

## Faculty of Education

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Submission 60.2

TE Inquiry



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31.01.06

Ms Janet Holmes  
Secretary  
House of Representatives Inquiry into Teacher Education

Dear Janet

I refer to your email inquiry of 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005 regarding clarification of some points in our submission to the Inquiry into Teacher Education.

Your first query related to the partnership between Deakin University and St Michael's Grammar School. I attach to this letter a statement regarding the program provided by the course coordinator, Dr Julia Walsh. If you had additional queries, you might like to email Julia directly ([julia.walsh@deakin.edu.au](mailto:julia.walsh@deakin.edu.au)).

Your second query related to the administrative costs of managing the total owned load for our courses.

Undergraduate teacher education courses at Deakin place a strong emphasis upon developing knowledge discipline strengths as well as strengths in areas relating to the study of education. We believe that this discipline knowledge strength is vital for the development of teachers with strong and reliable curriculum knowledge. In many other courses, in Australian universities as well as elsewhere, discipline knowledge is taught as part of curriculum studies. For instance, knowledge of science per se is taught within the context of science curriculum. (This has particularly been the case for primary teacher education courses.) At Deakin, however, students study a major sequence of subjects (of their choosing) in another faculty. They might do a major sequence in Science, Mathematics, English, History, Visual Arts, etc.

The principal mode of study for secondary teachers is via the dual degree structure. This structure also means that half the program is studied in another Faculty.

All primary teacher education students also study some core subjects in Science, Mathematics and Language. These units, although developed in consultation with the Faculty of Education, are taught by the Faculties of Science & Technology and Arts. Students also may choose to study one or two elective units in other Faculties.

This means that approximately 50% of a student's undergraduate course is studied outside the Faculty of Education. Although being strongly committed to the importance of the development of this discipline knowledge, the problem it creates for us results from the funding model. Faculties are funded on 'taught' load, rather

than 'course' load. This means that, although we are funded adequately for our actual teaching, all of the administrative services associated with having students enrolled in a course, are funded by only 50% of the student's load. Thus the costs of marketing, recruitment, student advising, progress monitoring, graduation, alumni support etc all have to be supported out of funding for 50% of the course.

I trust that this clarifies the point we made in our original submission, but if you have further queries, please do not hesitate to ask.

When the Committee met with us last year, one of the questions asked related to our ability to say clearly what distinguished our Faculty and characterised what we do. You may be interested to know that since receiving that challenge, we have been working on a 'Distinctiveness and Aspirations Statement', which we now have displayed on our web site. If this was of interest to the Committee, it can be viewed at <http://www.deakin.edu.au/education/distinctiveness.php>.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance. Best wishes for your work with the Inquiry this year.

Professor Shirley Grundy  
Dean of Education

## **The St. Michael's Associate Teaching Program**

The Associate teacher program is a partnership between Deakin University Faculty of Education and St. Michael's Grammar School. The program provides students in the Bachelor of Education with an opportunity to be placed in a school during the last year of the course while still undertaking studies. The students are expected to commit to the program for the full school academic year. Students complete their placement in the school and are also exposed to a wide range of other experiences.

This is a win-win program for Deakin University students and St. Michael's Grammar School. The school struggled to employ good sport coaches for their co-curricular sport program. Through a partnership arrangement the school offered to place students in the school for the year, provide them with opportunity to develop understanding of the school context through experience, professional development and engagement with staff, and supervise students on teaching rounds while at the school. Students commit to the co-curricular program, coach teams and participate in outdoor education camps. Students are paid for coaching on a monthly basis. The advantage for Deakin is that the university can place up to 10 students on one site for teaching practicum. Deakin University supports the students by negotiating a timetable providing flexibility for them to attend St. Michaels during the required hours. In 2006 at least one core unit will be delivered at St. Michaels Grammar by a staff member to further develop the partnership, provide timetable flexibility for students, and have students engaged in a "real" school project.

Students become an integral part of the co-curricular program, coaching teams and working in the outdoor education program. This is a great opportunity for students to work within the wider context and culture of the school, establish relationships with students and staff, and develop confidence in teaching skills.

One special attribute of the Associate Teacher Program is that each student has three mentors. A mentor is allocated for each discipline area as well as a mentor for personal development.

There has been very positive feedback about this program from past and present students involved in the program, St. Michael's Grammar School, employers of students from this program. This year the program has been extended to provide internships to students in other discipline areas.

Several students have been employed by St.Michael's Grammar School as full time or contract teachers. Prior to the Associate Teacher program the school did not employ graduate teachers.

The program has been in place for four years. It is designed around an expertise developmental model. Contextual knowledge is difficult to develop outside of an extended school context. The associate teacher program provides opportunities for students to engage in the context and develop relationships with students and staff and bring meaning to their teaching. The next stage of development is to establish more school partnerships and conduct research. It should be noted that this model does not suit all students and only those that elect to be part of the program are involved in the selection process.