

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

**Department of
Education and Training**

Managing teacher performance

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Foreword

Every young person has the right to a sound education. As well as the personal benefits it brings to the student, society as a whole benefits from the contributions that can be made by well-educated individuals.

Despite the growing use of modern technologies, the education a child receives is still largely based on face-to-face teaching. The competence of individual teachers is therefore one of the most critical factors in the standard of education delivered.

Every employer knows that the competence and dedication of staff is not uniform. Managing these differences in staff performance is one of the most challenging roles faced by management. High performing staff need to be recognised and rewarded; poor performing staff need to be made aware of their shortcomings and be assisted and encouraged to improve.

Because education plays such a critical role in determining students' futures, it is absolutely essential that the Department of Education and Training has a rigorous performance management system in place. Most importantly, the system should enable poor performing teachers to be quickly identified and assisted to reach higher levels of competence. In designing and implementing such a system, the needs of students and their rights to a quality education should be paramount.

R J Sendt
Auditor-General

May 2003

Executive summary

Executive summary

The Department of Education and Training is the largest employer of teachers in Australia, with more than 40,000 classroom teachers working in 2,225 public schools.

The purpose of teacher performance management is twofold. For Government, the purpose is to provide assurance that the educational interests and welfare of students are safeguarded and that teachers fulfil their contractual obligations. For teachers, the purpose is to ensure practices are reviewed and improved and to support professional development.

This audit examines the most recent teacher performance management scheme for primary and secondary classroom teachers which was introduced in NSW public schools in 2001.

Audit opinion

Some form of teacher performance assessment has been in place in NSW public schools for the past 40 years and the scheme has been significantly enhanced through its inclusion in the 2000 Award. We welcome these changes. However, we are of the opinion that further changes are required to improve its effectiveness.

We have two issues of concern. Firstly, that the scheme may not provide for fair and consistent assessments across all schools. Secondly, that the annual performance review does not allow a teacher who is not a probationer or on a formal improvement program to be rated as anything other than 'efficient'.

Under the current scheme, principals are required to conduct an annual performance assessment certifying that a teacher demonstrates continuing efficiency in teaching practice, satisfactory performance and professional growth.

While the components of the annual performance review are outlined, there are no professional standards against which principals can assess classroom teaching. There are also no explicit or minimum requirements for the content and manner in which the assessment components are to be completed.

Although training is provided for principals in assessment procedures, the basis used for making judgements regarding teacher performance can differ from school to school. For secondary principals, this presents an additional problem given that assessments are usually delegated to head teachers.

Other state governments have developed, or are in the process of developing, role statements and performance standards to describe a teacher's work. The NSW teacher performance management scheme may achieve greater consistency and benefit for teachers if it adopts a similar approach using explicit and endorsed standards of professional practice to assess performance.

We also consider that there is a need to extend the rating system to allow a teacher's performance to be assessed other than efficient, especially when an efficient assessment results in an automatic entitlement to a salary increment. We note that 70 per cent of current teachers have progressed to the top of the salary scale.

We recognise that a teacher's performance can be reviewed at any time during the year. And if a teacher is identified as experiencing difficulties with their performance, a separate scheme exists that can be used to manage them.

During 2001, however, with more 40,000 classroom teachers, only 174 (0.4 per cent) were being managed according to these procedures. We find it difficult to accept that any organisation with over 40,000 employees would have so few with performance problems.

We consider that the teacher performance management scheme should be extended so that teachers with superior performance, performance that requires improvement, or poor performance can be identified and recorded accordingly. This would allow better integration between the two separate schemes.

Other comments

The scheme

The current teacher performance management scheme was included in the 2000 Award, making performance review and feedback mandatory.¹

One of the most significant enhancements in the latest scheme is the establishment of mandatory requirements for conducting teacher assessments as a clause in the Award. This has made the process both legitimate and transparent.

¹ The requirements of the current system are outlined in Clause 6 of the Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and TAFE and Related Employees) Salaries and Condition Award 2000.

In NSW, teachers are assessed annually by either the principal or the principal's nominee. The process must be consistent with the Award. At the end of the process the principal certifies that the teacher is 'efficient' and that feedback has been provided.

The scheme is not used to identify poor performers and no other rating, such as 'needs improvement', is available to the principal.

The rating

Principals can only rate teachers as 'efficient' under this scheme. Teachers identified as 'efficient' and not already on the top of the salary scale are entitled to a salary increment. Currently, this represents approximately 30 per cent of teachers. The remaining 70 per cent are already on the top of their salary scale.

Under-performing teachers

Teachers who experience difficulties meeting the requirements of the position are managed under separate, formal procedures that can be implemented by a principal at any time during the school year.

During 2001, 174 teachers (0.4 per cent) were managed according to these procedures. Of these, 51 teachers (0.1 per cent) left either during or as a result of this process.

School based policy

Principals and teachers are required to develop policies and procedures on how assessments will be conducted in their school. This degree of flexibility allows the process to be adapted to different school environments, but may lead to inconsistency in assessments from one school to the next.

Performance standards

Without professional standards or even minimal competency statements, it is left to each school to decide what standards to use to judge a teacher's performance. Whether or not students' achievements are taken into account in this process is left to each school to decide.

There are also no explicit or minimum requirements for the content and manner in which mandatory components of the assessment are to be completed.

Rewards and recognition

The current scheme does not recognise or reward outstanding performance or professional achievements. The results of the annual review are not formally used, or required to be used in merit based selections or promotions, nor linked to career progression.

NSW Institute of Teachers

Unlike most other states, NSW does not have an independent body responsible for determining teacher qualifications, registration and standards of professional practice. An interim committee was established by the NSW Government to review this and other recommendations arising from the 2000 Ramsey Report on teacher education in NSW.² The committee is due to report to the Minister in June 2003.

The committee is also considering the development of a hierarchy of professional teaching standards.

The committee's report may benefit the Department in providing ways to enhance the teacher performance management scheme.

² G Ramsey, *Quality Matters: Report of the Review of Teacher Education*, New South Wales 2000.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Department of Education and Training should:

- develop minimum requirements for the content of assessments to support principals and teachers in the implementation of the Award provisions for teacher performance management
- develop a comprehensive role statement to describe the professional work of classroom teachers in NSW government schools
- examine how to achieve greater consistency in implementation and benefit for teachers from the teacher performance management scheme by using explicit and endorsed standards of professional practice
- consider expanding the ratings available to allow principals to identify superior performance, performance that requires improvement, or poor performance
- consider how teachers can be recognised and rewarded for achievements and professional growth
- as part of the teacher performance management scheme, enable teachers to receive documented feedback on performance in a form that is consistent for all teachers and can be used by teachers to support career progression
- introduce a quality assurance process in order to ensure broad consistency in teacher performance management and the professional support it provides for teachers.

Response from the Department of Education and Training

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report of the Performance Audit on Managing Teacher Performance.

The New South Wales Government education policy includes the following commitments:

The Government will establish a NSW Institute of Teachers, in line with the advice of the Interim Committee which will report to government by June 2003.

In addition:

The Institute will establish a framework of professional standards for teachers and school leaders.

and

The work of the Institute will be complemented through the development of a new performance assessment system linked to standards.

Consistent with government policy, the Department is working with the Interim Committee for an Institute of Teachers to develop such professional standards.

Based on the advice of the Interim Committee for an Institute of Teachers, and subsequent decisions of government, professional standards and processes for accrediting teachers against the standards will allow the development of consistent and reliable performance assessment and support processes for NSW teachers.

The specific implications of this with regard to each of the report's recommendations are set out below.

Recommendation One

Develop minimum requirements for the content of assessments to support principals and teachers in the implementation of the Award provisions for teacher performance management.

The professional standards being developed by the Interim Committee for an Institute of Teachers (Interim Committee) set out minimum requirements for effective teaching across four key stages of teachers' professional lives - Graduate Teacher, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. The standards are organised into seven elements that describe the work of teachers.

Recommendation Two

Develop a comprehensive role statement to describe the professional work of classroom teachers in NSW government schools

The standards will seek to describe the knowledge, skills and understandings required of classroom teachers. Once established the standards form the core of a clear and comprehensive role statement for Government school teachers.

Recommendation Three

Examine how to achieve greater consistency in implementation and benefit for teachers from the teacher performance management scheme by using explicit and endorsed standards of professional practice

Professional standards, once developed, can provide consistent and transparent criteria for performance management. The framework of standards set out in the Terms of Reference for the Interim Committee reflects a continuum of teachers' professional quality which can be applied through all stages of a teacher's career.

The Interim Committee's Terms of reference also require it to provide advice on specific processes for assessing teachers against the standards on a reliable and consistent basis for accreditation purposes.

The Department proposes to negotiate a new framework for the assessment, monitoring and development of quality teaching in schools on the basis of the proposed standards once endorsed.

Recommendation Four

Consider expanding the ratings available to allow principals to identify superior performance, performance that requires improvement or poor performance.

The framework for the development of professional standards is designed to allow for judgements to be made on differentiated levels of performance. In consultation with the Department, the Interim Committee is developing recommendations regarding processes for assessing teachers against standards to allow for more specific identification of performance concerns and developmental needs of teachers.

Recommendation Five

Consider how teachers can be recognised and rewarded for achievements and professional growth.

Recognition for professional growth can occur at all four key stages of the proposed standards. The development of standards for Graduate Teachers, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership will enable the recognition of teachers as they grow professionally.

Recommendation Six

As part of the teacher performance management scheme, enable teachers to receive documented feedback on performance in a form that is consistent for all teachers and can be used by teachers to support career progression.

Professional standards provide a common reference points and common language for comprehensive, informed and documented feedback.

Recommendations on processes for assessing teachers against the standards will allow for consistent implementation and direct identification of professional learning needs.

Recommendation Seven

Introduce a quality assurance process in order to ensure broad consistency in teacher performance management and the professional support it provides for teachers.

Principles and practices for quality assurance in the performance management and professional support for teachers are inherent in the structure and processes set out for advice to government in the Interim Committee's Terms of Reference.

The Department of Education and Training will continue to work closely with the Interim Committee for a NSW Institute of Teachers in implementing the Government's policies on teacher quality.

(signed)

Jan McClelland
DIRECTOR- GENERAL OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF TAFE NSW

Dated: 24 April 2003

1. Teacher performance management in NSW

1.1 Introduction

This audit examines the current performance management scheme for assessing primary and secondary teachers employed by the NSW Government. We also obtained the views of some primary and secondary principals on how the scheme operates in schools.

1.2 Background

Some form of teacher performance assessment has been in place in NSW public schools for the past 40 years. The current teacher performance management scheme has been included in the 2000 Award, making performance review and feedback mandatory.³

One of the most significant enhancements in the latest scheme is the establishment of mandatory requirements for conducting teacher assessments as a clause in the Award. This has made the process both legitimate and transparent.

The current scheme was implemented in September 2001 following training conducted jointly by the Department of Education and Training (the Department) and the NSW Teachers Federation for principals and federation delegates.

In NSW, separate, detailed procedures have been issued by the Department for assessing principals, assessing probationary teachers, and for managing teachers who are experiencing difficulties with their teaching performance.

1.3 The purpose of performance management

Generally, the literature recognises the purpose of a teacher performance management scheme to be twofold. For Governments, the purpose is to safeguard the educational interests and welfare of students, ensure that teachers fulfil their contractual obligations and are publicly accountable. For teachers, the purpose is to ensure practices are reviewed and improved and to support professional development.

³ The requirements of the current system are outlined in Clause 6 of the Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and TAFE and Related Employees) Salaries and Condition Award 2000.

The purpose of teacher performance management in NSW is broadly the same. Firstly, to provide the Department assurance that teachers employed are 'efficient' and capable of doing the job and secondly, at the school level, to provide feedback and support the professional development of teachers.

1.4 Effective performance management

The key elements of an effective performance management scheme are:

- clear role or duty statements for the position
- development of performance goals or plans
- identification of personal development needs
- ability to recognise achievements
- review of performance and provision of feedback
- grievance procedures
- a means of addressing underperformance.⁴

In NSW not all of these elements are included in the current teacher performance management scheme. The scheme does not use role or duty statements for assessments and does not require principals to develop goals or plans with teachers. The current scheme also has no provision for recognising the achievements of teachers.

1.5 Assessing classroom teachers in NSW

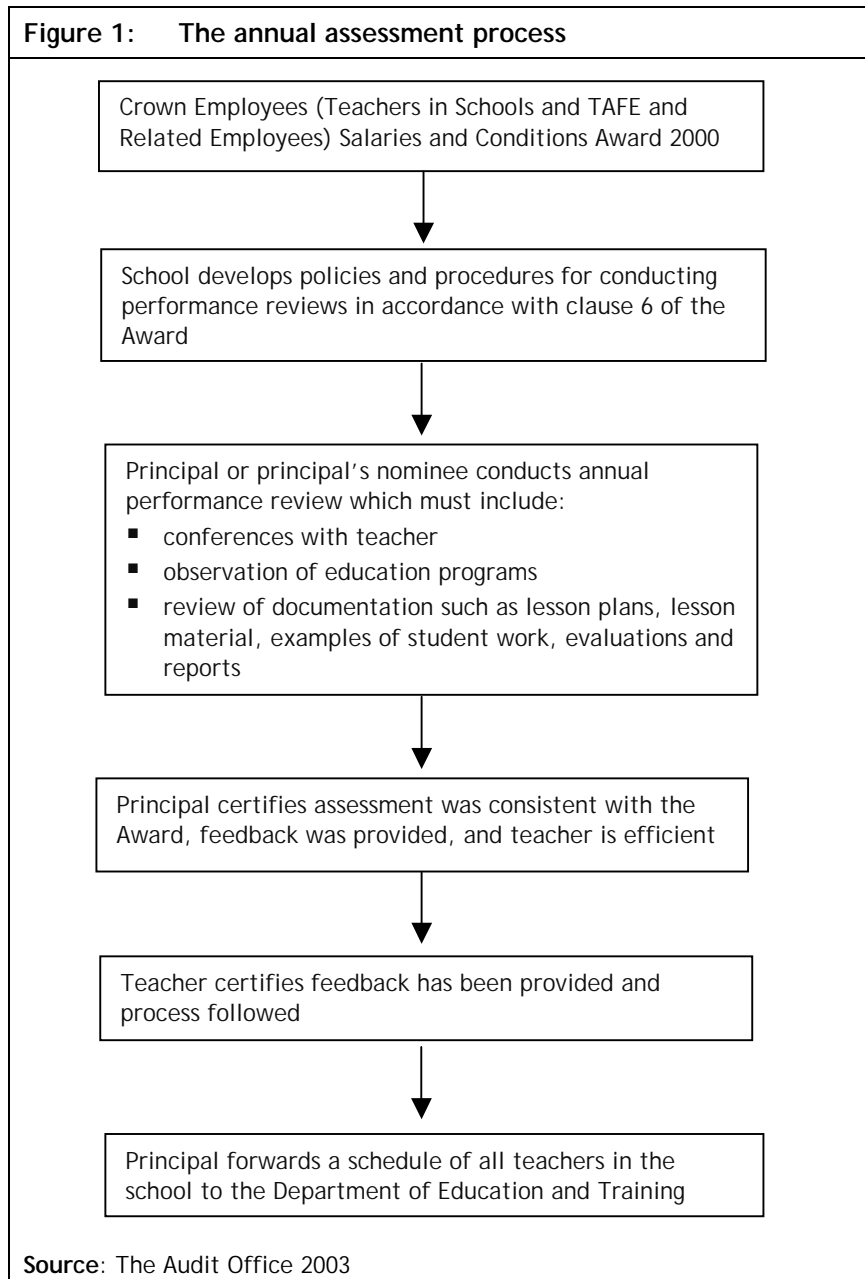
Teachers are assessed annually by either the principal or the principal's nominee, usually a deputy principal, head teacher or supervisor. Teachers are assessed for continuing efficiency in teaching practice, satisfactory performance and professional growth for salary progression.

The Award lists the mandatory components for conducting the annual performance review, which are:

- conferences between the teacher and the reviewer
- observation of education programs
- review of documents such as lesson plans, lesson material, examples of student work, evaluations and reports as appropriate.

⁴ South Australian Department of Education and Training and Employment, Performance Management Guidelines 2000.

At present, agreed policies and procedures on how the review will be conducted and what is involved in the process are determined by each school in accordance with clause 6 of the Award. Some principals indicated that this flexibility was beneficial, as it meant the process could be adapted to the particular circumstances of the school and the level of experience of the teaching staff.



Note: This schedule lists teachers according to one of four categories: the teacher demonstrates continuing efficiency; is a probationary teacher; is a probationer on an improvement program; is a teacher on an improvement program or whose efficiency is causing concern.

While the Award requires conferences between the teacher and the principal, the scheme does not require development of a performance plan or professional development goals at the commencement of the school year, although a decision to do so may be made at the local level between the principal and the teacher.

At the end of the process, the annual performance review allows the principal to rate a teacher who is not a probationer or on a formal improvement program as 'efficient'. In this context, 'efficient' is defined as the level of performance that satisfies requirements for the position held.⁵ No other rating is available to the principal (see also 1.8).

1.6 Minimum requirements

There are no explicit or minimum requirements for the content and manner in which the mandatory components of the review are to be completed. For example, principals must include 'observation of education programs' as part of the teacher's assessment, but what constitutes the observation of education programs is not defined.

As described previously, the nature and content of each of these components needs to be negotiated and agreed to at the school level, taking into account the level of experience of the teacher and the particular circumstances of the school.

Teacher performance management schemes in other jurisdictions have guidelines to assist principals on what would be expected as part of the review process and to ensure consistency in the assessment process from one school to the next. In NSW, although training is provided for principals in assessment procedures, the basis used for making judgements regarding teacher performance can differ from school to school.

⁵ Department of Education and Training, *Procedures for Managing Teachers Who Are Experiencing Difficulties With Their Teaching Performance* 1999.

Case study: Observing lessons by teachers in UK schools

Guidelines for principals conducting classroom observations are included in the procedures for conducting teacher performance reviews. Eight competencies are covered, from lesson preparation to assessing pupil understanding. The following examples list performance indicators principals can use to make these judgements.

Teacher plans effectively and sets clear objectives that are understood.

- objectives are communicated clearly at the start of the lesson
- materials are ready
- there is a good structure to the lesson
- the lesson is reviewed at the end
- special learning needs are incorporated with the teacher's plan.

Teacher shows good subject knowledge and understanding.

- the teacher has a thorough knowledge of the subject content covered in the lesson
- subject material was appropriate for the lesson
- knowledge is made relevant and interesting for pupils.

Source: Department of Education and Employment Performance Management in Schools Policy UK 2001

Recommendation **The Department of Education and Training should develop minimum requirements for the content of assessments to support principals and teachers in the implementation of the Award provisions for teacher performance management.**

1.7 The need for role or duty statements

For the assessment of teacher performance to be fair, there is a need for valid and explicit standards that define a teacher's work.⁶

Public school teachers employed in other states are assessed against a set of standards or competency statements. Some also include criteria and indicators of effective practice that can be used as a tool in annual reviews.⁷

At present, there are no role statements or position descriptions for classroom teachers employed in NSW public schools.

⁶ Dr L. Ingvarson, *Strengthening the Profession? A comparison of recent reforms in the UK & the USA*, ACER Policy Briefs 2 (July) 2002.

⁷ Although performance standards have been developed for classroom teachers employed in public schools in other states, they are not always included as part of performance management schemes.

Some principals have developed competency standards and performance criteria with staff that can be used to support teacher performance management at the local level.

The following case study illustrates the approach taken in one school to provide the principal with the tools to judge teacher performance.

Case study: Supporting teacher performance assessment
A principal and teachers at one school have developed criteria to support teacher performance reviews. The criteria cover key classroom practice areas such as organisational skills, classroom teaching and learning, use of technology, communication skills, assessment of student achievements and reporting to parents and the community. Teachers have also developed examples of practices under each key area to match the level of teaching experience for a beginning teacher, experienced teacher and best practice teacher. Source: The Audit Office

Links to student achievements

There is a significant body of research that indicates teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning and far outweighs the effects of class size and individual difference.⁸

As discussed earlier, the current system does not use explicit criteria based on standards of professional practice for assessing teachers. Further, student learning achievements are not required to be used as information in the review process.

In the absence of professional standards or even minimal competency statements, it is left to each school to decide whether or not the assessment process takes student achievements into account. However, teachers are expected to meet the individual learning needs of students and assist each student to maximise his or her learning outcomes under their code of conduct.⁹

⁸ L Darling-Hammond, *Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence* Education Policy Analysis Archives 2000.

⁹ Department of Education and Training, *Professional Responsibilities of Teachers 1997 and Code of Conduct 1997*.

- Recommendation** **The Department of Education and Training should:**
- **develop a comprehensive role statement to describe the professional work of classroom teachers in NSW government schools**
 - **examine how to achieve greater consistency in implementation and benefit for teachers from the teacher performance management scheme by using explicit and endorsed standards of professional practice.**

1.8 Outcomes of the annual performance assessment

At the conclusion of the assessment process, the principal certifies that the teacher is 'efficient' and those teachers who are eligible receive a salary increase (there are up to 13 salary increments or steps). However, for nearly 70 per cent of teachers, who are already at the top of the salary scale, the process confirms their status quo.

The current scheme does not make provision for recognising a teacher who is 'efficient' but who may also need support to move to a higher level of professional practice.

<p>'The system is good for staff who don't have performance problems but not so good for those whose performance is borderline' Comment by secondary school principal</p>

A principal cannot recommend that a salary increment be deferred as an outcome of the assessment. Teachers who are experiencing difficulties with their performance must be managed under separate, formal performance management procedures which have been designed to meet industrial and legal requirements.¹⁰ During 2001, 174 teachers (0.4 per cent) were placed on improvement programs and had their salary increment withheld until the outcome of the process; of these, 51 teachers (0.1 per cent) left public school employment either during, or as a result of, this process.

In the current scheme there is also no recognition or reward for outstanding performance or professional achievement. The results of the annual performance review are not formally used, or required to be used in merit based selections for promotion, or linked to career progression.

¹⁰ Department of Education and Training, Procedures for Managing Teachers who are Experiencing Difficulties with their Teaching Performance 1999.

We consider that the teacher performance management scheme should be extended so that teachers with superior performance, performance that requires improvement, or poor performance can be identified and recorded accordingly. This would allow better integration between the two separate systems.

- Recommendation** **The Department of Education and Training should:**
- **consider expanding the ratings available to allow principals to identify superior performance, performance that requires improvement, or poor performance**
 - **consider how teachers can be recognised and rewarded for achievements and professional growth.**

1.9 Providing feedback

Stakeholders considered the most significant enhancement to the current scheme was the requirement for both teachers and principals to certify that feedback has been provided.

Some principals commented that in the past, teachers were not always provided feedback on the outcomes of the review even when it had been performed and the teacher assessed as 'efficient'.

Although the current scheme makes feedback mandatory, it is not necessary for this feedback to be written. This makes it impossible to objectively assess the quality or content of feedback provided or the extent to which there is consistency in approach and practice across schools.

'The quality of the review relies very much on the quality of the reviewer and their ability to do a competent job in assessing (teacher) performance and providing feedback'

Comment from a secondary school principal

The reporting requirement in the current scheme is certification by the principal that the assessment has been conducted in a manner consistent with the Award, the teacher has been found to be 'efficient', and feedback has been provided.

No additional documentation needs to be maintained by either party on the content of the feedback or the outcomes agreed.

As principals can only provide oral references for staff who apply for promotional positions, teachers do not have consistent, documented outcomes of reviews that could be included in a portfolio to support career progression.

Recommendation **The Department of Education and Training should, as part of the teacher performance management scheme, enable teachers to receive documented feedback on performance in a form that is consistent for all teachers and can be used by teachers to support career progression.**

1.10 Quality assurance

The Department has yet to develop a quality assurance process for teacher performance management that would enable it to:

- verify compliance at the school level
- assess the quality of local policies and procedures
- identify best practice in school based approaches to teacher performance management
- verify the quality and extent of feedback provided to teachers by principals or their nominees.

Although district superintendents may review local policies and practices as part of the assessment of principals, this is not sufficient to ensure statewide consistency in teacher assessments.

Recommendation **The Department of Education and Training should introduce a quality assurance process in order to ensure broad consistency in teacher performance management and the professional support it provides for teachers.**

1.11 Managing under-performing teachers

As noted earlier, teachers who are experiencing difficulties with their performance must be managed under separate, formal performance management procedures that have been designed to meet industrial and legal requirements. These procedures can be implemented at any time during the school year when a teacher's performance is considered not satisfactory.

These procedures detail the types of performance improvement, professional development and collegial support programs available to teachers and provide additional funding to the school to meet the teacher's specific needs.

The principal is responsible for the teacher's improvement program, although the Department provides advice and support to the principal and ensures procedural fairness.

1.12 NSW Institute of Teachers

Unlike most other states, NSW does not have an independent professional body responsible for determining teacher qualifications, registration, certification, standards and professional development requirements.

In 1999 the NSW Government commissioned a review of teacher education in NSW. The review report, *Quality Matters*, was submitted to the Government in November 2000.¹¹ Subsequently, an interim committee was established to consider issues arising from the review including the establishment of an institute of teachers and the development of a hierarchy of professional practice standards.

An institute of teachers would enable the teaching profession and education authorities to talk with each other on equal terms and pursue common goals such as improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

The interim committee is due to report to the Minister for Education by June 2003.

The committee's report may benefit the Department in providing ways to further enhance the teacher performance management scheme.

¹¹ G Ramsey, *Quality Matters: Report of the Review of Teacher Education New South Wales 2000*.

2. Other teacher performance management schemes

2.1 Introduction

A review of teacher performance management schemes in other states and New Zealand was completed as part of the audit, as we thought it useful to compare the NSW scheme to other jurisdictions.

While a comprehensive review of these schemes was not performed, publicly available information was used to compare approaches used by various governments.

Criteria	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NZ
Number of teachers employed	40,899	35,660	28,917	14,898	11,906	4,360	46,208
Teachers Registration Board certifies teacher as competent	✘	✓	✓	✘	✓	✓	✓
Teacher performance management scheme	✓	✓	✘	✓	✓	✘	✓
Performance standards for classroom teachers	✘	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Performance standards for experienced teachers	✘	✓	✘	✓	✘	✓	✓
Performance agreement between appraiser and teacher	✘	✓	✘	✓	✓	✘	✓
Assessments linked to student achievements	✘	✓	✘	✘	✓	✘	✓
Scheme linked to salary progression	✓	✓	✘	✓	✓	✘	✓
Scheme identifies and rewards outstanding performance	✘	✘	✘	Note 1	Note 1	Note 1	✘
Program for supporting teachers experiencing difficulties	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✘	✓

NOTE: Some of these schemes and standards are either under development or have not been fully implemented.

Note 1: These states have developed schemes which allow more experienced teachers or specially accredited teachers to be recognised and rewarded.

2.2 Teacher registration

Most other states and New Zealand have independent teacher registration bodies that determine teacher qualifications, registration, certification and professional standards.

Generally, government schools only employ teachers who are registered or certified by the professional body in that state or country.

2.3 Teacher performance management schemes

Most states (including NSW) and New Zealand either have, or are in the process of implementing, a performance management scheme for all government school teachers.

South Australia, Victoria and New Zealand have the most comprehensive schemes. They include:

- guidelines for principals on the scheme
- position descriptions for classroom teachers
- professional standards
- performance agreements between principals and teachers
- teacher self-assessments
- feedback from supervisors or principals and identification of professional development needs
- grievance procedures.

2.4 Performance standards

Most states apart from NSW have developed, or are developing, some form of performance standards for classroom teaching. Other jurisdictions also have different standards to reflect stages of progression in a teacher's career, eg probationary or experienced teachers.

In New Zealand, as with some states, the assessment of a teacher's performance against standards is mandatory for salary or career progression.

One of the more straightforward models is the classroom teachers competency framework currently being developed for Western Australia teachers. This model lists five dimensions of a teacher's work and provides competency standards at three different career stages with indicators of effective practice for each competency.

For example, facilitating student learning is defined as providing learning experiences that promote problem solving, critical thinking, inquiry and creativity. An indicator of effective practice by the teacher is whether or not the teacher uses real-life, practical learning experiences that present students with a challenge.¹²

¹² Department of Education Western Australia, Competency Framework for Teachers Consultative Draft 2001 and Teacher Competencies and Professional Standards Discussion Paper 2001.

2.5 Performance agreements

Of those states that have a performance management scheme in place, only the NSW scheme does not have performance agreements negotiated between principals and teachers as a requirement of the process.

Performance agreements generally identify goals and achievements expected over the year as well as professional development goals.

In New Zealand, the scheme requires appraisers to negotiate performance agreements with teachers at the beginning of the school year. These agreements are documented, and at the end of the year an assessment is made against not only the performance standards but also the performance agreement.

2.6 Assessment linked to student achievements

Victoria, South Australia and New Zealand include student achievements as a criterion for assessing teacher performance.

One of Victoria's Professional Standards for Experienced Teachers relates to demonstrating classroom teaching skills and strategies that allow students to reach their full potential. A suggested performance indicator for measuring student improvement over the review period requires teachers to show evidence of effective teaching and learning approaches, including monitoring and feedback of student progress.¹³

2.7 Salary progression

Where performance management schemes have been included in an industrial agreement (such as NSW, Victoria and South Australia), they are more likely to be tied to decisions regarding salary progression.

Victoria and New Zealand require all standards to be met for salary progression. Under both schemes, increments are deferred until a further review if not all criteria are met. Once at the top of the pay scale, teachers are still required to meet the standards for salary maintenance.

¹³ Department of Education, Employment and Training, Victorian Government Schools Performance and Development Handbook October 2001.

2.8 Outstanding performance

Only Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania reward outstanding teacher performance, although these schemes are separate from the teacher performance management schemes. All schemes reward teachers with higher pay rates for outstanding classroom performance.

Western Australia and South Australia have developed additional competencies for advanced teachers. The selection process includes written applications, referee reports and panel assessments. In South Australia, teachers are reassessed every five years.

2.9 Under-performing teachers

Most states and New Zealand have separate procedures to support teachers who are experiencing difficulties in meeting their position requirements. These procedures can be implemented any time a teacher's performance is not considered satisfactory.

Procedures generally include performance improvement, professional development and collegial support programs. All procedures for dealing with under-performing teachers are formal and have been designed to meet legal and industrial requirements.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Audit scope and objectives

This audit examines the adequacy of the current teacher performance management scheme to review performance and improve accountability of teachers employed by the Department of Education and Training.

Criteria Teacher performance management scheme

Hypothesis: That a performance management scheme is in place to objectively assess teacher performance and improve teacher accountability.

Areas examined:

- components of the performance management scheme
- the use of performance standards
- provision of feedback to teachers
- documentation of outcomes of the process
- identification of development needs
- links to salary and career progression
- recognition and reward
- dealing with under-performing teachers
- approach to implementation
- quality assurance practices.

Audit approach

The audit:

- examined the Department of Education and Training's policies and procedures on teacher performance management
- reviewed research papers and reports on the NSW scheme and schemes operating elsewhere
- researched information on similar schemes in other states and New Zealand
- ran focus groups of primary and secondary public school principals to discuss how the scheme operated in their schools
- ran a focus group of district superintendents to capture their views on the scheme
- spoke to representatives from the Interim Committee for a NSW Institute of Teachers, the NSW Teachers Federation and the Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of NSW

- spoke to representatives of the Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training and the New Zealand Ministry of Education
- engaged a consultant with extensive knowledge of the educational environment in NSW to help with audit design and reporting.

Despite numerous attempts, the Professional Teachers Association were unable to arrange a focus group of teachers.

Cost of the audit The cost of the audit was \$224,220. This includes the estimated cost of printing the report (\$6,000).

Acknowledgement The Audit Office gratefully acknowledges the cooperation and assistance provided by representatives of the Department of Education and Training and the principals from primary and secondary schools who attended our forums.

Audit team Sandra Tomasi and Jane Tebbatt.

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Performance Audits by the Audit Office of New South Wales

Performance Auditing

What are performance audits?

Performance audits are reviews designed to determine how efficiently and effectively an agency is carrying out its functions.

Performance audits may review a government program, all or part of a government agency or consider particular issues which affect the whole public sector.

Where appropriate, performance audits make recommendations for improvements relating to those functions.

Why do we conduct performance audits?

Performance audits provide independent assurance to Parliament and the public that government funds are being spent efficiently and effectively, and in accordance with the law.

They seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government agencies and ensure that the community receives value for money from government services.

Performance audits also assist the accountability process by holding agencies accountable for their performance.

What is the legislative basis for Performance Audits?

The legislative basis for performance audits is contained within the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, Part 3 Division 2A*, (the Act) which differentiates such work from the Office's financial statements audit function.

Performance audits are not entitled to question the merits of policy objectives of the Government.

Who conducts performance audits?

Performance audits are conducted by specialist performance auditors who are drawn from a wide range of professional disciplines.

How do we choose our topics?

Topics for a performance audits are chosen from a variety of sources including:

our own research on emerging issues

- our own research on emerging issues
- suggestions from Parliamentarians, agency Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and members of the public
- complaints about waste of public money
- referrals from Parliament.

Each potential audit topic is considered and evaluated in terms of possible benefits including cost savings, impact and improvements in public administration.

The Audit Office has no jurisdiction over local government and cannot review issues relating to council activities.

If you wish to find out what performance audits are currently in progress just visit our website at www.audit@nsw.gov.au.

How do we conduct performance audits?

Performance audits are conducted in compliance with relevant Australian standards for performance auditing and our procedures are certified under international quality standard ISO 9001.

Our policy is to conduct these audits on a "no surprise" basis.

Operational managers, and where necessary executive officers, are informed of the progress with the audit on a continuous basis.

What are the phases in performance auditing?

Performance audits have three key phases: planning, fieldwork and report writing.

During the planning phase, the audit team will develop audit criteria and define the audit field work.

At the completion of field work an exit interview is held with agency management to discuss all significant matters arising out of the audit. The basis for the exit interview is generally a draft performance audit report.

The exit interview serves to ensure that facts presented in the report are accurate and that recommendations are appropriate. Following the exit interview, a formal draft report is provided to the CEO for comment. The relevant Minister is also provided with a copy of the draft report. The final report, which is tabled in Parliament, includes any comment made by the CEO on the conclusion and the recommendations of the audit.

Depending on the scope of an audit, performance audits can take from several months to a year to complete.

Copies of our performance audit reports can be obtained from our website or by contacting our publications unit.

How do we measure an agency's performance?

During the planning stage of an audit the team develops the audit criteria. These are standards of performance against which an agency is assessed. Criteria may be based on government targets or benchmarks, comparative data, published guidelines, agencies corporate objectives or examples of best practice.

Performance audits look at:

- processes
- results
- costs
- due process and accountability.

Do we check to see if recommendations have been implemented?

Every few years we conduct a follow-up audit of past performance audit reports. These follow-up audits look at the extent to which recommendations have been implemented and whether problems have been addressed.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) may also conduct reviews or hold inquiries into matters raised in performance audit reports.

Agencies are also required to report actions taken against each recommendation in their annual report.

To assist agencies to monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations, the Audit Office has prepared a Guide for that purpose. The Guide, *Monitoring and Reporting on Performance Audits Recommendations*, is on the Internet at www.audit.nsw.gov.au/guides-bp/bpglist.htm

Who audits the auditors?

Our performance audits are subject to internal and external quality reviews against relevant Australian and international standards.

The PAC is also responsible for overseeing the activities of the Audit Office and conducts reviews of our operations every three years.

Who pays for performance audits?

No fee is charged for performance audits. Our performance audit services are funded by the NSW Parliament and from internal sources.

For further information relating to performance auditing contact:

Tom Jambrich
Assistant Auditor-General
Performance Audit Branch
(02) 9285 0051
email: tom.jambrich@audit.nsw.gov.au

Performance Audit Reports

No.	Agency or Issue Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
64*	Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Government-wide Framework</i> ▪ <i>Defining and Measuring Performance (Better practice Principles)</i> ▪ <i>Legal Aid Commission Case Study</i> 	31 August 1999
65	Attorney General's Department	<i>Management of Court Waiting Times</i>	3 September 1999
66	Office of the Protective Commissioner Office of the Public Guardian	<i>Complaints and Review Processes</i>	28 September 1999
67	University of Western Sydney	<i>Administrative Arrangements</i>	17 November 1999
68	NSW Police Service	<i>Enforcement of Street Parking</i>	24 November 1999
69	Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW	<i>Planning for Road Maintenance</i>	1 December 1999
70	NSW Police Service	<i>Staff Rostering, Tasking and Allocation</i>	31 January 2000
71*	Academics' Paid Outside Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Administrative Procedures</i> ▪ <i>Protection of Intellectual Property</i> ▪ <i>Minimum Standard Checklists</i> ▪ <i>Better Practice Examples</i> 	7 February 2000
72	Hospital Emergency Departments	<i>Delivering Services to Patients</i>	15 March 2000
73	Department of Education and Training	<i>Using computers in schools for teaching and learning</i>	7 June 2000
74	Ageing and Disability Department	<i>Group Homes for people with disabilities in NSW</i>	27 June 2000
75	NSW Department of Transport	<i>Management of Road Passenger Transport Regulation</i>	6 September 2000
76	Judging Performance from Annual Reports	<i>Review of eight Agencies' Annual Reports</i>	29 November 2000
77*	Reporting Performance	<i>Better Practice Guide A guide to preparing performance information for annual reports</i>	29 November 2000
78	State Rail Authority (CityRail) State Transit Authority	<i>Fare Evasion on Public Transport</i>	6 December 2000
79	TAFE NSW	<i>Review of Administration</i>	6 February 2001
80	Ambulance Service of New South Wales	<i>Readiness to Respond</i>	7 March 2001

No.	Agency or Issue Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
81	Department of Housing	<i>Maintenance of Public Housing</i>	11 April 2001
82	Environment Protection Authority	<i>Controlling and Reducing Pollution from Industry</i>	18 April 2001
83	Department of Corrective Services	<i>NSW Correctional Industries</i>	13 June 2001
84	Follow-up of Performance Audits	<i>Police Response to Calls for Assistance The Levying and Collection of Land Tax Coordination of Bushfire Fighting Activities</i>	20 June 2001
85*	Internal Financial Reporting	<i>Internal Financial Reporting including a Better Practice Guide</i>	27 June 2001
86	Follow-up of Performance Audits	<i>The School Accountability and Improvement Model (May 1999) The Management of Court Waiting Times (September 1999)</i>	14 September 2001
87	E-government	<i>Use of the Internet and related technologies to improve public sector performance</i>	19 September 2001
88*	E-government	<i>e-ready, e-steady, e-government: e-government readiness assessment guide</i>	19 September 2001
89	Intellectual Property	<i>Management of Intellectual Property</i>	17 October 2001
90*	Better Practice Guide	<i>Management of Intellectual Property</i>	17 October 2001
91	University of New South Wales	<i>Educational Testing Centre</i>	21 November 2001
92	Department of Urban Affairs and Planning	<i>Environmental Impact Assessment of Major Projects</i>	28 November 2001
93	Department of Information Technology and Management	<i>Government Property Register</i>	31 January 2002
94	State Debt Recovery Office	<i>Collecting Outstanding Fines and Penalties</i>	17 April 2002
95	Roads and Traffic Authority	<i>Managing Environmental Issues</i>	29 April 2002
96	NSW Agriculture	<i>Managing Animal Disease Emergencies</i>	8 May 2002
97	State Transit Authority Department of Transport	<i>Bus Maintenance and Bus Contracts</i>	29 May 2002
98	Risk Management	<i>Managing Risk in the NSW Public Sector</i>	19 June 2002
99	E-government	<i>User-friendliness of Websites</i>	26 June 2002

No.	Agency or Issue Examined	Title of Performance Audit Report or Publication	Date Tabled in Parliament or Published
100	NSW Police Department of Corrective Services	<i>Managing Sick Leave</i>	23 July 2002
101	Department of Land and Water Conservation	<i>Regulating the Clearing of Native Vegetation</i>	20 August 2002
102	E-government	<i>Electronic Procurement of Hospital Supplies</i>	25 September 2002
103	NSW Public Sector	<i>Outsourcing Information Technology</i>	23 October 2002
104	Ministry for the Arts Department of Community Services Department of Sport and Recreation	<i>Managing Grants</i>	4 December 2002
105	Department of Health Including Area Health Services and Hospitals	<i>Managing Hospital Waste</i>	10 December 2002
106	State Rail Authority	<i>CityRail Passenger Security</i>	12 February 2003
107	NSW Agriculture	<i>Implementing the Ovine Johne's Disease Program</i>	26 February 2003
108	Department of Sustainable Natural Resources Environment Protection Authority	<i>Protecting Our Rivers</i>	7 May 2003
109	Department of Education and Training	<i>Managing Teacher Performance</i>	May 2003

* Better Practice Guides

Performance Audits on our website

A list of performance audits tabled or published since March 1997, as well as those currently in progress, can be found on our website www.audit.nsw.gov.au



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Level 11
234 Sussex Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Australia

Postal Address

GPO Box 12
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Australia

Telephone	(02) 9285 0155
Facsimile	(02) 9285 0100
Internet	www.audit.nsw.gov.au
e-mail	mail@audit.nsw.gov.au

Office Hours	9.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday
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Contact Officer	Jane Tebbatt Principal Performance Auditor +612 9285 0074
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