officer Dallas McInerney said it was always worthwhile to review the extent to which professional standards drive teacher quality nationally.

However, he warned against weakening requirements to enable more people to become teachers.

"New South Wales has the most rigorous requirements for vocational educational teachers in the country," Mr McInerney said.

"Teachers delivering vocational education and training (VET) in NSW are expected to hold a teaching degree and a relevant VET qualification.

"As the largest non-government school system in Australia, Catholic schools want to ensure that the AITSL inquiry will enhance the quality of teaching in all schools without compromise.

"Although there is a shortage of qualified teachers in some vocational education courses, we do not support a lowering of registration standards."

An expert panel will meet today to start the review, which will also look at the degree of national consistency in teacher registration processes across the country, including identifying examples of best practice, challenges and barriers.

In 2017, 31% of Year 11 and 12 Catholic school students in NSW undertook one or more vocational educational and training courses.

Mr McInerney said CSNSW also supports a strengthening of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), which is being reviewed separately this year by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training.

The AQF incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single national qualifications structure.

"This helps teachers qualified in one state or territory to work across borders in Australia.

"It may also assist students who move interstate during their VET studies."

CSNSW represents the state's 593 Catholic schools and their 260,000 students, fully taking over this role from Catholic Education Commission NSW from 1 January 2018.

Media Contact: Jim Hanna | 0414 828 629 | jim.hanna@csnsw.catholic.edu.au