

MEDIA RELEASE

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ACU supports new initial teacher education placement guidelines

Australian Catholic University (ACU) has welcomed new guidelines released by the Federal Government today to improve professional experience programs for initial teacher education (ITE) students.

ACU Executive Dean of Education and Arts Professor Mary Ryan said the guidelines, developed by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership, provided a national framework to improve in-school placements and allow for greater consistency among ITE providers across the sector.

“In-school placements are a vital part of a student teacher’s journey into the profession and these guidelines will help to ensure that all preservice teachers receive best practice experiences,” Professor Ryan said.

“As Australia’s largest provider of teachers, ACU is proud of our rigorous teaching courses and robust professional practice programs, which in recent years have seen record numbers of preservice teachers enter hard-to-staff and regional, rural, and remote schools across the country.

“It is vital our preservice teachers have diverse in-school experiences and opportunities to blend theory and practice to allow for professional growth and increased confidence in their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

“This gives them a chance to put ACU’s evidence-based teachings in areas including explicit teaching, formative assessment, effective classroom management techniques, and literacy and numeracy practices into action.”

Professor Ryan said ACU’s commitment to best practice in-school experiences for preservice teachers was highlighted by its successful advocacy for financial support for students undertaking placements, and the variety of flexible ITE programs on offer which prioritised time spent in the classroom.

“Theory is important as it provides the foundation for a teacher’s evidence-based understandings and knowledge. However, at ACU we have long recognised that time spent in the classroom applying these learnings in authentic contexts and honing one’s skills and teacher identity is just as important,” Professor Ryan said.

“This is why we have a variety of pathways into teaching including our new APTT (All Points to Teaching) program, which will see preservice teachers in classrooms from the get-go in roles including teacher aides and paraprofessionals, as well as our employment-based pathway partnership with Teach for Australia.

“We are also early adopters of programs allowing ACU preservice teachers nearing completion of their courses to teach while they finish their degrees and we have designed a pioneering accelerated

early childhood course, which allows students to work in the sector and complete their studies faster without sacrificing on quality.

“Put simply, we know that more time spent in early childhood contexts and school classrooms with children and mentor teachers is a vital component of our goal of continuing to produce the high-quality educators of today and tomorrow.”

Professor Ryan said ACU’s commitment to the teaching profession did not end once students graduated, with microcredential courses and ongoing professional learning opportunities available and underpinned by experts including those at ACU’s world-leading Australian Centre for the Advancement of Literacy.

“Teachers are lifelong learners, and it is important that they continue to upskill as the demands on the profession continue to evolve and to grow,” she said.

“ACU is a university where initial teacher education students can learn the skills and knowledge to enter the profession at the highest graduate standard, career-changers can access pathways to help them successfully make the move, and established teachers can continue an upward trajectory through further qualifications.”

For more information on ACU’s APTT program which offers aspiring teachers full scholarships, a paid role in a classroom, and intensive wraparound support, click [here](#).

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