



Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, Sarah Mitchell, MLC  
and  
Mr Paul Martin, Chief Executive Officer NESA

10 December 2020

Dear Minister and Mr Martin,

The NSW Association of French Teachers- (NAFT) is responding in regards to the unexpected recent news about the new Accreditation of Professional Development Courses Policy. NAFT is a not-for-profit, incorporated body, established to represent the professional interests of French educators, most specifically French teachers in NSW and the ACT. Our endorsed Accreditation provider is PTC- the Professional Teachers Council

There are 300 members of NAFT located across regional and metropolitan areas of the state and territory. Membership is individual (for secondary and primary French teachers, teacher education students, educational consultants, academics, and retirees). One of the responsibilities of NAFT is to design and deliver quality, evidence-informed professional development (PD) courses for teachers around the delivery and assessment of the K – 12 French syllabus. Another responsibility is to actively represent and advocate for the interests of our membership, French education, and the profession of teaching overall. This advocacy is done through responding to appropriate authorities, making recommendations about educational decisions, policies and other matters of state and national interest in relation to foreign language teaching and learning in NSW.

In recent communication from the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) to the Professional Teachers' Council of NSW (PTCNSW) about endorsing professional development (PD) providers and courses, there were four priority areas for PD identified:

1. Delivery and assessment of NSW Curriculum/Early Years Learning Framework (as appropriate);
2. Students/children with disability;
3. Aboriginal education and supporting Aboriginal students/children;
4. Student/child mental health

Being a member association of PTCNSW ensures NAFT is able to address professional development (PD) for Priority area 1 for French. The PTCNSW Professional Learning Committee ensures all PD courses exceed NESA accreditation requirements. In so doing, the NAFT executive is confident all previous and current NESA Accredited PD courses, together

with those planned for the future are of best practice, high impact and clearly connect to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The strength of PD courses offered by PTCNSW and the professional associations lie in their multi sectorial expertise and support. Such strength also lies in the targeted expertise connected to each professional association. Such expertise under the PTCNSW umbrella through which applications for NESA Accredited PD typically arise relate to subject-specific areas (such as French). With many teachers responsible for teaching French in secondary schools being away from Sydney, it is essential that NAFT be able to provide NESA Accredited PD courses through PTCNSW as an Authorised Provider, enabling reach across NSW.

NAFT is not aware of the listed Authorised Providers having enough capacity or in-depth expertise to be able to effectively meet the diverse PD needs for teachers of French. We emphasise that the work done by NAFT is not-for-profit and carried out on a volunteer basis by highly experienced, full-time and part-time classroom teachers of French. Without the support of PTC, the valid and valuable PD courses we offer to our membership would not be able to take place.

NAFT is puzzled and what is not clear from the policy and related communication that occurred so suddenly, is the reason why the Professional Teachers Council of NSW (PTCNSW) is deregistered and therefore excluded from the list of Authorised Providers. The communication from NESA to PTCNSW states: "The NESA Registered PD you have provided to teachers in the past has made a significant contribution to the NSW teaching profession and accreditation system". This therefore begs the question as to why PTCNSW is no longer considered to be a provider.

NAFT requests that the decision to deregister PTCNSW as an Authorised Provider be reversed as quickly as possible. Many of our courses for 2021 Semester 1 are drafted and ready for registration. We need to advertise these early in 2021 to enable teachers and schools to prepare their school applications for attendance in Term1.

Without the ability to ensure endorsement/registration/accreditation, schools will be reluctant to endorse and support attendance for their staff to participate in our courses. As a result, some courses will be out of reach to teachers seeking accreditation, despite their importance for their learning and professional development.

We would also request that clear and transparent communication with PTCNSW and the professional associations about why such a decision occurred. NAFT feels that the announcement demonstrates the Minister for Education nor NESA neither understand nor value the professional learning provided by professional teaching associations.

Therefore, the Association would like to recommend the following items to the Chief Executive Officer of New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) and the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning:

- To reverse the decision about the Professional Teachers Council of NSW (PTCNSW) not appearing on the list of Authorised Providers who can assess and accredit NESA accredited PD on NESA's behalf; and in so doing

- To include the PTCNSW as an Authorised Provider to assess and accredit courses they deliver in the priority areas as NESA Accredited PD in the Accreditation of Professional Development Courses Policy.

Yours sincerely,

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