

ACT Teacher Quality Institute (Code of Practice) Approval 2014 (No 1)

Disallowable Instrument DI2014 - 22

made under the

ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010, s.59 (Codes of Practice)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Background

The purposes of the *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010* (the Act) include protecting ACT students and the community by ensuring that education in all ACT schools is provided in a professional and competent way by approved teachers, enhancing the status of the ACT teaching profession, and maintaining the ACT community's confidence in the local teaching profession.

The Act includes a range of powers and actions to achieve these purposes. In particular, it establishes the ACT Teacher Quality Institute. One of the functions of the Institute is to develop and apply codes of practice about the professional conduct or practice of teachers. Part 5 of the Act describes the processes to be followed in approving any code of practice.

Further, the ACT Government is committed to raising teacher quality in the Territory. One key strategy to achieve this goal is the implementation of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. The Standards require teachers to conform to codes of professional conduct relevant to their work as a teacher.

As well, employers of teachers in the ACT generally enforce a code of conduct on teachers as a condition of their employment.

Thus, with the approval of this Code of Professional and Ethical Practice, the ACT will have a strong, integrated regulatory framework which will both provide guidance to teachers and confidence to parents/carers and the community.

Content of the Code

This Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Teachers sets out the principles of conduct and practice appropriate to the role of a teacher to which the Minister and the Institute expects members of the teaching profession in the ACT to conform.

It spells out three ethical principles that should govern the professional practice of ACT teachers, namely:

- demonstrating personal and professional integrity;
- demonstrating respect for others; and
- accepting responsibility for their contribution to the teaching profession and through it to the community.

The Code details how teachers should act to fulfil each of these principles. It links each principle to the relevant stakeholder, with emphasis being given to the stakeholders of 'students' and 'parents/carers'.

Importantly, the Code requires teachers to adhere to the principles and behaviours 'at all times'. That is, the ethical principles should extend beyond a teacher's normal working hours because of the important role given to teachers by the community.

Compliance with the Code will be a condition of any approval to teach given under the *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010*. Failure to comply with the code will provide grounds for suspension or cancellation of a teacher's approval to teach under s.63 of the Act.

This Determination comes into effect the day after notification.