

Instrumental Music Teachers and Teacher Registration Frequently Asked Questions by aMuse October 2011

This document was prepared by Sue Arney (Secretary – aMuse) following a meeting between Barbara Carter (Group Manager, Registration & Accreditation, VIT) and Robyn Paull (Manager Registration, VIT) on Tuesday, August 9, 2011.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 makes it clear that the Institute regulates and registers school teachers to undertake the duties of a teacher in Victorian schools.

What consultation process took place prior to the changes to VIT registration?

The changes to the Institute's Permission to Teach Policy are a result of amendments to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 which followed a three-year period of parliamentary review and consultation with stakeholders and the profession.

Consultation specifically to review the Permission to Teach Policy following the amendment of the legislation, occurred during 2010 and included principals and teachers from government, Catholic and independent schools including both primary and secondary; teachers, LOTE teachers and regional officers of DEECD, Music Co-ordinators, Directors of Music from key independent schools, representatives of DEECD, ISV and Catholic Education and employment agencies and representatives from the AEU and IEU.

What recommendations were made during this process?

Through this consultation process it was recommended that permission to teach should only be sought for positions which required the knowledge and expertise of a qualified and registered teacher and involved the duties of a teacher in the delivery of an educational program. Extra curricular and co-curricular programs which operate outside the required curriculum of a school and require the expertise of instructors other than qualified and registered teachers would not require permission to teach.

It was recommended that Instrumental Music programs which do not require qualified teachers would not require permission to teach where an instructor is not a registered teacher. As such Instrumental Music Instructor or Tutor would be a more appropriate term than teacher to describe these positions.

Why was it necessary to change the Permission to Teach (PTT) category that has existed for many years?

PTT was always meant to be a short-term registration – up to five years - established for those who were actively seeking to complete their teaching qualifications.

There has always been an expectation that teachers who held PTT for this period of time would complete teacher training and move on to gain full registration.

The number of applications for second and subsequent periods of PTT in some areas, including Instrumental Music, where there is no real intention to move towards full registration, had become problematic given the change to legislation. The legislative requirement, that applications for permission to teach would require evidence that the school

had first sought to employ a registered and qualified teacher to fill the position, would result in a significant and unnecessary impost for schools with large Instrumental Music programs.

PTT for Instrumental Music and some other programs such as Sports Coaching and faith leadership to work in 'any Victorian school' will be honoured for the periods currently granted but over time will be phased out.

Even so, schools and Instrumental music instructors in particular schools may decide that the role undertaken by an Instrumental Music Instructor is the work of a school teacher. The school would advertise the position, seeking a registered teacher, but may seek permission to teach for the role if no suitable qualified teacher applies. The permission in this case would be limited to that school and the requirement to make appropriate progress towards qualification as a teacher within three years would apply.

Would it be possible to create a VIT subcategory for Instrumental Music Teachers that takes into consideration the limited training opportunities and short timeline for re-registration?

No. The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 makes it clear that the Institute recognises and regulates school teachers who undertake the duties of a teacher in the delivery of educational programs in Victorian schools.

Extra curricular and co-curricular programs, which operate outside the required curriculum, which comprises the education program of a school, generally require the expertise of instructors other than qualified and registered teachers and would not require registration or permission to teach.

Instrumental music instructors together with sports coaches, faith community leaders, speech and drama tutors, voice coaches, and the like, are able to be employed in schools to provide specialised support to students and the school in their own right and without the requirement for registration as teacher.

How will we ensure teachers working with children in our schools are appropriately checked?

Working With Children legislation is now in place in Victoria. Instructors and tutors working in schools in extra curricular and co-curricular programs and who are not required to be registered with the VIT are able to provide an up-to-date Working With Children Check to their Principal, or employer, as evidence of their suitability to work with children.

How will it be possible for Instrumental Teachers who do not currently hold a teaching qualification to undertake a teacher training course if no specific Instrumental Music Teaching course are currently offered in Victoria?

Those who decide to follow the career path of teaching music will need to make a decision about whether or not they undertake a teacher qualification course. This will determine the type of work for which they can be employed.

Several tertiary institutions across Victoria offer a range of diplomas and degrees that will qualify a person as a Music Teacher. The individual needs to make a choice as to how they see their career path. Specialist instrumental music tuition for individuals and small

ensembles is different from music teaching as part of a required, general and comprehensive education.

The current teacher training courses are centred around training individuals to be Classroom Music Teachers. There are no courses currently running in Victoria that offer an Instrumental Music Method. How can Instrumental Music Teachers who are currently in our system, and who wish to undertake an appropriate IMT course, do so when there are none available?

They can either undertake an existing Music teacher education course that will qualify them to teach in the classroom, or investigate courses that run interstate either on or off campus with an instrumental music focus.

aMuse would like to work with the VIT to investigate the possibility of relevant and appropriate teacher training courses being established in Victoria.

The VIT encourages aMuse in co-operation with other music teacher associations to approach tertiary institutions with a view to discussing options for Instrumental Music methods within an initial teacher education program.

The VIT is responsible for accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Victoria, and would welcome a submission of such a program from a higher education provider for review.

It could be possible to explore options for recognition of prior learning with higher education providers, particularly for those who already hold a performance degree or diploma; recognition of prior experience and course delivery that would fit with current employment hours. (NB aMuse has begun discussions with a number of tertiary institutions in regard to this matter).

There are currently many experienced Instrumental Music Teachers in our schools, a great number with performance degrees and professional performance experience, who would happily undertake a teacher training course if one was available. At present there is no course in Victoria offering Instrumental Music Teaching as a teaching method. Therefore, how can Instrumental Music Teachers demonstrate that they are seeking to become qualified within the next three years?

An application for PTT registration can still be lodged. The application will ask what teachers have put in place to move towards upgrading their qualifications. In their application teachers can:

- Demonstrate enrolment in a program of initial teacher education, or units that would ensure their eligibility for a teacher education course if they do not yet have an undergraduate degree;
 - Demonstrate strong involvement in professional development activities that enhance their professional learning in music and for teaching;
 - Show evidence of a documented PL plan that is supported by the school
 - Demonstrate their willingness and desire to undertake further training to update their teaching skills
 - Include an endorsement from their school of the above
- Cite that they are keen to explore the option of an appropriate course when it becomes available

Each application is looked at and considered on its own merits.

Who will determine whether or not an Instrumental Music Teacher should apply for or hold VIT registration.

The decision about whether a position requires a registered teacher is a decision made at the school level. In many schools the nature of the performing arts program and the place of individual components of the program in the curriculum will be resolved after a broad ranging discussion of the curriculum.

If the role of the teacher is delivering part of the required school curriculum then they will need to be registered with the VIT. If they are delivering a program or instructing in an area deemed by the school to be 'extra curricula' or 'co-curricula' then they will not. The VIT advises that applications for permission to teach from schools seeking to employ teachers in performing arts programs and music programs with a strong instrumental focus will be welcomed. (It should be noted that the school or employer will have advertised for a school teacher for this role in the first instance.)

The only change is that persons registered with permission to teach will be granted permission for three years and will be required to show evidence of progress toward qualification as a teacher should they seek a further period of permission.

Information regarding the decision making process advised by the Institute has been made available to all schools and is accessible from the Institute website {HYPERLINK "http://www.vit.vic.edu.au"} on the Principal pages.

Is Instrumental Music considered to be “curriculum”?

The decision about whether or not instrumental music is considered 'curriculum', 'authorized curriculum', 'required curriculum' or 'core curriculum' is largely up to each individual Principal and school. The Principal therefore has the responsibility of deciding whether or not IMTs should have VIT registration based on which area of the school or the particular program they are teaching in.

Schools need to be clear about how they see the instrumental music program fitting into their schools overall curriculum program..

The following FAQs address employment issues are not within the jurisdiction of the Victorian Institute of Teaching. aMuse will continue to seek clarification from HR at DEECT and teacher unions on these matters.

aMuse has received concerns from experienced teachers who do not hold a teaching qualification, who have been told by their Principals that due to changes in the VIT policy their employment will cease at the end of the year.

Employment of Instrumental Music Teachers is a school (employer's) responsibility. This example is an employment situation and is the responsibility of the Principal. It is outside the jurisdiction of the VIT.

If Instrumental Music Teachers are not registered with the VIT, who is responsible for their teaching conditions? Eg class sizes, supervision duties etc

The teaching conditions for Instrumental Music Teachers, whether registered with the VIT or not, are the responsibility of the Principal.

Schools are responsible for showing due diligence in the care of all students as well as for their staff. This does not fall within the jurisdiction of the VIT.

The Principal has a duty of care to ensure students are adequately supervised whilst both on school grounds and during excursions, camps and so on. This applies to class sizes, rehearsals, concerts and camps.

(NB: aMuse has agreed to put together a Code of Conduct based on current DEECT Duty of Care regulations to distribute to schools in order to remind both Principals and Music Staff of responsibilities in this area

Some other questions raised in an earlier letter from aMuse to the VIT but not specifically addressed in our meeting

- **IMTs without VIT registration and no longer considered ‘teachers’ are unsure about how their employment conditions will be affected. Who will now set the criteria for pay, increments, leave entitlements, hours of duty etc and how will they be transferred across?**
- **aMuse has also received calls from Instrumental Music Teachers who have contacted their Region with questions about VIT registration and have been told that it is expected that ALL music teachers hold VIT registration. How will we resolve this conflict?**
- **How will Instrumental Music Teachers who have, up until now, held PTT registration be affected if their VIT registration is not renewed? Will their TO number disappear? How will their pay structure be affected?**