2009

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR PRE-SERVICE (DOUBLE DEGREE) GRADUATE RETRAINING PROGRAM
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**Attachments:**

1. Sample Deed of Agreement
2. Application form
3. Prohibited Employment Declaration form & Consent to Screening form
Introduction

Thank you for expressing interest in the 2009 School Counsellor Pre-Service (Double Degree) Graduate Retraining Program. The following information is provided to assist you in completing your application.

This program is one of the strategies developed by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET) to increase the pool of teachers eligible to undertake school counsellor retraining to meet a workforce need for school counsellors.

The 2009 School Counsellor Pre-Service (Double Degree) Graduate Retraining Program targets graduates with teaching qualifications and a psychology major at credit average completed within the last 10 years, with less than two years full-time teaching experience. Sponsored graduates are appointed to a full-time teaching position for two years followed by entry to the part-time school counsellor retraining program for an additional two years of part-time study whilst working as a school-counsellor-in-training. Following completion of their retraining program, participants are confirmed as qualified school counsellors in NSW public schools.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander teachers are encouraged to apply.

Role of school counsellors

School counsellors in NSW public schools are experienced teachers with postgraduate training in psychology and school counselling. School counsellors strengthen the student welfare provision of schools by promoting student welfare policy and programs and by providing counselling and psychological assessment of students with specific needs.

School counsellors normally work across primary and secondary schools with students from pre-school to Year 12. School counsellors:

- assess students’ needs using psychological and educational tests, rating scales and observation, and report the results to parents and teachers
- counsel students individually and in groups
- participate in the work of student welfare committees
- provide advice to review committees concerning the education of students with special needs
- refer students or their families to other agencies concerned with the health and welfare of students and liaise with such agencies as required
- work with groups of parents regarding the welfare needs of their children
- report and make recommendations when students have received a long suspension from school
- respond, as part of a team, to schools experiencing serious incidents.

It is strongly recommended that you seek the advice of a current DET school counsellor or District Guidance Officer if you wish to undertake this retraining opportunity.

2009 Pre-Service Double Degree Program

The 2009 Pre-Service Double Degree School Counsellor Retraining Program is designed to assist graduates with teaching qualifications and a psychology major (at a minimum credit average completed within the last 10 years) to gain successful full-time teaching experience to enable them to enter school counsellor retraining.
Successful applicants are initially appointed to classroom teaching positions for two years in one of their nominated staffing areas in non-coastal rural NSW. Participants will be paid a full-time teachers salary during this period of teaching.

Upon successful completion of the teaching component, participants move into the 2011 Part-time School Counsellor Retraining Program. They are re-appointed to a school in their nominated staffing areas as a school counsellor-in-training. Participants may be required to re-locate when proceeding to the school counsellor retraining phase of the program.

The program over six years is anticipated to be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Appointment under the program to a position as a full-time teacher in a rural staffing area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Continuation of full-time teaching appointment. Endorsement from Principal confirming suitability for school counsellor retraining, including demonstrated interest and involvement in student welfare during the two years of teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Full-time appointment under the program as a school counsellor-in-training. Part-time study in the program commences. Release from work for up to two days per week for part-time study. First orientation component in Sydney. Further orientation and university components throughout the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Part-time study program continues. Confirmation of appointment as a school counsellor upon successful completion of retraining program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>School counsellor full time. Service commitment period finishes for participants in group one staffing areas (see section on geographic locations of workforce need) at the end of 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>School counsellor full time. Service commitment period finishes for participants in all other staffing areas at the end of 2014.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Counsellor Retraining Program

The current School Counsellor Retraining Program is a postgraduate tertiary program undertaken over two years. All program participants receive full-time teacher salary whilst undertaking retraining.

Program participants must participate in, and successfully meet, requirements for the following university and Departmental components of the retraining:

- university lectures, tutorials, intensive schools (where required) and examinations which may be scheduled in school holidays
- professional experience (practicum)
- DET orientation sessions and work shadowing experiences.

Teachers are appointed as school counsellors-in-training to non-metropolitan vacancies mainly in non-coastal rural NSW during which time they are released for up to two days per week to undertake part-time study by distance mode over two years.
Please note also that there is reference on the website of the NSW Psychologists Registration Board [http://www.psychreg.health.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.psychreg.health.nsw.gov.au/) to a proposed change in the study requirement for registration of psychologists from 2010. If this occurs, DET retraining programs may have to be amended to accommodate these changes. All successful psychology sponsorship participants will be advised of any proposed changes to the school counsellor retraining programs as soon as possible.

The two year study program for those entering part-time retraining program in 2009 is anticipated to be as follows. Please note that this outline is included as a guide only. Program details may change during the pre-requisite teaching period.

**2009 Program Outline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Part-time program milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009: Week 1, Term 1</td>
<td>Full-time appointment under the program to schools as <em>school counsellors-in-training</em>. First orientation component will be in Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009: February - November</td>
<td>Released from school for up to 2 days per week for part-time study program. Further orientation and university residential components during the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009: End of Term 4</td>
<td>Program concludes for school vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010: Week 1, Term 1</td>
<td>Full-time appointment to schools continues. Released for up to 2 days per week for part-time study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010: end of Term 4</td>
<td>Confirmation of appointment as school counsellor upon successful completion of retraining program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>School counsellor full time. Service commitment period commences. Service commitment period finishes for participants appointed to group one staffing areas at the end of 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>School counsellor full time. Service commitment period continues and finishes at the end of 2012 for all other applicants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**University training provider**

The university training provider will be confirmed with pre-service double degree participants before the start of their post graduate study.

The University of Wollongong is the 2009 training provider for the part-time program. This program involves two years of study by distance mode. Participants are appointed from the first year to school counsellor-in-training positions mainly in non-coastal rural NSW schools and are released for up to two days per week for study. The University of Wollongong will deliver the 2009 program largely on-line with the residential components held at the Sydney campus of the University of Wollongong which is located at the Sydney Business School, 75 Liverpool Street, Sydney and at their Wollongong campus.

The University of Wollongong course coordinator is Colleen Respondek, her contact details are: 02 4221 3728 (phone) or email: [colleenr@uow.edu.au](mailto:colleenr@uow.edu.au)
On successful completion of the school counselling retraining program, participants will receive a postgraduate qualification in psychology from the university training provider and qualification as a school counsellor.

Selection criteria

To be considered for selection, you must have:

- graduate teaching qualifications
- less than two years full-time teaching experience
- current full-time approval to teach in NSW public schools (must be confirmed prior to final acceptance into the program)
- an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) approved psychology major at credit average grade completed within the last ten years. Applicants need to be aware that university training providers require credit grades for undergraduate psychology subjects to satisfy entry requirements into postgraduate courses in psychology
- a current NSW drivers licence or the willingness to obtain one before the commencement of school counsellor retraining
- copies of all practicum reports to date and the willingness to send any outstanding reports to the Retraining Unit before final acceptance into the program
- a Principal’s report if you have already undertaken any casual or temporary teaching
- two additional referees’ reports supporting your application
- the willingness to obtain an endorsement from your principal at the completion of your teaching experience.

*Applicants who have not worked for the Department previously are required to attend an interview with the NSW Department of Education and Training to gain permanent approval to teach in NSW public schools. This is in addition to the interview for sponsorship for the School Counsellor Retraining Program.

Priority for retraining will be given to applicants who are willing to accept appointment as a school counsellor (which initially may be as a mobile* school counsellor) in rural locations of staffing need in NSW.

* Note: a mobile school counsellor has not yet been appointed to a substantive position. They may be used to replace school counsellors who are currently on leave or who are absent from their role on other duties.

Geographic locations of workforce need

The geographic locations of workforce need for school counsellors are mainly in western and south-western Sydney and non-coastal rural NSW. Applicants must select staffing areas that they are prepared to work in from the following groups.

**GROUP ONE:** For Group ONE you must select a minimum of ONE school staffing area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Albury</th>
<th>Broken Hill</th>
<th>Dubbo</th>
<th>Moree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bourke</td>
<td>Deniliquin</td>
<td>Griffith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OR
GROUP TWO: For Group TWO you must select a minimum of TWO school staffing areas.

- Armidale
- Maitland
- Orange
- Wagga Wagga
- Bathurst
- Muswellbrook
- Tamworth

Please note: applicants who select a GROUP ONE staffing area may also select additional staffing areas from GROUP TWO.

The schools in these staffing areas are listed on the Department’s website at: [https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/employment/promotion/schstaffingareas.xls](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/employment/promotion/schstaffingareas.xls).

It is important that you consult this spreadsheet for a list of schools within these areas before completing section 6 of your application form.

Applicants will also be able to nominate additional non-metropolitan staffing areas that may be considered by the Department if suitable vacancies arise.

**Service Commitment**

Successful applicants must be prepared to work as a full-time school counsellor for a nominated service commitment period outlined below at the completion of the training program in one of their nominated staffing areas.

- for appointments to Group One staffing areas: the service commitment period will be a continuous one year of service following the successful completion of the retraining program
- for all other appointments, the service commitment period will be a continuous two years of service following the successful completion of the retraining program.

Please note: School Counsellors are required to undertake a caseload of schools some of which may be outside their service commitment areas.

**Financial support**

It is envisaged that sponsored teachers undertaking the 2009 *School Counsellor Pre-Service (Double Degree) Graduate Retraining Program* will receive the following financial support once they enter the retraining program:

- payment of university course fees associated with retraining
- full-time teacher salary during the two years of part-time study
- reimbursement of approved travel and accommodation costs to attend compulsory university and DET course components, if applicable
- a general purpose allowance to assist with technology support, printing and textbooks. In 2009 this allowance will be $1000 for participants who are appointed to a Group One staffing area and $700 for participants who are appointed to a Group Two staffing area.

Teachers receive full-time teacher salary while on sponsorship including during the pre-requisite period of classroom teaching under the following conditions:

- salary is paid at the appropriate incremental level as determined by the Department
- the period of training counts for incremental purposes, and
- teacher leave conditions apply.
Extra incentives are also available in many rural schools. These incentives include a range of benefits and allowances through the Rural Incentives Scheme. Entitlements vary according to a school’s location, so please check specific entitlements for particular schools at the online benefits calculator at: www.teach.nsw.edu.au/calculator.

**Fringe Benefit Tax**

When the Department provides its employees with benefits, there may be a Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) implication.

Where the Department incurs FBT for benefits provided to its employees, the Commonwealth requires certain benefits to be disclosed on the individual employee’s payment summary (formerly group certificate). This is known as the Reportable Fringe Benefits Amount (RFBA) and usually appears in a box in the top right hand corner of the payment summary.

An RFBA on the employee’s payment summary does not mean the employee has an income tax or FBT liability. However the RFBA is used to assess eligibility for other Commonwealth benefits and obligations, for example the Medicare levy.

You are advised to seek financial advice regarding FBT implications. For further information a fact sheet is available from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) which will provide details on likely impacts and thresholds. FBT publications are available on the ATO website www.ato.gov.au. There is a Personal Tax Information Line on 13 28 61.

**Selection process**

A selection panel, representing the Department’s Human Resources Directorate, Student Welfare Directorate and a District Guidance Officer, will shortlist and interview eligible applicants. Applicants are asked to demonstrate their personal, professional and academic suitability for retraining as a school counsellor.

The timeline for completion of the selection process is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 June 2008</td>
<td>Advertising for recruitment for 2009 School Counsellor Pre-Service (Double Degree) Graduate Retraining Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 August 2008</td>
<td>Final date for receipt of applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week beginning 25 August 2008</td>
<td>Selected applicants contacted and invited to interview. Please ensure that you can be reached by telephone on the number(s) you supplied on the application form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week beginning 8 September 2008</td>
<td>Interviews conducted at DET offices in the Sydney area. Locations will be advised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late October 2008</td>
<td>Offers to successful applicants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acceptance into the program

If you are successful you will:

- be subject to a probity check
- be required to consent to employment screening
- enter into a Deed of Agreement which will include a financial liability if the Deed of Agreement is not fulfilled
- commit to successfully completing the teaching and retraining components of the program in a timely manner and work as a school counsellor in an area of staffing need, mainly in schools in non-coastal rural NSW, for a specified service commitment period following successful completion of retraining
- relinquish your current teaching position (if already working as a permanent Department teacher)
- maintain current employment status i.e. temporary teachers/casual teachers will remain as temporary teachers until they successfully complete the program.

You may also be subject to a medical check if you are not already working as a permanent DET teacher.

Permanent teachers will be required to relinquish their current position, but will retain permanent status. Teachers whether permanent or temporary who do not successfully complete the retraining program will return to their employment status prior to the commencement of the program.

Successful applicants who are not yet permanent teachers with the Department of Education and Training will have the opportunity to apply for an Assessment of Prior Service review prior to the commencement of retraining.

Offers of retraining are for the 2009 retraining program only and are conditional on meeting university entry requirements for the postgraduate qualification in psychology and having current full-time approval to teach in NSW public schools.

Acceptance of offers cannot be deferred to a later date.

Administrative arrangements

- retraining program participants are full-time employees of DET and sign a Deed of Agreement to successfully complete the program
- participants are expected to attend all compulsory university and DET training sessions and all practicum and work shadowing components and any absence must be accompanied by a DET leave form. Attendance at compulsory university sessions will be monitored
- in the part-time program, some compulsory university intensive schools may be in school holidays
- university and school holiday periods may not always coincide
- participants are not entitled to leave without pay during the program
- the Retraining Unit within the DET will monitor participants’ progress in the program.

Awards and conditions

Currently school counsellors enjoy the same working conditions and salary as teachers. A full list of employment conditions can be found at the links below. Information about current awards and conditions for teachers in NSW Department of education and Training schools can be found at: https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/awardcon/index.htm
Comprehensive information about school teacher conditions of employment is in the Teachers Handbook at: [https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/awardcon/handbooktoc.htm](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/awardcon/handbooktoc.htm)

Information about current conditions of employment for teachers in the Education Teaching Service, including salary scales, is available from the Department’s web site at: [https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/salaryallow/index.htm](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/salaryallow/index.htm)

Information about employment conditions for temporary teachers can be found at: [https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/teachnsw/cas_tempteacher.htm](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/teachnsw/cas_tempteacher.htm)

**Deed of Agreement**

The Deed of Agreement specifies the duration and the area of the service commitment and outlines the responsibilities of you and the Department.

The Deed of Agreement is a legally binding document. You are urged to examine the terms of the Deed of Agreement closely. A sample Deed of Agreement and schedule is provided.

Please do not return the sample Deed of Agreement or sample schedule with your application. Successful applicants are sent a countersigned original copy of the Deed of Agreement. The Department also holds an original copy.

**Application guidelines**

**Application form:** You must complete all questions on the application form.

**Required documentation:** Attach all the documentation required to support your application including official academic transcripts to date, DET approval for permanent teaching or evidence of your Graduate Recruitment Application, evidence of social welfare related experience or skills and any other relevant information. If you wish to send copies of original documents, these must be endorsed as exact copies of original documents by a representative of the issuing authority, a Justice of the Peace or a NSW Department of Education and Training senior officer.

Consistent with NSW Government policy (Premier’s Department Circular 2004-03) any person who falsifies the record of academic and/or professional qualifications to gain employment may be dismissed and/or prosecuted.

**Service Commitment:** Priority for retraining will be given to applicants who are willing to accept an appointment to rural locations of staffing need in NSW.

**Principal report and referees:** If you have had teaching experience or are currently teaching, your principal’s supportive written recommendation is essential. Casual teachers should seek comment from the principal at the school of their most recent significant period of casual employment. The school stamp or seal is required on this report.

If you have no teaching experience other than your practicum teaching, please attach copies of your practicum reports. The school counsellor or district guidance officer would be a very good choice for your additional referee, particularly if they know your professional work. Advise your referees of your application and that they may be contacted by phone if you are invited to interview. Ensure you provide their telephone numbers for business and non-business hours.
Prohibited Employment Declaration and Consent to Employment screening forms: You must complete, sign, date and include these with your application.

Further information

For further information about the 2009 School Counsellor Pre-Service (Double Degree) Retraining Program please call the Retraining Information Line - 1300 300 634, or contact:

Angela White  
Project Officer, Retraining  
Human Resources Directorate  
Telephone: (02) 9836 9885  
Call Centre: 1300 300 634  
Email: angela.white@det.nsw.edu.au

Dan O'Brien  
Senior Project Officer, Retraining  
Human Resources Directorate  
Telephone: (02) 9836 9899  
Call Centre: 1300 300 634  
Email: daniel.o'brien@det.nsw.edu.au

Other useful contacts:


- Australian Psychological Society: see http://www.psychology.org.au or telephone 1800 333 497

- University of Wollongong: Course Coordinator, Colleen Respondek: colleenr@uow.edu.au or telephone (02) 9441 3748
Checklist

Please note that all required documentation should be submitted with your application.

In submitting your application, please ensure you:

- check the Department’s Directory to inform yourself about schools in areas you have selected
- will have an APAC accredited psychology major at a credit average or better by the end of 2008 Evidence of results to date and proof of current enrolment should be supplied
- inform your referees that they may be contacted by the selection panel if you are invited to interview
- complete all sections of the application form
- include all relevant academic transcripts (this includes all transcripts of psychology subjects). Copies must be certified as exact copies of the original documents by a representative of the issuing institution, a Justice of the Peace or a NSW Department of Education and Training authorised officer
- include a copy of your current NSW drivers licence
- include your current DET serial number and / or evidence of your GRP application plus a copy of your full-time or interim DET approval letter if you already have this
- include copies of all teaching and counselling practicum reports to date (any reports from yet to be completed practicum should be submitted as soon as possible)
- include evidence of any non DET teaching experience listed in your application
- complete, sign and include the Prohibited Employment Declaration form and the Consent to Employment Screening form
- include a current Principal’s report that is signed, dated and has the school stamp, if applicable
- include 2 other signed and dated referees’ reports on the forms provided
- attach your photograph to the front page
- make a copy of your completed application for your own records

DO NOT COMPLETE OR RETURN the Sample Deed of Agreement with your Application

Send your completed application to arrive by 8 August 2008 to:

Anne Van Gramberg
Programs Support Officer
Retraining Unit
Staffing Services Directorate
Locked Bag 3023
BLACKTOWN NSW 2148