2011

PART-TIME RURAL SCHOOL COUNSELLOR RETRAINING PROGRAM
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### Attachments:

- Sample *Deed of Agreement*
- Application form
- *Declaration and Employment Screening Consent for all Employment with the Department* form
- *Pre-Employment Health Declaration* form
Introduction

Thank you for expressing interest in the 2011 Part-time Rural School Counsellor Retraining Program. This program is one of the strategies developed by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET) to meet a workforce need for school counsellors. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers are encouraged to apply for this retraining initiative.

This program targets suitably qualified teachers with the equivalent of two years successful teaching experience and a psychology major at credit average completed within the last 10 years to undertake postgraduate study in psychology and counselling skills. The following information is provided to assist you in completing your application.

Role of school counsellors

School counsellors in NSW DET 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 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.

School counsellor retraining program model

The retraining program is a postgraduate tertiary program undertaken over two years. In the part-time rural model, teachers are appointed as school counsellors-in-training in non-coastal rural NSW for two years during which time they are allocated up to two days per week study leave. Following the successful completion of their retraining program, participants are confirmed as qualified school counsellors in NSW public schools.

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

- university lectures, tutorials, compulsory intensive schools and examinations, some of which may be in scheduled school holidays
- professional experience (practicum)
- DET orientation sessions and work shadowing experiences.
The Retraining Unit within the DET will monitor participants’ progress and attendance at all stages of the retraining program.

Program outline

The program of activities over two years of study is anticipated to be as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Part-time program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>- Appointment as a school counsellor-in-training for 3 days per week and study leave for up to 2 days per week. Delivery of study program is largely on-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- DET orientation, professional experience and university intensive school components during the first year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>- Permanent appointment as a school counsellor upon successful completion of retraining program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Specified service commitment period commences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University training provider

The University of Wollongong is currently the provider university for the part-time and full-time school counsellor retraining programs. As per DET policy, all retraining programs are re-tendered every three years. The school counsellor retraining programs will be re-tendered during 2010 for the period 2011 – 2013. Participants will be advised of the university provider for the 2011 programs before the end of 2010. The full-time program will be delivered in a metropolitan Sydney location.

On successful completion of the program participants will receive a postgraduate qualification in psychology from the university training provider and DET approval as a school counsellor. We anticipate that as well as distance learning during the university semesters, there will be a number of intensive block weeks during the first year.

The University of Wollongong course coordinator is Colleen Respondek. Her contact details are: Telephone, 02 4221 3728 or email, colleenr@uow.edu.au.

Prerequisite qualifications and experience

- recognised qualifications in teaching
- full-time permanent approval to teach in NSW DET schools
- successful school based teaching experience or the equivalent
- a current NSW drivers licence or willingness to obtain one before commencement of the course
- an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) approved psychology major at credit average grade completed within the last ten years.

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.
Applicants who have not worked for DET as a teacher within the past five years are required to complete an application and attend an interview with the NSW Department of Education and Training to gain permanent full-time approval to teach in NSW public schools. This is in addition to the application process and interview for the School Counsellor Retraining Program.

**Required documentation**

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

You must complete all sections in the application form. If you are applying for more than one retraining program, you will need to complete a separate application form for each program.

You must attach all the documentation required to support your application including:

- a recommendation of suitability for retraining as a school counsellor by your current school principal
- two additional referees reports supporting your application, *(it is highly recommended that one of your referees is a current DET school counsellor if they know of your professional work)*
- official academic transcripts of your academic achievements
- evidence of any current or proposed university enrolment
- a copy of your current DET permanent approval for full-time teaching (if not currently a permanent Departmental teacher)
- the *Declaration and Employment Screening Consent for all Employment with the Department* form and *Pre-Employment Health Declaration* form *(you must complete, sign and include both these forms with your application)*
- certified copies of both your current NSW drivers licence and your birth certificate or passport
- a certified copy of your marriage certificate, divorce papers or other relevant documentation if there is a different name on any documentation in the application or in DET records
- evidence of any non DET teaching experience listed in your application
- a current photograph.

If you wish to send copies of original documents, these must be endorsed as exact copies of original documents by the issuing authority, a Justice of the Peace, or a NSW Department of Education and Training senior authorised officer.

A written recommendation from your current principal is essential. Casual teachers should seek a written recommendation from the principal at their most recent significant period of casual employment. **The school stamp is required on this document.** Please advise the principal that they may be contacted by the selection panel if you are invited to interview.

Please note that if a principal delegates the writing of the report to another person, that person cannot also act as one of the other referees. Referees reports written by three separate individuals are required. Advise referees of your application and that they may be contacted by phone if you are invited to interview and ensure you provide their telephone numbers for business and non-business hours.

The School Counsellor or District Guidance Officer would be a good choice for one of your additional referees if they know your professional work.
Selection criteria

- clear understanding of the role of the school counsellor
- well developed communication and interpersonal skills with the capacity to work collaboratively with students, parents and staff
- demonstrated interest and experience in student welfare initiatives in schools
- demonstrated ability to cater for the individual needs of students
- understanding of and sensitivity to the needs of Aboriginal students, students from a socio-economic disadvantaged background and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

You must address each of the selection criteria (a maximum of 120 words per criteria) in the space provided on the application form.

Selection process

A selection panel representing the Department’s Staffing Services Directorate, Student Welfare Directorate and District Guidance Officers will shortlist and interview eligible applicants. The selection panel will assess the information provided at all stages of the selection process:

- the application
- principals comments
- referees comments
- performance at interview.

Referees are asked to comment on your 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 June 2010</td>
<td>Advertisement for 2011 Part-time Rural School Counsellor Retraining Program. Applications are available on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 August 2010</td>
<td>Final date for receipt of applications. Late applications cannot be accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week beginning 30 August 2010</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 6 September 2010</td>
<td>Interviews conducted at DET offices in the Sydney area (locations will be advised)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late October 2010</td>
<td>Offers to successful applicants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acceptance into the program

If you are successful at interview you will:

- be subject to a probity check and 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 retraining program in the time specified
- work as a school counsellor in an area of staffing need, mainly in schools in western and south western metropolitan Sydney and non-coastal rural NSW, for a defined service commitment period following the successful completion of training
- relinquish your current teaching position (if already working as a permanent Department teacher)
- accept appointment as a mobile school counsellor if necessary. A mobile school counsellor is a permanent school counsellor who has not yet been appointed to a substantive vacancy. They may be used to replace school counsellors who are currently on leave or who are absent from their role on other duties.

Applicants who are permanent Departmental teachers who are appointed to positions in current workforce need areas of mathematics, science, technology or special education will be given lower priority.

Offers of retraining are for the 2011 retraining program only and are conditional on meeting university entry requirements for the postgraduate qualification in psychology, having current full-time permanent approval to teach in NSW public schools and the successful completion of all probity, health and employment screening checks. Acceptance of offers cannot be deferred to a later date.

Employment status

Sponsored teachers are full-time employees of DET and sign a Deed of Agreement to successfully complete the program. Sponsored teachers maintain their current employment status i.e. temporary teachers/casual teachers will remain as temporary teachers until they successfully complete the program.

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 revert to the employment status they had prior to the commencement of the program.

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

Attendance and leave provisions

Sponsored teachers are expected to attend all compulsory university and DET training sessions and all practicum and work shadowing components, attendance at compulsory sessions will be monitored.

Any periods of leave must be applied for through the DET leave system. Leave may only be taken during periods when there are no university or DET commitments. Temporary teachers are not entitled to leave without pay during the program or service commitment period.
University and school holiday periods may not always coincide and some university intensive schools may be in school holidays. Intending participants who have planned or booked a holiday for 2011 may need to apply for a future retraining program.

**Service commitment**

Successful applicants must be prepared to work as a full-time school counsellor for a nominated service commitment period at the completion of the training program in one of their nominated staffing areas. The service commitment period will be a defined continuous period of service following the successful completion of the retraining program.

*NOTE: School counsellors are required to undertake a caseload of schools, some of which may be located outside their service commitment areas.*

**Geographic locations of workforce need**

The geographic locations of workforce need for school counsellors are in western and south-western Sydney and non-coastal rural NSW. Applicants for the part-time Rural Program 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. Group ONE staffing areas have a one year service commitment period.

- Albury
- Bourke
- Broken Hill
- Deniliquin
- Dubbo
- Griffith
- Moree

**GROUP TWO:** For Group TWO you must select a minimum of TWO school staffing areas. Group TWO staffing areas have a two year service commitment period.

- Armidale and Tamworth
- Bathurst
- Central Coast
- Maitland
- Muswellbrook
- Orange
- Wagga Wagga

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 staffing areas that may be considered by the Department if suitable vacancies arise.

Teaching in rural NSW offers exceptional opportunities for both experienced and beginning teachers. It is a rewarding lifestyle choice that can give you numerous opportunities to get involved in the wider community.
The NSW Department of Education and Training offers a range of incentive benefits to teachers who accept positions in many rural or remote areas. Depending on the school location, these may include additional training and development days, one week of additional summer vacation for schools in the western areas of NSW, rental subsidy of 90% in the most isolated locations and 70% in other isolated locations, and a number of locality allowances such as a climatic allowance, an isolation from goods and services allowance, vacation travel expenses, reimbursement of certain expenses related to medical or dental treatment and an allowance for dependants. The allowances are paid in addition to your salary and could add up to $7000 per annum.

The benefits vary from school to school. Please use the www.teach.nsw.edu.au/calculator for more detailed information about allowances and incentives for individual schools and school staffing areas.


Financial support

Sponsored teachers undertaking the 2011 Part-time School Counsellor Retraining Program will receive the following financial support:

- payment of tuition fees associated with retraining
- reimbursement of approved public transport travel, meals and reasonable accommodation expenses to attend compulsory face to face sessions where overnight accommodation is necessary, if applicable
- a general purpose allowance of $300 to assist with technology support, printing and textbooks
- full-time teacher salary during the two years of the retraining program.

Teachers receive full-time teacher salary while on sponsorship under the following conditions:

- teachers in executive positions do not receive executive salary while on sponsorship but revert to the appropriate teacher salary
- 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: www.teach.nsw.edu.au/calculator.

Fringe Benefits 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 also a Personal Tax Information Line on 13 28 61.

**Awards and conditions**

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](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)

School counsellors enjoy the same working conditions and salary as teachers.

**Deed of Agreement**

The Deed of Agreement specifies the duration and the area of the service commitment and outlines your responsibilities and those of 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 is provided for your information.

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.
Further information

For further information about the **2011 Part-time School Counsellor Retraining Program** please call the Retraining Information Line - 1300 300 634, or contact:

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

Janet New  
Project Officer, Retraining  
Staffing Services Directorate  
Telephone: (02) 9836 9096  
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](http://www.psychology.org.au) or telephone 1800 333 497

- University of Wollongong – course coordinator, Colleen Respondek, phone 02 4221 3728 or email colleenr@uow.edu.u

- The following DET website has useful information on developing a job application: [https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/proflearn/secure/career/teachers/apply/developa.html](https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/proflearn/secure/career/teachers/apply/developa.html)
Checklist

Please note that all required documentation must 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
- include evidence of an APAC accredited psychology major which is at a credit average or better and completed within the past 10 years. If this is not possible (e.g. some subjects to be completed this year) a full written explanation and appropriate evidence must be attached to the application
- 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 certified copies of all relevant academic transcripts (this includes all transcripts of all psychology subjects).
- include certified copies of your current NSW drivers licence and a second form of ID
- include your current DET serial number
- include a copy of your current full-time permanent approval to teach from the NSW Department of Education and Training if you are not currently in a permanent DET position
- include evidence of any non DET teaching experience listed in your application
- complete, sign and include the Declaration and Employment Screening Consent for all Employment with the Department form and the Pre-Employment Health Declaration form
- include a current Principal's report that is signed, dated and has the school stamp applied
- include 2 other signed and dated referees' reports on the forms provided
- include a certified copy of your proof of change of name if any documentation is in a different name to the name on the application
- 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 Friday 13 August 2010 to:

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