

## COMMITMENT TO COLLEAGUES AND TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION GENERALLY

As a registered teacher, I must promote mutual respect and trust in my relationships with colleagues (both teachers and others), I assist newcomers to the profession, and I behave in a way which enhances the status of the profession. This means that I must:

- Build an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect and openness
- Act within the educational and wider community in a way which enhances the status of the profession
- Commit myself to ongoing professional learning
- Continually improve my teaching and learning strategies
- Assist, support and encourage newcomers to the profession

## RESPONSIBILITIES TO TEACHER EMPLOYERS AND TO THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

As a registered teacher, I do my best to fulfil my responsibilities to my employer, my community and society. This means that I must:

- Be truthful when making statements about qualifications and competencies
- Observe contractual commitments
- Promote actively the improvement of

school/ institutional policies

- Provide a high standard of professional service
- Develop in students the values of a democratic society: respect for others, freedom, equality, integrity, participation and the pursuit of truth
- Promote cooperation among all agencies and professionals working in the best interests of students and families
- Provide a professional service which is responsive to the needs of the community
- Develop by precept and example, a respect for laws and policies which protect and promote the well-being of students, families and the community

For a more detailed version of this document, including examples for each of the standards listed, contact:

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*As a registered teacher:*

- **I must make my foremost responsibility the education and welfare of all students in my care, and I respect the uniqueness and dignity of each student.**
- **I must build relationships with students' families, as appropriate, that contribute to students' welfare and education.**
- **I must promote mutual respect and trust in my relationships with colleagues, I assist newcomers to the profession, and I behave in a way which enhances the status of the profession.**
- **I must do my best to fulfil my responsibilities to my employer, my community and society.**

## WHY ETHICAL STANDARDS?

We live in a changing society rich in diversity. However there is sufficient common ground on values to formulate ethical standards which promote the ideals of teaching and set high standards of professional practice.

Within society there is, for example, a broad acceptance of values such as honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, equality, impartiality, fairness, justice, caring, compassion, sensitivity, commitment, the pursuit of truth and the respect of self and others. Ethical principles such as these underlie most professional codes and certainly underlie these standards.

The teaching profession itself expects high standards of ethical behaviour from its members. Ethical standards document a formal framework of ideals which can guide and encourage all teachers to strive to achieve these high standards of ethical behaviour and service provision. The aim of such standards is to support teachers and to demonstrate their professional status.

Due to the importance of education and the responsibilities of teachers in the education and development of students, teachers are accountable to students and families, colleagues, the profession, the teacher's employer and the community. Consequently, teachers need to be aware of their ethical responsibilities and vulnerabilities in their interactions and relationships with each of these groups. Ethical standards for Queensland teachers address the ethical ideals relating to each of these groups. Commitment or responsibility should not

all be one way - ie by teachers to others. There must be some reciprocity on the part of employers, parents, and the community, but it is beyond the scope of this document to address this.

These ethical standards are meant to be a generic, interactive statement to be used by sectors, systems, or schools. They are intended for teachers in State and non-State preschools, primary schools, and secondary schools (ie the levels of formal education in which teacher registration is currently compulsory); however, much (if not all) of the standards will also apply to educators in other settings (eg child care centres and kindergartens, TAFE, and higher education). They are also intended to apply as far as possible to those in professional education positions beyond the classroom.

The ethical standards cover the four main types of teacher responsibility. They take the form of a set of principles, each with a list of dot point examples. The latter are illustrative only - they are not an exhaustive list and may not all be necessary in all cases for the achievement of the relevant principle.

## RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS

As a registered teacher, I must make my foremost responsibility the education and welfare of all students in my care, and I respect the uniqueness and dignity of each student. This means that I:

- Regard the lifelong learning of students as the main goal of teaching
- Base teaching on best theoretical and practical

knowledge and knowledge of each student's development

- Recognise and respect, and promote the understanding of, diversity
- Provide an environment which promotes the physical, emotional, social and intellectual well-being of all students
- Create and maintain appropriate professional relationships with students
- Protect students' rights to privacy and confidentiality

## RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS' PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND FAMILIES

As a registered teacher, I must build relationships with students' families, as appropriate, that contribute to students' welfare and education. This means that I must:

- Establish relationships with parents based on courtesy, mutual trust and open communication
- Respect family privacy and treat information with an appropriate level of confidentiality
- Respect parents' and guardians' rights of inquiry, consultation and information with regard to their children
- Respect the uniqueness and characteristics of family backgrounds