Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in SA Independent Schools

To
SECONDARY COMBINED HEADS

From
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BACKGROUND

1. Despite the removal of the Federal Government rewards payment for teachers who become certified as Highly Accomplished or Lead Teachers, the AISSA is still required under the National Partnership Agreement on Rewards for Great Teachers Program to facilitate and support teachers in participating Independent Schools who elect to seek certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead levels from 2013. This will be at a cost of $1825 to the applicant to be made in 3 payments. Payment is required to recover some of the costs associated with the process such as administration, assessor training and assessment time as well as on-going associated support and professional learning provided by the AISSA for applicants and assessors.

2. SATCC, the joint committee with DECD, Catholic Education SA and AISSA to oversee the certification process in SA is currently awaiting State Cabinet approval. Some matters still need to be finalised between the three school sectors. However, the AISSA will have responsibility for undertaking the process in the Independent sector.

3. Currently the AISSA has 3 trained assessors/facilitators (AITSL National Assessor Training) and is preparing to train more AISSA assessors as required when the revised training program is released by AITSL. This training will be conducted in conjunction with DECD and CESA later this year or early next year.

4. In 2014 the AISSA intends to run its first Certification process. Information sessions and workshops have been conducted this year and there is a reasonable level of interest (despite rewards money no longer being offered).

KEY POINTS FOR PRINCIPALS

5. Principals are asked to consider suitable applicants in their schools to be trained as assessors. Assessor training will require 3 – 4 days face to face plus 30 - 35 hours online. The certification assessment process will require a time commitment of...
approximately 3 days per assessor per applicant. Further details of the role and responsibility of assessors will be circulated soon and applications for assessor training will be called for in Term 4.

6. In order to ascertain more definite numbers, the AIS-SA is seeking an Expression of Interest from potential applicants for Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Certification in 2014. This can be made now via a form available on the Teacher Certification page of the AIS-SA website. The AIS-SA will offer support and training for suitable applicants for Certification.


8. Principals may wish to consider suitable applicants in their schools for certification as HAT or LT and to draw their attention to the Expression of Interest Form. This form will need to be signed by the Principal.

9. A high level of understanding and application of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* is essential for applicants for Certification.

10. The process for gathering and organising evidence of all Standards/Descriptors and annotating this evidence for certification at the HA or Lead career stage is a rigorous one and it is important that applicants and other key staff are fully aware of this. It is crucial to read carefully all the information on the AIS-SA and AITSL websites.

11. Applicants will need to devote a substantial amount of time to developing a Collection of Evidence and, for Lead applicants, a school initiative. Whilst this is an excellent professional development opportunity and will undoubtedly have positive impact on students and colleagues in the long term it is important that it is aligned with the School Plan.

12. Principals are advised to consider how many applicants could be supported at the same time. Applying the ‘cascade approach’ may be more effective and efficient.

**CERTIFICATION PROCESS: PRINCIPAL (OR DELEGATE)**

13. Principals (or delegate) are required to have a professional discussion with the applicant and, in SA, must approve their application;

14. In Stage 1 principals (or delegate) need to complete a lesson observation and write a report, as well as write a referee – evaluative statement to verify specific Standards/Descriptors;

15. In Stage 2 an assessor will spend a day in the school for a site visit and this will include a professional conversation with the principal (or delegate) as well as lesson observations and other interviews;

16. The requirements outlined in the *Australian Performance and Development Framework* (2012), are aligned to the Certification process and many schools are already working towards implementing the following essential elements:
i. All teachers have a set of documented and regularly reviewed goals related to both performance and development, and ways of measuring progress towards them that are agreed with the principal or delegate;

ii. All teachers are supported in working towards their goals, including access to high quality professional learning;

iii. Evidence used to reflect on and evaluate teacher performance should come from multiple sources and include as a minimum: data showing impact on student outcomes, information based on direct observation of teaching and of collaboration with colleagues;

iv. All teachers receive regular formal and informal feedback on their performance. This includes a formal review against their performance and development goals at least annually, with verbal and written feedback being provided to the teacher.

17. Principals may consider in-school support for potential current and future applicants in the following areas:

- Professional Learning and Professional Learning Groups;
- Opportunities for peer collaboration;
- Professional Learning Plans;
- Professional Portfolios (collection of evidence – also now relevant for SA Teacher Registration Board requirements);
- Financial support for applicants: partial or full payment of the Certification fee;
- Rewards/incentives – for HA and LT in your school. Will this be acknowledged? Incorporated into the EA?

FURTHER INFORMATION

18. Please contact Mary Pickett at the AISSA: 8179 1423, pickettm@ais.sa.edu.au or visit the AISSA Teacher Certification web page http://www.ais.sa.edu.au/teacher-certification or the AITSL website http://www.certification.aitsl.edu.au.

ATTACHMENTS


Guide to Certification - AISSA version

A Flow Chart of the Certification process for Applicants (Guide pp. 27, 28)
B Roles and Responsibilities: Principal (Guide p. 25)

FOR DISCUSSION