Teacher Classification Review
Joint Working Party
Briefing No. 3

Some positive features of employer classification position

Employer position falls short of addressing structural and conceptual anomalies

Employee Representatives to respond

Dear Colleagues

Catholic employing authorities have posed far-reaching new classification provisions in the current working party – while unfortunately leaving much as the same.

The ‘new’ concepts of a reduced number of classification steps, substantive salaries for middle leaders and the Highly Accomplished Teachers (HAT) and Lead Teacher (LT) classifications deserve to be explored.

However, members will not sit comfortably with the fact that in the employer position fundamental wage rates remain essentially undisturbed and HAT and LT is compromised.

Background

Following the most recent Joint Working Party meeting (8 March) Catholic employing authorities have now tabled an almost complete position on their proposals for a revised classification structure and scale.

Positive features of employer position

There are a number of employer proposals which merit positive consideration:

1. Reduction in length of incremental scale from the current eleven (11) steps to nine (9).
   
   This would be achieved by removing the current entry level step (Graduate 1) and the removal of a further step in the steps Proficient 1 to Experienced 5 classification.

2. Consideration of substantive salaries for Middle Leaders.

   Substantive salaries rather than base salary, plus an allowance, recognising the substantive character of a middle leader role.
3. Introduction of a HAT and Lead Teacher classification to recognising the particular high level qualitative character of work by teachers at these levels.

**Issues with the employer position**

1. Restriction on the incremental movement from Graduate 2 (entry level) to Proficient 1.

   Employers propose that incremental advancement only occur at the point a provisionally registered teacher obtains full registration.

   Given the contemporary fractional nature of graduate employment finding a school authority to sign-off on the full registration recommendation is often difficult.

2. The substantive salary rates for middle leaders which are proposed by employers would merely reflect the ‘norms’ of payment currently received by middle leaders in the current ‘base salary plus allowance’ model.

   The exceptions would be middle leaders on base salary at E3/Proficient 5 or below who would derive an advanced benefit until such time their teacher base incremental rate was at E3/Proficient 5.

   Employers have confirmed that existing release time provisions would be maintained in the substantive salary model.

3. The payment of a Lead Teacher would be at the discretion of the employer.

   Employer representatives have foreshadowed that HAT and Lead Teacher applicants will be required to pay a significant fee.

   A teacher will have paid over $1,500 to a certifying authority for the certification process, and if successful in the application, will be recognised across the country as a Lead Teacher.

   However, the employer position is that a school will determine at its discretion if a teacher is to be acknowledged as a Lead Teacher and paid accordingly. At other times the Lead Teacher will be placed in a ‘holding position’ as a HAT and paid as such.

   Seemingly a nationally and independently certified Lead Teacher would only be a Lead Teacher if the employer decides that the person is a Lead Teacher.

   The employer position is an affront of the nationally recognised Teacher Standards and the certification process. It is a nonsense and an offence to the integrity of the national certification process.

4. The employer also wants the capacity to ‘suspend’ and ‘revoke’ a HAT or Lead Teacher in their classification and thus suspend or revoke payment.

   This would create the spectacle of a nationally recognised independently certified HAT or Lead Teacher being subject to a latter day employer determination that the teacher was no longer HAT or Lead.

5. The employer position would leave rates paid to APs and Deputies unaltered notwithstanding the relativities will be significantly impacted by the top incremental classroom teacher rate being at $100,936 from 1 July 2018.
Next steps

A further meeting of the Joint Working Party is scheduled for Wednesday, 22 March 2017.

Employee representatives will be tabling a set of proposals in response to the employer positions consistent with the comments in this briefing.

While there are positive features of the employer position, it fails to recognise structural and conceptual anomalies in their position.

The outcomes of negotiations for the replacement collective agreement created a different framework for the overall classification structure. The employer position recognises this only in part.

The adoption of the National Teacher Professional Standards introduces new conceptual underpinnings for the classification structure. Rather than deal with anomalies arising from that, the employer position introduces additional anomalies.

Further advice will be forwarded to Chapters following the Joint Working Party meeting next week.

Kind regards

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