

2017 – 2019 QTU education leaders policy

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1. Introduction

The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) supports the Union membership of both teachers and education leaders, believing that it is one of its greatest strengths. By representing both groups, the Union enables greater collaboration.

The QTU notes that it is the only registered industrial organisation that can represent teachers and education leaders in the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

The QTU supports targeted initiatives to enhance the involvement of education leaders in the Union.

The QTU believes all QTU members and QTU Officers should enhance collaboration between teachers and education leaders.

2. Salary structure for education leaders

The QTU supports the salary and career structure principles outlined in the QTU Working Conditions policy as they relate to education leaders.

The QTU supports a salary structure that:

- encourages education leaders to apply for promotions
- recognises school complexity
- enhances both the minimum salary and maximum salary for an educational leader
- differentiates between a principal salary structure and an associate leader salary structure.
- remunerates the Principal as the highest paid officer in the school.

3. Promotions and evaluations

3.1 Selection for promotion and appointment

3.1.1 Principles of selection

The QTU maintains as a basic principle that the assessment and selection of applicants for promotion should be centralised functions, based on a selection process using common statewide selection criteria. The QTU believes that classified positions comprise a generic range of skills, however, the QTU acknowledges the relevance of local requirements in the selection of appointees to particular positions. The QTU supports the following techniques as appropriate for use in the selection process:

- the use of curriculum vitae statement as a record of demonstrated capacities and responsibilities
- a written application that relates to specific selection criteria
- a face-to-face selection panel interview (physically or electronically)
- a supervisor's report based on criteria and competencies
- referee checks focused on validation.

3.1.2 Selection criteria

The QTU believes that a proven commitment to public education (e.g. could include sending your children to government schools) should be included as a separate selection criterion for all promotional positions in government schools.

3.1.3 Eligibility

The QTU maintains that to be eligible to apply for promotional selection, a person must be a teacher registered (or able to be registered) by the Queensland College of Teachers, have satisfied the appropriate probationary requirements for a teacher in Queensland, and be, or undertake to become, a financial member of the QTU.

3.1.4 The application process

The application process should include the following:

- promotional positions should be publicised through departmental communications media that are available to all teachers
- applications should be submitted to an appropriate central office location in accordance with the advertised requirements

3.1.5 The selection process

The selection process should include the following:

- assessment of written applications
- short-listing
- referee checks
- interviews, except in exceptional circumstances
- applicants rated suitable or unsuitable, and candidates for specific vacancies ranked in order
- applicants notified and provided with feedback if requested

3.1.6 Recruitment and selection for temporary school-based promotional positions

The QTU supports the use of a consistent and transparent systemic process for all temporary school-based promotional position vacancies greater than one term in duration.

Such a process would be by way of expression of interest advertised across the state.

The QTU believes in the first instance that temporary school-based promotional vacancies should be filled by permanent employees of the department with the necessary skills and capabilities.

3.2 Composition of selection panels

Each selection panel should include a QTU member appointed by the QTU General Secretary (or appropriate nominee, eg. relevant Officer) from a list that has been endorsed by QTU State Council.

The QTU General Secretary (or nominee) will maintain a register of endorsed QTU nominees that is regularly reviewed.

The QTU believes that panels must have at least one male and at least one female member, and all panel members must have undergone panel training.

All panel members should be taken off-line and replaced for the duration of the selection process.

3.3 Panel training and re-training

Regular training for selection panel service should be provided and funded by the department. It should address current legislative and regulatory requirements, an understanding of social justice

principles, and information on specific selection techniques. Training of QTU selection panel nominees should include a module prepared and presented by the QTU on the particular role of the QTU nominee.

3.3.1 Selection panellist accreditation

Accreditation of selection panellists would establish recognition of their skills and competencies.

A process of accreditation should be negotiated and agreed to by the department and the QTU.

3.4 Relocations

3.4.1 Principles

The QTU strongly supports a process of relocation for all education leaders in classified positions. Relocations shall be a function of a central joint QTU–department panel.

There should be a balance between the number and bands of positions open for merit selection and relocations.

3.4.2 Process

A range of factors may be considered in determining whether an applicant deserves relocation.

All officers are eligible to apply for relocation once they have completed an "eligibility period" in their current position.

The relocation panel shall consist of a senior officer of the Department of Education and Training and the General Secretary of the QTU, or nominee.

Applicants may seek feedback and if aggrieved by a relocation decision have the right to lodge a complaint or appeal that is conducted through an established departmental procedure

3.5 Appeals

3.5.1 Appeals process

An unsuccessful applicant should have the opportunity to appeal against the appointment decision resulting from the selection process.

The appellant is only entitled to QTU assistance if QTU membership was held for the duration of the selection exercise (from advertisement of the vacancy).

3.5.2 Appeals tribunal

Appeals should be heard by the Public Service Commissioner (or nominee) and the QTU General Secretary (or nominee).

3.6 Teaching loads for education leaders

School leaders who have a regular teaching load of any fraction in addition to their leadership duties, including teaching principals, deputy principals, HODs, HOSES and teachers-in-charge, should have an appropriate maximum teaching load that allows adequate time for their leadership duties.

A teaching principal is any principal who has, in addition to his/her leadership responsibilities, a regular teaching load, either full-time or fractional. The growth in managerial leadership

responsibilities for all principals has had a significant impact on the role of the teaching principal, who has to balance the teaching load with the leadership demands of the school.

Principalship is now a multi-functional role, and teaching principals have the added factor of a regular teaching role. The QTU acknowledges the complexity of the position.

Given this complexity, the QTU believes the teaching principal should be entitled to an appropriate range of conditions that allows him/her the capacity to meet both leadership and teaching roles. This might include, but not be limited to:

- an adequately furnished and equipped office, which gives privacy to the principal when required
- an appropriate level of permanent administrative support with suitable facilities for work
- additional non-contact time provided by either part or full-time permanent teachers, for the purposes of completing the range of principal duties
- amended class size maximums that take full account of the demands upon a teaching principal.

3.6.1 Cluster principals

The QTU acknowledges that groups of schools choose to work together on shared tasks in informal clusters for varied purposes such as:

- professional development
- combining of resources (eg. STLD, IT, PE, music etc.)
- bulk ordering of materials
- other purposes suitable to their local area.

However, the QTU opposes the cluster principal concept (that is one principal with responsibility and accountability for several separate schools) on educational and social grounds, and supports the autonomy of small schools as distinct educational entities in their own right. The QTU believes each school has an entitlement to a person in charge, known as the Principal, with accountabilities, remuneration and conditions of a Principal. Notwithstanding this view, where groups of schools choose to work together to maximise efficiencies and resources, the QTU will consider proposals on a 'case by case' basis.

4. School planning and review

4.1 School closures, amalgamations and establishment

The QTU believes that departmental decisions involving possible closures and amalgamations of existing schools and establishment of new schools as a result of school amalgamations must include necessary consultation with the QTU. This consultation would necessarily consider implications for education leaders and staff in affected schools.

In the event that school closures are to occur education leaders and staff should be entitled to appropriate relocation, in line with agreed departmental and union relocation procedures (see Section 3.4 of this policy).

4.2 Governance

The QTU's commitment to public education demands that the governance of schools is maintained by the Department of Education and Training. In developing their school overviews, annual plans,

budgets and reviews, school communities are accountable to the Department of Education and Training. Consequently, the QTU believes that the Queensland Government has a fundamental responsibility to properly fund the public schools that make up the state school system.

On occasions, government will introduce new initiatives to be implemented in state schools or the Department of Education and Training may amend operational procedures to be adopted by state schools. In either case, there is likely to be a resourcing implication for schools.

The QTU believes that any new education initiative or change in schools' operating procedures must be accompanied by a cost and workload impact statement from the department that details the resourcing implications. In particular, the anticipated cost to schools should be detailed, as well as the source of those funds.

Schools' decision-making processes must be consistent with the Department of Education and Training accountability requirements. The decision-making structures within a school will be determined by agreement between the school leadership and representative staff organisations (unions), and will take account of the views of the school community. Local Consultative Committees (LCCs) must play an important role in school decision making.

4.3 Planning

The QTU supports the concept of school based planning within a centralised policy framework, which focuses on the efforts of each school in meeting the needs of its workforce and its students.

The QTU believes that these can best be met within a school planning approach which includes:

- a medium-term school overview which outlines the general directions and objectives for the school
- an annual operational plan which details the major activities to be undertaken by the school
- a school budget which reflects expenditure in the activity areas outlined in the annual operational plan.

These school planning documents should be developed collaboratively by the workforce at a particular school site and those staff should be provided with appropriate support (for example teaching release) for participation.

4.4 Review

The QTU supports a review process directly linked to the monitoring of the outcomes of school determined plans. This review process will be conducted within the school using personnel from that school, although external personnel may be involved given appropriate respect for, and in consultation with, school leadership and procedures. The outcome of this review process will be provided to the Principal as the leader of the school community

The review process should be embedded in the regular operations of the school, to minimize any additional workload. Any unavoidable extra workload is to be resourced with adequate teacher release time.

The data gathered by these school review processes is to be used by the school to help it achieve its educational and organisational goals. The department may use it to provide adequate resourcing for individual schools to help them achieve their goals. The data must not be used to compare public or systemic outcomes across the public schooling system or the broader schooling sector.

5. Staffing

The QTU believes that all schools should have a Principal.

The QTU believes that all schools should have an entitlement to leadership positions such as Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, Heads of Curriculum and Heads of Special Education Services. In relation to middle management, schools in all sectors require equitable middle management resourcing that accurately reflects the complexity of the school. Advocacy for this principle should be reflected in all resourcing policy development.

In the case of smaller schools, where there is no full-time entitlement to these positions, there should be sufficient flexibility for aggregation of these fractional entitlements.

The Department of Education and Training should provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure to support leadership and middle management positions provided as part of the school allocation.

5.1 Principals

Schools with an enrolment of over 100 are entitled to a non-teaching principal. The maximum teaching load of principals in schools with under 100 enrolments should be 0.5, which should decrease in proportion to the size and complexity of schools.

Principals of schools with an enrolment under 100 should have access to a cluster coordinator principal who could provide support such as mentoring and coaching.

5.2 Deputy principals

All schools with an enrolment of under 100 students are entitled to 0.5 of a deputy principal position. All schools with an enrolment of between 100 and 300 students are entitled to one deputy principal position. All schools are entitled to an additional deputy principal position for every 200 students, or part thereof, beyond an enrolment of 300. An additional deputy principal should be allocated to schools serving areas where particular social issues affect the school's behaviour management capabilities.

5.3 Middle management

Schools in all sectors require equitable middle management resourcing that accurately reflects the complexity of the school. Advocacy for this principle should be reflected in all resourcing policy development.

All schools across Years P-12 are entitled to a head of department (HOD) position with a 0.5 maximum teaching load, appointed on the basis of one position for every 100 enrolments, or part thereof, while schools with an enrolment of more than 250 students should get one additional HOD position over and above this entitlement. Prep enrolments should be included in these calculations.

The designation of HOD positions should reflect a strong curriculum focus, with the majority of positions within a school designated to specific curriculum areas. The designation of HOD positions, and any changes to them, should be subject to a process of consultation involving the entire teaching staff.

5.4 Heads of Special Education

All special education programs are entitled to a Head of Special education (HOSE) position. The classification and conditions of these positions is to be at least comparable with a HOD, and should

increase according to the size and complexity of the special education program. Schools with a Deputy Principal (Special Education) are also entitled to a Head of Department (Special Education) per 100 enrolled, verified students.

Allocations in special education schools should at least reflect the allocations based on primary and secondary enrolments in other schools, as outlined in *QTU Special Education policy* – Section 5.1 Staffing.

5.5. P–12 schooling

All schools with enrolments of both primary and secondary students are entitled to principal and deputy principal staffing, as outlined in sections 5.1 and 5.2. Such schools are also entitled to HOD positions based on their enrolments, in accordance with sections 5.3

6. Investigations/complaints management

The QTU believes departmental investigations of teachers and school leaders for possible breaches of the code of conduct must be transparent and based on the principles of natural justice.

The QTU also believes there should be a set of fundamental investigation guidelines, jointly agreed to by the department and the QTU, which become binding to all parties involved in investigations. As examples, these guidelines might include such aspects as (but not be limited to):

- frivolous or vexatious complaints should not be investigated however where they are being investigated suitable regional support be provided to the school.
- allegations or complaints should be outlined in written form and provided to the officer at least 48 hours prior to any interview.

The QTU believes all departmental investigators should be trained to a standard which is consistent across the Queensland public sector and is based on relevant industry standards. The QTU does not support the use of QTU members as investigators, unless they are provided with appropriate support regarding their core duties while they are involved in the investigation.

The QTU believes any external investigators examining allegations of official misconduct must be highly trained and be subjected to significant quality assurance controls and departmental accountabilities.

6.1 Member vs member

In member vs member disputes, including between teachers and education leaders, Union Officer assistance will be provided in accordance with the QTU structures, procedures and services policy.

However, of particular importance to school leaders is noting that in complex matters between a teacher member and principal member appropriate QTU support may be provided to each party by separate QTU officers at the discretion of the General Secretary.

7. Succession planning

There is a continuing need to establish effective succession planning strategies to address the issue of principal replacement. The QTU believes:

- the department should promote strategies such as work shadowing and mentor arrangements for classroom teachers and officers in classified positions
- such programs should be supported by providing teacher release when necessary

- schools should be encouraged to develop aspirant groups and professional development plans for staff members who express interest in seeking promotion
- the department should ensure appropriate affirmative action strategies are implemented to support the proportionate representation of women in education leadership positions, compared with the teaching service as a whole. Similarly, appropriate strategies should be implemented by the Department to support minority groups.

8. Performance reviews of classified officers

The QTU is opposed to any performance review or planning which is anything other than developmental in nature. Performance planning or review may only be undertaken for the purposes of planning professional development and/or career planning, under the following guidelines:

- the planning or review is conducted within agreed guidelines between the department and the teacher's union for performance development planning, and is part of an overall career development plan
- documentation and data collection is minimal and is negotiated with the officer's supervisor and/or identified mentor
- there is self-identification of development needs, negotiated with the officer's immediate supervisor and/or identified mentor
- such developmental opportunities and/or processes may be accessed via professional development, mentoring or other means as negotiated by the officer and his/her supervisor.

Performance reviews of classified officers will:

- not be used to allocate a rating/rank order to any area of performance for classified officers and/or their schools
- not be part of a procedure to manage unsatisfactory performance
- be separate from any procedures associated with salary increments and banding of positions within the department.

9. Contract employment

The QTU opposes the use of contract employment for all school-based classified positions.

The QTU believes that contract employment of school-based classified positions would lead to the politicisation of school leadership positions, a situation which encourages compliant and expedient decision making.

Contract employment encourages employers to use performance reviews which are not developmental in nature. Employment contracts do not enhance the quality, productiveness and professionalism of individuals or organisations, but instead place unrealistic expectations on personnel trying to meet systemic goals in a relatively short time frame.

The QTU notes that there is an increasing use of temporary variations to conditions of permanent tenure, for example but not limited to, Executive Principals. The QTU believes that selection, management and supervision arrangements in these situations should not erode the conditions of permanent tenure, or be used to impose unrealistic expectations or demand compliant leadership that undermine the independence and professionalism of the Principal.

10. Mandatory requirements for all school-based promotional positions

The QTU believes that a mandatory requirement for all school-based promotional positions is the possession of, or immediate potential for, full teacher registration with the Queensland College of Teachers. In addition, it strongly asserts that any person directly supervising the performance of teachers and other promotional position holders must possess full teacher registration with the Queensland College of Teachers.

The QTU believes that all school-based promotional positions must form part of the Teachers' Award – State.

11. Professional learning of education leaders and aspirants

11.1 Induction

The QTU believes that appointment to school-based promotional positions should include departmental provision of a comprehensive induction program, which might include a variety of aspects relevant to educational leadership, for example:

- leadership (school and curriculum)
- management (human resource, financial, facilities)
- conflict resolution
- communication
- professional ethics
- staff development
- self development
- community relations
- development of professional learning.

Such induction programs could be conducted externally away from the school or 'in situ' on the school site, but in either case must include relief at the school for the person completing induction.

11.2 Professional learning

Education leaders should have access to quality ongoing professional learning. This professional learning should be accessed from a variety of quality sources and be funded by the department. Education leaders should be able to access such professional learning during school time.

11.3 QTU and professional associations

The QTU recognises the role that the state professional principal associations play in supporting and advocating for education leaders. These associations include:

- QASEL (Queensland Association of Special Education Leaders)
- QASSP (Queensland Association of State School Principals)
- QSPA (Queensland Secondary Principals Association)

- P-10/12 Principals Association.

These recognised associations focus on professional issues confronting education leaders.

The QTU represents all education leader members, as well as all teachers, in both industrial and professional matters. The QTU believes that a close working relationship between these professional associations and the QTU is advantageous for all.

12. School classification methodology

The QTU supports the use of approved methodologies in classifying schools, because it has the capacity to recognise the variations in their complexity and specific needs.

The QTU opposes any school classification methodology based on enrolment size of school alone, or size of school budget.

The QTU believes the issue of workload should be acknowledged in any school classification structure, and should be recognised by the department through the provision of additional resource support.

The QTU believes the application of any endorsed methodology to classifying special schools must fully take account of the unique complexity and challenges faced by these schools, in excess of 'regular schools' of similar enrolment.

The QTU believes it is imperative that there are QTU education leader members trained in any Department of Education and Training endorsed school classification methodology and its application to school classifications. The QTU requires that these trained members are included on any Department of Education and Training committee classifying the complexity of schools (e.g. evaluation review committee (ERC)).

All QTU education leader members should be entitled to QTU support when preparing submissions as part of their industrial entitlement to have a classification reviewed by the Department of Education and Training (e.g. ERC).

13. School Autonomy

The Queensland Teachers' Union is aware of the majority of educational research that has not established a causal link between increased levels of school autonomy and improved student learning outcomes.

However, the Queensland Teachers' Union also understands that some Queensland public schools may wish to utilise varying degrees of autonomy of school governance and accountability, as manifest in initiatives such as Independent Public Schools.

The QTU recognises the failure of school autonomy schemes in New Zealand, Victoria, WA, the United States and other jurisdictions to deliver any improvement in the quality of education.

Indeed, autonomous public schools can create:

- a two tiered public system that concentrates students from disadvantaged backgrounds in the same school
- unacceptable accountability measures for teachers
- precarious industrial conditions

In Queensland autonomous public schools may significantly undermine the transfer system and consequently the integrity of public education in rural areas.

The Queensland Teachers' Union supports schools wishing to exercise increased school autonomy within the following parameters:

- schools wishing to move to models of higher degrees of school-based management and decision-making, do so only after a thorough process of consultation with and approval by the school community, including endorsement by the Local Consultative Committee
- school funds that are allocated to the school for staffing must be used for the employment of staff
- notional allocations for staffing should be used rather than real dollar allocations to schools for staffing
- all state schools should remain a part of a continuing viable transfer system for classroom teachers and relocation system for classified officers, whereby all schools are treated in a consistent and equitable manner.
- where schools move to a model of governance incorporating school councils, the role of those councils will focus only on broad strategic direction
- the government retains responsibility for funding of specific systemic imperatives eg. workers compensation, workplace health and safety requirements
- school decision and actions are compliant with existing industrial agreements and conditions within certified agreement or established memoranda of agreement
- Any scheme must be the subject of negotiation and agreement between the QTU and the department, and the agreement must be in an enforceable form.

14. Permanent part-time education leaders

The QTU believes education leaders should have the opportunity to work permanent part-time. The QTU acknowledges previous certified agreements have accepted permanent part-time education leaders.

The Department of Education and Training should provide a range of initiatives to encourage and support education leaders, particularly principals, being deployed in permanent part-time positions.

The QTU supports a variety of models that help principals and other education leaders to work permanent part-time. Greater flexibility should allow schools to develop models to suit their circumstances and so maximise the potential for this method of work.

The QTU supports models of permanent part-time for education leaders which, as well as allowing education leaders to work in this mode of employment, also ensure the effective functioning of the respective schools.

15. School administrative officers

Principals are the accountable officers responsible for all facets of school leadership and management. The ability of principals to ensure that financial and human resource management are conducted appropriately is partly reliant on the knowledge and ability of school administrative officers (including those with specific financial training, for example, Business Services Managers (BSMs)).

The continuing increase in accountability expected of Department of Education and Training schools has an adverse impact on the ability of school administrative staff to adequately complete their duties. The QTU believes that levels of administrative staffing for all schools (particularly schools with sole education leaders) should reflect these administrative demands. All schools should have access to an appropriately trained finance officer (e.g BSM).

The QTU believes the administrative demands of schools should be met by:

- a dramatic increase in the current allocation of administrative staff to schools (including an appropriately trained finance officer (e.g BSM) in small schools)
- an automatic increase in administrative support whenever new initiatives or accountability measures are imposed on schools and when central or regional administrative processes are devolved to a school level
- immediate review of/increase to the remuneration levels for administrative personnel, in order to retain and attract highly qualified staff to these positions
- establishment of district/regional pools of experienced relief administrative personnel.