

TO: QTU MEMBERS

New QTU Executive elected

The Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) has finalised the election of members of the QTU Executive for a new three-year term of office commencing today. With the May 2020 meeting of the QTU State Council cancelled due to COVID-19, the ECQ conducted a postal ballot of QTU Council members and TAFE Council members.

The members elected to the QTU Executive are:

12 Executive members

Gillian Armit – teacher, Bounty Boulevard State School
Joshua Cleary* - acting deputy principal, Morayfield State High School
Peter Darben – teacher, Cavendish Road State High School
Shane Hancock – deputy principal, Leichhardt State School
Beck Humphreys – teacher, Barcaldine P-12 State School
Tom McCartney* – teacher, Yarrabah State School
Natalie Montague-Clarke – teacher, Manly State School
Cassandra Munro – teacher, Ferny Hills State School
Leah Olsson – teacher, Cairns West State School
Nikki Roos – teacher, Brighton State School
Nicholas Shirley – principal, Atherton State School
Andrew Thompson – principal, Redlands District Special School

TAFE Division Executive member

Scott Tibaldi – teacher, TQST Bracken Ridge Campus

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander member

Rachel Bos* – teacher, Bremer State High School

(* indicates a new member of the Executive).

The 14 members elected, together with the six Senior Officers of the Union who are elected to office at different times, form the 20 person QTU Executive, which meets fortnightly during term time to make decisions about the range of issues facing QTU members. On any decision, there is a maximum of 16 votes, and 15 of those are exercised by Executive members working every day in school or TAFE colleges – a very important part of the democratic tradition and values of the QTU.

The first meeting of the Executive for the new term is tonight.

Thanks to members of the previous Executive

Three members of the previous Executive are not continuing on the new Executive. On behalf of QTU members, the QTU expresses its thanks to Andrew Beattie, Kerry O'Connor and Penny Taylor for their service to members on the Executive of the QTU and their commitment of time and energy in doing so.

Each of them continues as an active and involved member of the QTU.

Committee elections

The election of Executive follows the triennial election of a member of Council from each geographical branch of the QTU and three members from the TAFE Division. Area Council representatives to Council are elected in a different cycle. As well as the Executive, the members of Council also elect new Union committees in a range of policy areas, including Working Conditions, Professional Issues, Education Leaders, Special Education, Women Teachers and Girls Education, Gandu Jarjum (the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee), and State Accommodation, as well as a number of administrative committees.

These committee elections are conducted by the QTU and those ballots are currently being counted.

Pay freeze argument continues

One of the major items on the Executive agenda will be the ongoing opposition to state government demands for a pay freeze for public servants, including teachers and principals and TAFE teachers.

A meeting was held between the government and public sector unions last Thursday, but there was no change in the situation. Public sector unions are meeting again on Tuesday with an expectation that the government will finally state its proposal.

The QTU remains opposed to any freeze, because:

- it breaks our agreement
- it's bad economics
- teachers and principals don't deserve it after what they've done this year.

The QTU has started a lobbying campaign of all MPs in anticipation that the government will have to pass legislation to implement a wage freeze.

COVID-19 restrictions eased but vigilance still required

The Queensland Government yesterday announced an earlier than expected easing of restrictions on movement, gatherings of citizens and the operations of businesses, as a result of continuing low numbers of new cases.

In particular, restrictions on travel within Queensland were lifted prior to the approaching school holidays, meaning teachers will be able to travel within the state during the winter vacation. The arrangements for travel to and from remote communities have not yet been finalised, but the QTU has been pressing for decisions to be made and communicated as soon as possible to provide as much notice as possible.

There is still no room for complacency, whether at school or in public, and the school arrangements to reduce the risk of adult-to-adult transmission, in particular, and any form of transmission of COVID-19.

These include:

- physical distancing
- four square metres per adult when indoors
- hand hygiene
- respiratory hygiene
- frequent environmental cleaning and disinfection.

There are **NO changes** at this time in vulnerable workers and those caring for the vulnerable having to work from home.

There are **NO changes** at this time to the need for teachers, staff and students who are displaying even the mildest of symptoms to stay away from school.

There are **NO changes** at this time in the guidelines for operation of schools or the planning considerations issued by the department for the return of all year levels to school.

The implementation of any changes will continue to be the subject of consultation and negotiation between the QTU and the Department of Education. Matters of active consideration at present include:

- finalisation of arrangements for vacation travel and return, including in remote Indigenous communities
- assessment and reporting requirements for Semester 2 that are not predicated on completing everything as if COVID-19 didn't happen
- securing payments for casual and temporary teachers in line with the state government's pandemic directive
- arrangements for the return of school sport
- the demands on school budgets as a result of resource costs and staff replacement costs
- the return of students to state government boarding facilities.

Workload campaign; delayed not forgotten

The sustainable reduction of teacher and principal workload remains the number one priority campaign of the QTU for this year and next. Work on the campaign and the processes for the Workload Advisory Council have continued internally within the QTU office, but were overtaken by the immediate issues raised by the pandemic.

The process of submissions to the Workload Advisory Council will commence before the end of Term 2.

A QTU position statement on workload and workload reduction was approved in principle by Executive at its last meeting, and this will be published in the very near future to stimulate discussion at a school level about the changes that will make a real, substantial and ongoing reduction to teacher workload.

Keep an eye out for forthcoming bulletins on the workload reduction campaign.

EST and ST

The QTU has been working hard to ensure that the processes for EST and ST secured in the 2019 certified agreement are made available as soon as possible. The QTU has been pushing the department to finalise the processes, however the discussions remain ongoing. The QTU understands members want certainty around the processes, and we have heard your voice on these issues.

Experienced senior teacher

In accordance with the Department of Education State School Teachers' Certified Agreement 2019, the EST classification is available to any teacher with two or more years' satisfactory service as a senior teacher or senior instrumental music teacher, or who has completed five or more years of satisfactory service as a senior instrumental music instructor.

Employees who became eligible prior to the launch of the EST process for 2020 and who apply in the 2020 calendar year will have their EST classification backdated (dependent on a successful outcome) to their date of eligibility (but not before 1 July 2019).

The department is hoping to make the process for experienced senior teacher available this month. Guidelines to assist with applications, as well as the relevant forms, will be made available via OnePortal. The QTU will continue to press the department to meet this timeline and will communicate this with members upon confirmation from the department.

Senior teacher

The QTU met with the department last week and continues to press it to make this process available. Members who were identified as eligible earlier this year are reminded that they can apply for the senior teacher classification using the existing process until the new process takes effect. Members who wish to enquire as to their eligibility for senior teacher or who have questions related to their application, should contact the Teacher Classification Team, either on 1300 365 718 or via tct@qed.qld.gov.au. It is predicted that the new processes for senior teacher will commence from Term 3, 2020. Once further detail is confirmed by the department, the QTU will communicate this with members.

Authorised by:

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