

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION

AEU Position on a National Teaching Body

as adopted at the
September 2007 Federal Executive

The AEU has consistently expressed support for a national professional body for teachers that is accountable to teachers and has a capacity to work cooperatively to help build the status and standing of teachers.

Such a body (or bodies) could encompass some or all of the following functions:

- Advocacy for the profession;
- Commissioning, coordination and dissemination of research;
- Facilitating professional learning;
- Preparing papers or running activities of significant interest to the profession;
- Acting as a broker in bringing more specialist national organisations together for a specified purpose;
- Functions related to the coordination of registration, course accreditation, and teaching standards.

In regard to this last:

The AEU notes the existence of statutory bodies, variously referred to as Institutes of Teaching or Colleges of Teachers in seven of the states and territories (with ACT in the process of considering such a body). They currently have legislative responsibility for various functions related to registration and course accreditation. Professional standards are correctly the work of MCEETYA through these various registration authorities and education departments at state and territory level.

The AEU also notes the existence of the Australasian Federation of Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities (AFTRAA) as an emerging national body arising from these statutory bodies. It is increasingly playing a coordinating role nationally.

The areas of interest are teacher course accreditation, initial teacher standards (graduation), beginning standards (competence), advanced teaching standards (accomplishment), and leadership standards.

The AEU supports the following principles:

- Greater national consistency is desirable, such that recognition in one jurisdiction should automatically lead to recognition in other jurisdictions;

- This should:
 - be based on nationally agreed criteria;
 - be achieved through the constituent bodies of AFTRAA reaching agreement on the relevant standards and ensuring consistent application. This may involve AFTRAA creating specific sub-bodies with representation beyond AFTRAA itself;
 - involve substantial consultation with the AEU and IEU;
- Registration itself should remain the domain of the state and territory jurisdictions.