



**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PATHWAYS**
FOR EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

FRAMEWORK

A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION INITIATIVE

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1. INTRODUCTION

The professional development pathways framework has been developed to assist educators in the schooling sector to engage in quality professional development that links with postgraduate study at South Australian universities.

The Professional Development Pathways Framework provides an opportunity for professional development providers who are creating professional development modules to seek and attain accreditation for those modules at a fifth year tertiary level within South Australia.

The Professional Development Pathways Framework was developed by a group of key stakeholders including universities, employer groups, professional associations, principal and preschool director associations, unions, the Teachers' Registration Board of SA, the Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia, and private providers. Representatives of these stakeholders form a management committee to oversee the operation of the Professional Development Pathways Framework and to coordinate the development and administration of professional development modules.

The PD Pathways Framework is operated by a management committee comprised of a representative from each of the participating tertiary institutions in South Australia, the Department of Education and Children's Services, Catholic Education SA, the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, the Council of Education Associations of South Australia, the Australian Education Union, the Independent Education Union, and one other nominated education stakeholder, which together are known as The PD Pathways Network. The Management Committee may choose to co-opt specialist personnel as required.

2. OPERATION OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Management Committee coordinates the approval of professional development programs.

These programs contribute to the ongoing professional learning of school-based educators in South Australia.

- Approved programs are delivered in the form of modules.
- The development, delivery, and assessment of the modules occur under the auspices of the Management Committee.
- The modules are offered by consortia, with each consortium containing at least one university partner or other organisation accredited to offer Masters level courses. The requirement for modules to be offered by consortia is part of a quality assurance process in two ways. First, consortia will combine the expertise and knowledge of staff from universities, the education sectors, clusters of school/preschool/institute staff, teacher unions, or education professional associations. Second, consortia will contain expertise associated with university assessment at the Masters level.

- The Network facilitates the formation of consortia to develop and offer the modules.
- Consortia members are expected to negotiate structure and content as well as associated assessment based on Network guidelines.
- Modules are to be based on sound principles of adult learning.
- Modules are intended to provide professional development with clear relevance to educational practice, and provide insights into implications for change in educational practice. At the same time, the modules are to serve as a basis for increased professional knowledge through an enhanced awareness of educational issues, debates, theory, and research.
- Modules can employ a range of methodologies including face-to-face, on-line, workshops, self-paced individual activities, collegiate groups, mentoring, lectures, research, and using information technology such as the Internet and videoconferencing.

3. MODULES

The following information relates to the creation of modules that are consistent with the PD Pathways approach to professional learning for teachers.

3.1. Module Consortium

The composition of the consortium developing a Professional Pathways module for approval must include an academic knowledgeable in the appropriate field of study from one of the cooperating tertiary institutions.

Other members could include:

- Education curricula policy makers,
- Schooling sector specialists,
- Private professional development providers

For masters qualification requirements of consortium members refer to 2.6 Delivery of Modules.

3.2. Module Size

Modules can be of either three or four units.

3.2.1. Three-unit modules

These should involve about 150 hours work, which includes face to face contact, work-based activities, assessment and independent study. The assessment is the equivalent of about 4,500 words. A module of this size is the equivalent of about one quarter of a semester's work in a full-time course work Masters program.

3.2.2. Four-unit modules

For these modules, the total amount of work for the program participant, including face to face contact, work-based activities, assessment and independent study, should involve about 200 hours work. The assessment is the equivalent of about 6,000 words. A module of this size is the equivalent of about one third of a semester's work in a full-time course work Masters program.

3.3. Module Content

Content of the modules will:

- include a mixture of relevant theory, workplace practice and other relevant and current research
- include outcomes that are directed to practical strategies for learning environments and school/preschool/institute application
- provide opportunities for practitioners to renew knowledge in their respective learning areas
- encourage self-reflection and a research approach to the analysis of learning environments and school/preschool/institute-based issues

- contain follow-up activities and assessment
- contain outcomes that focus on practice, the mastery of current educational theory and research relevant to practice, and an analysis of educational issues.

3.4. Module Development

Modules are to be developed through negotiations with all consortia members and the Network Management Committee, with an emphasis on:

- recognition of the needs and priorities of each of the education systems as well as of individual practitioners, school/preschool/institute or clusters of these
- the relevance of the module for educational practice
- the contribution of current educational theory and research
- a wide process of consultation, including consultation with members of the Network.

As well, module development should take account of the university awards to which the module could be accredited.

3.5. Module Approval

There are three steps in the module approval process.

step 1:

A consortium containing at least one university partner will initiate and develop each module.

The first step in gaining overall approval as part of the Pathways Framework is for the university involved in the development to agree to host the module for future approval of credit within its own awards.

step 2:

The module, together with information about its accreditation status, will then be submitted to the Management Committee, whose secretariat will forward it to the tertiary institutions for their approval. At the end of the second step, the module will be either, approved for accreditation, rejected, or returned to the Management Committee with a request for modification. The approval process will include a determination about the specific awards for which approval has been given as eligible for credit.

step 3:

The final step is for the Management Committee to accept the module as part of the Pathways Framework. Module approval will normally be for a period of three years, after which re-accreditation will need to be obtained. Approval is given contingent on minimum changes to the module on occasions where the module will be re-offered. Changes to content, outcomes, or personnel involved in the presentation or assessment of the module must be referred to the Management Committee.

3.6. Delivery of Modules

Module content must be delivered by professionals with expertise in the field of study related to the module title and content and with proficiency in adult learning.

Teams and individuals may be involved in delivery. Where an individual is solely responsible for delivery, the individual must have a Masters qualification or better. Where a team is involved in delivering module content, at least one person must have a Masters qualification or better and supervise other presenters to ensure module quality and that the standards are consistent with fifth year tertiary level.

3.7. Assessment of Learning Within Modules

Assessment is an integral aspect of each module, rather than an 'add-on' component.

Module approval includes approval of planned outcomes and associated assessment strategies. Nevertheless, assessment is not a requirement for all who undertake the module.

Modules might involve participation only. Participants who complete and pass the assessment for the module will receive a Certificate of Completion. Participants who complete only the face-to-face component will receive a Certificate of Participation provided by the module consortium.

The document 'Making the most of PD Pathways' will be available for presenters at the time of the module being accepted. Information contained in this document should be shared with participants at the first opportunity so that participants can make an informed decision concerning their credit opportunities.

A variety of approaches to follow-up activities and assessment are possible: project work, presentations to a group, classroom/learning environment or school/pre school/institute- based research, written assignments, preparation of student course work, presentation of an agreed portfolio, maintenance of a journal while participating in professional forums, writing of a journal article, and so on.

The consortium that designs and presents the module is responsible for arrangements related to the assessment of the participants. The consortium needs to detail the arrangements for assessment at the time of module approval.

In most cases assessment will be on the basis of a non-graded pass. (With agreement from those responsible for the assessment, participants may request that their work be graded if they intend to pursue further study.)

4. CREDIT TO UNIVERSITY AWARDS

When successfully assessed, the consortium responsible for the module will forward a list of the names and dates of birth of successful participants to the PD Pathway's secretariat. The secretariat will then forward a Certificate of Completion to the successful participants. This statement will be accepted by all participating tertiary institutions as credit towards a post graduate fifth year-level qualification. The award/s to which the module can receive credit will be determined by the particular university, taking into account the unit length and content of the module, the requirements of the award, and the participant's existing qualifications. To actually receive the credit, and take out an award, a participant will need to seek academic advice from one or more of the participating tertiary institutions, enrol in the appropriate award and then complete the remaining topics/subjects/courses with the institution of their choice.

Participants with less than a four-year qualification (such as a Diploma of Teaching) will need to approach each institution about recognition of prior learning (RPL) and the granting of status. An institution may, under some circumstances, allow entry to a fifth-year award based on a Diploma of Teaching and RPL. However, participants may wish to use the modules for credit towards a fourth-year qualification (such as towards a Bachelor of Education). There is an assumption that a base level for the accreditation of these modules is at least a three-year qualification. Participants with less than a three-year qualification must speak directly with the accreditation providers.

The Professional Development Pathways framework has been developed with the intention that credit for completed modules will articulate within and across awards of the participating tertiary institutions to the same degree as normal fifth year tertiary subjects. South Australian qualifications are recognised nationally and internationally.

5. COMPLETING A POSTGRADUATE-LEVEL AWARD

In order to fulfil the requirements of a postgraduate-level award, participants will have to enrol in one of the participating tertiary institutions and complete additional courses/topics/subjects.

The core feature of the Professional Development Pathways framework is that, with a Certificate of Completion, each of the participating tertiary institutions will accept the certificate towards credit or exemption in appropriate postgraduate-level awards. The award to which credit is given and the amount of credit, (or exemption) will depend on the qualifications of the participant, the extent to which the content of the module matches the focus of the award, and limits placed by the institution on the amount of 'outside' credit that can be used for the award.

6. MODULE FEES

Registration fees for participants can be expected to vary among modules. Tertiary institution partners may charge for assessment of participants and this should be discussed at the time of planning and built into overall fees for the module.

The modules are provided on a fee-for-service basis and mindful of the National Competition Policy.

The Pathways secretariat charges a registration fee of \$200 for processing each new module approved by the tertiary institutions and imposes a fee of \$20 for replacement of lost Certificates of Completion.

For further information contact:

Professional Development Pathways Secretariat Office
C/- Council of Education Associations of SA (CEASA)
Level 1 - Education Development Centre
Milner Street, Hindmarsh SA 5007
Phone: (08) 8463 5875
Fax (08) 8463-5855
Email: ceasa@ceasa.asn.au