

MEDIA RELEASE

Higher education registration supports professional learning

14 April 2014: The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) will offer Graduate Certificate professional learning programs, following its registration last week as a higher education provider by the Australian Government's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Announcing the news, ACER Chief Executive, Professor Geoff Masters AO, said registration as a higher education provider is a milestone in ACER's 84-year history.

"Registration means that ACER will immediately offer its Graduate Certificate in Education in the Assessment of Student Learning, a four-unit course designed particularly for current teachers and school leaders," Professor Masters said. It also opens the way for the national research body to plan for masters degrees in future.

Professor Masters said courses offered through the ACER Institute would provide graduates with advanced skills in evidence-based teaching.

"Research consistently shows the importance of deep pedagogical knowledge to more effective teaching and improved student learning. ACER's courses are designed to provide teachers with advanced knowledge and skills in key areas of teaching practice," Professor Masters said.

ACER plans to offer courses that draw on its expertise in the assessment of student learning, educational measurement and quantitative research methods. Senior research staff have contributed to the development and teaching of pilot programs over the past two years.

"Our Advanced Professional Learning Programs in the Teaching of Reading and the Teaching of Mathematics draw on international research into the most effective ways to teach these subjects and complement ACER's range of published resources for schools," Professor Masters said.

"The purpose of the programs is to build teachers' familiarity with evidence-based practices, to support their research and reflection, and to provide a way of recognising teachers who master these practices in their day-to-day work."

ACER Institute Director Dr Elizabeth Hartnell-Young said that, as a result of demand from across Australia, ACER Institute professional learning is available online as well as through a blended approach that includes face-to-face sessions and opportunities for participants to apply and reflect on the content in their own settings.

ACER's initial registration as a non-self-accrediting Higher Education provider will be for a period of seven years to April 2021.

ACER Institute Director Dr Elizabeth Hartnell-Young is available for comment.

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