



Education &  
Communities

# Executive and principal positions – a guide for addressing the general selection criteria

Revised July 2014

# EXECUTIVE AND PRINCIPAL POSITIONS - A GUIDE FOR ADDRESSING THE GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA

## Introduction

This guide is to help teachers applying for advertised executive and principal positions. It includes the general selection criteria for executive and principal positions and an outline of some of the areas relating to each criterion. Please read this guide in conjunction with the [Selection panel procedures for school teachers](#) and [Promotion and transfer procedures for school teachers](#).

Applicants need to have a clear understanding of the skills, knowledge and experiences required in the role for which they are applying. Applicants must demonstrate their capacity to perform the duties for the relevant position and show evidence of having projected themselves into the role.

Panel members use applications and referee comments to shortlist potential applicants for interview. Applicants will be assessed against other candidates on the basis of information in relation to the general and specific selection criteria for the position. Applicants need to articulate clearly and concisely their skills, knowledge and experiences in response to each of the criteria.

Applicants should choose no more than three significant examples for each criterion to provide the best evidence of how their skills, knowledge and experiences fulfil the requirements of the criterion.

Applicants should address each criterion clearly and unambiguously to emphasise the work undertaken and the outcomes achieved. Outcomes should relate to staff, students, school and/or the wider community and wherever possible be measurable. They should show the breadth and depth of the applicant's skills, knowledge, experiences and commitment to undertake a leadership role within the school.

The information that follows is a guide to stimulating and framing reflection and responses to the selection criteria. Applicants should not regard it as definitive or comprehensive as each applicant will bring different experiences and a different focus to the position. As information to support applicants, any appeals process will not consider this guide.

## **GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA—EXECUTIVE POSITIONS**

Applicants for executive positions must demonstrate the capacity to provide successful educational leadership. This must be demonstrated through:

1. *Successful teaching experience with capacity to initiate improvement in teaching, learning and classroom practice.*
2. *Knowledge of curriculum, assessment and student welfare with the ability to lead and design quality, inclusive teaching and learning programs.*
3. *Educational leadership skills to build the capacity and manage the performance of individuals and teams.*
4. *Well developed communication and interpersonal skills with the capacity to build relationships and engage students, staff and parents.*
5. *Ability to plan and manage resources effectively and equitably to support teaching and learning.*
6. *Knowledge of and commitment to the Department's Aboriginal education policies.*

Note: As the general selection criteria apply to assistant principal, head teacher or deputy principal positions, applicants need to reflect on the level and role for which they are applying and tailor applications accordingly.

The following suggestions are not a checklist nor do they attempt to cover all eventualities.

## **1. Successful teaching experience with capacity to initiate improvement in teaching, learning and classroom practice**

This criterion requires applicants to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and experiences as a successful and effective teacher.

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Leading others to enhance teaching, learning and classroom practice in a faculty, stage or across the school.
- Expert knowledge of the curriculum to provide engaging and challenging learning experiences that cater for the needs of students at all levels of development.
- Integration of syllabus requirements into programs designed to engage students and promote a culture of high achievement.
- Effective use of teaching strategies to ensure a variety of learning styles are catered for to enable all students to achieve improved learning outcomes.
- Effective use of data to inform teaching and learning programs and implement changes to programs as required to address the specific learning needs of students.
- Integration of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) and the [NSW Quality Teaching Model](#) into teaching and learning experiences to ensure that students are engaged and challenged to achieve their best.
- Development of assessment for learning strategies with clearly defined goals that allow for effective feedback and provide students with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Reporting of outcomes to clearly identify strengths and provide advice to enable improvement in areas of need.
- Strategic use of evaluation to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning programs and assist in the development of personalised programs tailored to address student needs.
- Effective integration of information and communication technologies into teaching experiences which engage and prepare students for the demands of an increasingly technological society.

## **2. Knowledge of curriculum, assessment and student welfare with the ability to lead and design quality, inclusive teaching and learning programs**

This criterion requires applicants to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and experiences to lead and lead others to provide quality learning experiences for students.

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Expert knowledge of the rationale and underpinnings of syllabus and curriculum documents and ability to lead others to develop exemplary teaching and learning strategies to improve students' outcomes.
- Well developed knowledge of student diversity and the skills needed to develop effective policies, programs and teaching and learning experiences to address the needs of all students.
- Knowledge of and skills in implementing strategies to address the needs of Aboriginal students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds, students with disabilities, talented students, students with specific learning needs, and male and female students.
- Development and implementation of learning plans that offer inclusive learning opportunities designed to target individual learning styles and raise achievement levels.
- Incorporation of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) and the [NSW Quality Teaching Model](#) into effective teaching and learning programs.
- Planning, developing and implementing stage/faculty/school wide strategies designed to address the specific literacy and numeracy needs of students based on evidence gathered from a range of available data sources (for primary positions in particular).
- Planning, developing and implementing stage/faculty/school wide strategies designed to address the specific academic, vocational and welfare needs of students working towards a Record of School Achievement or undertaking the Higher School Certificate based on evidence gathered from a range of available data sources (for secondary positions only).
- Well developed understanding of stage/faculty/whole school assessment policies and ability to lead the integration of assessment for improved teaching and learning practice.

- Effective development, monitoring and program evaluation strategies consistent with the stages of student development addressing both individual and group needs.
- Effective use of a variety of data sources to inform teaching strategies and program development and improve student learning outcomes.
- Effective management of change within a stage/faculty or school to adapt to new developments in teaching and learning, the specific needs of students and Department of Education and Communities policies and procedures.
- Effective implementation and coordination of student welfare policies, including child protection, integrated into teaching and learning practices.
- The provision of a safe and supportive learning environment that caters for the needs of all students and encourages and stimulates learning.

### **3. Educational leadership skills to build the capacity and manage the performance of individuals and teams**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Leadership to ensure the effective performance of a stage/faculty with a focus on the provision of quality educational delivery consistent with the values of public education.
- Engagement in stage/faculty/school reviews to assesses procedures and teaching practice with a focus on informing the continued development of quality practices.
- Ensuring teachers have the opportunity to engage in relevant and targeted professional learning to build their capacity to provide students with the most relevant educational experiences to improve outcomes.
- Developing and maintaining a culture of trust, respect and cooperation where staff members are valued for the contributions they bring and encouraged to enhance their ability to improve student learning experiences.
- Coaching/mentoring of staff aimed at developing their skills and leadership capacity through formal and/or informal processes and opportunities that are supportive and targeted to individual needs.
- Knowledge, support and implementation of the accreditation process of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW ([BOSTES](#)) in relation to new scheme teachers seeking and maintaining accreditation at the level of [Proficient Teacher](#) and teachers seeking voluntary accreditation at the levels of [Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher](#).
- Performance and development processes for teachers and their role in facilitating reflection on teaching practice and the development of professional learning plans to enhance teacher performance.
- Application of the principles of the [Code of conduct](#) and the [Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Charter](#) in day to day dealings with staff, students, parents and the wider community.
- [Performance improvement programs](#) and the support processes that need to be implemented to assist staff to perform at a satisfactory level.

**4. *Well developed communication and interpersonal skills with the capacity to build relationships and engage students, staff and parents***

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Ability to communicate, inspire, motivate and drive the direction of the stage/faculty through effective relationships established with students, staff, parents and community.
- Skills involved in communicating, consulting, negotiating and problem solving with students, staff, parents and community aimed at forging partnerships to promote the values of public education through the stage/faculty and/or school programs.
- Ability to assist others to develop and refine their skills in communicating, consulting, negotiating and problem solving with students, staff, parents and community aimed at forging productive partnerships.
- Ability to encourage and support teachers working in teams to develop strategies designed to enhance the quality and range of educational opportunities offered to students.
- Ability to effectively use conflict management strategies to resolve difficult situations and promote a culture of mutual respect.
- Ability to integrate information and communication technologies to enhance communication and participation with students, staff, parents and the community.
- Establishing and maintaining effective communication with members of the school community as relevant to the appropriate leadership role.
- Establishing, encouraging and maintaining effective communication and sharing with professional teaching networks external to the school to promote quality teaching practices under the community of schools concept.



## **5. Ability to plan and manage resources effectively and equitably to support teaching and learning**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Monitoring and evaluating the stage/faculty's provision of quality teaching and learning that puts the needs of students at the forefront of decision-making and provides students with the opportunity to exercise choice and develop skills in areas of interest.
- Developing and managing the allocation of staff to support ongoing learning and capacity building for improved student learning outcomes.
- Allocating/advising on the allocation of financial resources to support teaching and learning to ensure all students have a well resourced curriculum.
- Ability to plan for and manage the stage/faculty's physical resources to provide a safe, attractive and welcoming learning environment.
- Provision of access to integrated teaching, learning and technology to enable all students to develop the high level of technological skills expected of school leavers.
- Effective planning and implementation of changes to the stage/faculty's organisation and structure to maximise use of the school's resources.
- Effective administration and management to achieve improvements in the operations of the stage/faculty and its impact on the running of the whole school.
- Ability to contribute to whole school planning as a member of the school executive.

## **6. Knowledge of and commitment to the Department's Aboriginal education policies**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Knowledge of the Department's policies and strategies related to Aboriginal education.  
[Aboriginal Education and Training Policy](#)  
[Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy](#).
- Ability to locate and implement resources related to Aboriginal education.  
[Aboriginal Human Resource Development Plan](#)  
[Aboriginal Education and Community Engagement Directorate](#).
- Understanding and capacity to implement programs to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving in the higher bands in accordance with school, regional and state targets.
- Establishment of effective partnerships between the stage/faculty and students, staff, parents and community that serve to promote and support Aboriginal student achievement.
- Commitment to making a significant improvement in the attendance and retention rates of Aboriginal students.
- Implementation of an Aboriginal perspective as evidenced in stage/faculty practice and programs.

Note: Applicants for positions in Connected Community Schools may become familiar with the strategy at [Connected Communities](#).

## **General Selection Criteria – Principal Positions**

Applicants for principal positions need to show evidence of successful educational leadership. This must be demonstrated through:

- 1. High level educational leadership with the skills to lead and manage a complex public school focused on the delivery of high quality education.*
- 2. Ability to lead and manage rigorous and inclusive whole school teaching and learning programs.*
- 3. High level communication and interpersonal skills with the capacity to build positive relationships and engage all levels of the school and educational community.*
- 4. Ability to lead and manage the development and performance of staff to improve teaching and learning.*
- 5. Ability to plan systems and manage resources effectively and equitably to enhance teaching and learning.*
- 6. Capacity to lead staff in implementing the Department's Aboriginal education policies and to ensure quality outcomes for Aboriginal people.*

Applicants for principal positions will need to have a holistic, well integrated view of leadership. The following suggestions may assist applicants in framing their thinking in preparation for developing and refining their application. This is not a checklist nor does it attempt to cover all eventualities.

As the principal is ultimately responsible for the strategic leadership as well as day to day operations of the school, high order skills are required. Applications should show that applicants possess the skills needed to lead and manage successfully in the position. Applications should clearly reflect the applicant's philosophy, skills, knowledge, experiences and commitment with regard to educational leadership and management.

Applicants for principal positions should refer to the [Australian Professional Standard for Principals](#) and ensure that they meet its requirements.

**1. High level educational leadership with the skills to lead and manage a complex public school focused on the delivery of high quality education**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Demonstrated capacity to reflect on, articulate and gain commitment to the directions and priorities of the school as a complex and dynamic organisation where education as a life long practice and quality educational provision for all students are embedded and the ethos and values of public education are evident.
- Leadership and management of whole school planning, priorities and directions, incorporating critical analysis of a wide range of data sources, to ensure strategic alignment, accountability and compliance with NSW Department of Education and Training policies, procedures and legislative requirements.
- Expert knowledge of the core business of schools through demonstrated strategic leadership and management skills to inform, motivate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate teaching, learning, assessment and reporting to provide quality educational outcomes for all students.
- Demonstrated capacity to promote and foster a culture where change and innovation are critically analysed, strategically implemented, evaluated and celebrated and where staff feel confident in developing effective strategies that support diverse students' needs.
- Strategic management of accountabilities to ensure the school provides a quality education for all students in accordance with the policies and priorities of the NSW Department of Education and Communities and the NSW Government.
- Leadership and management of the school's annual evaluation process to strategically analyse the effectiveness of teaching and learning programs to inform policy and practice and define the school's strategic directions and targets.

## **2. *Ability to lead and manage rigorous and inclusive whole school teaching and learning programs***

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Strategically leading the school to develop high expectations through learning experiences that are challenging, promote increased levels of achievement and take into account the individual learning and developmental needs of students.
- Effective leadership and management practices, including those relating to child protection and student welfare, that ensure a safe and supportive learning environment that focuses on the learning outcomes for all students being maximised.
- Effective provision of quality educational experiences that include individualised programs to address the learning needs of all groups within the school community based on the principles of equity and diversity.
- Proven ability to identify areas of development within the curriculum to cater for the needs of particular groups and target programs to enhance students' opportunities to achieve improved learning outcomes.
- Leading the analysis of school wide assessment data to inform the development of school priorities and targets within a statewide framework and modify, as required, teaching and learning programs aimed at improving student outcomes.
- Leading the planning, development and implementation of strategies aimed at addressing the specific literacy and numeracy needs of students (for primary positions in particular) and the implementation of teaching and learning programs that cater for the developmental needs of the student population.
- Leading the planning, development and implementation of strategies aimed at addressing the specific academic, vocational and welfare needs of students working towards a Record of School Achievement or undertaking the Higher School Certificate (for secondary positions only) based on evidence gathered from a range of available data sources and the compliance requirements of BOSTES and the Department.
- Strategically leading the school to provide innovative approaches to the integration of information and communication technology with educational delivery which accounts for the changing nature of the ways students, staff and parents learn and engage with information.

**3. High level communication and interpersonal skills with the capacity to build positive relationships and engage all levels of the school and educational community**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Principled and ethical leadership of the school through interaction with students, staff, parents and community based on respect, dignity and commitment to the provision of quality education for all students.
- Extensive negotiation, mediation and conciliation skills in a range of forums to deliver positive outcomes for the school community and improved learning opportunities for students.
- Demonstrated ability to assist staff to develop and refine their skills in negotiation, mediation and conciliation in a range of forums to deliver positive outcomes for the school community and improved learning opportunities for students.
- Extensive ability to communicate, inspire, motivate and drive the direction of the school through effective relationships established with students, staff, parents and community and through the fostering of effective learning and organisational structures amongst staff.
- Effective use of a variety of media to promote the values and direction of the school, communicate students' achievements and report on the progress and outcomes of the school.
- Effective communication and engagement with diverse groups within the school community to ensure that all members of the school community are catered for in an inclusive manner.
- Demonstrated capacity to build and maintain effective school/community partnerships that enable mutual benefit and strengthen the ability of the school to respond to the changing needs of its student population.
- Leading students, teachers, administrative staff, parents and community members to build a learning community guided by the principles of delivering high quality education and maximising the opportunities of all students.
- Developing productive partnerships with groups external to the school such as universities, other government agencies, industry and local media to promote the school and provide quality experiences for students and staff.

- Working cooperatively with other schools to foster learning communities between schools to promote public education and opportunities and outcomes for students and staff.

#### **4. Ability to lead and manage the development and performance of staff to improve teaching and learning**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Effective leadership and integration of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#), the performance and development processes for teachers and whole school professional development planning to enhance teacher performance and capacity to deliver improved student learning outcomes.
- Embedding a culture of trust, respect and cooperation where all staff feel valued for the contributions they bring, are encouraged to enhance their ability and are celebrated for their achievements in improving student outcomes.
- Effective leadership and management to build the capacity of all staff through professional learning and the provision of informal and formal professional learning and leadership opportunities to strengthen the capacity of the school to deliver on its priorities.
- Leadership and management of the accreditation process of [BOSTES](#) as it relates to new scheme teachers seeking accreditation at the level of [Proficient Teacher](#) and teachers seeking voluntary accreditation at the level of [Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher](#).
- Demonstrating the application of the principles of the [Code of conduct](#) and the [Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Charter](#) in day to day dealings with all staff, students, parents and the wider community.
- Overseeing the effective implementation of the [Teacher Improvement Program](#) and [Procedures for managing casual teachers who are experiencing difficulties with their teaching performance](#) to assist teachers to perform at a satisfactory level.

Note: all staff refers to teachers and school administrative and support staff.



## **5. Ability to plan systems and manage resources effectively and equitably to enhance teaching and learning**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Leadership and management of whole school strategic planning which integrates the priority areas of the NSW Government and the Department with school goals and directions and sets achievable targets focusing on improving the learning outcomes of all students.
- Strategic management and development of the school's staffing allocation (teaching and school administrative and support staff) to deliver school priorities and quality educational provision.
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's overall capacity to provide a quality teaching and learning environment that puts the needs of students at the forefront of the decision making process.
- Effective management of a comprehensive school curriculum to provide a high quality education for all students which complies with BOSTES and NSW Department of Education and Communities policy, procedures and requirements.
- Effective maintenance and development of a physical environment that provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive educational setting that is conducive to learning.
- Strategic allocation of financial resources to support teaching and learning and ensure that students are provided for in an equitable way
- Leading the provision of a quality digital environment which integrates curriculum and school management and accounts for the changing nature of the ways students, staff and parents learn and engage with information.
- Managing risk and maintaining the legislative requirements of work health and safety at the school level to ensure that the school is a safe place for staff to work and that students are protected from risk of harm.

**6. Capacity to lead staff in implementing the Department's Aboriginal education policies and to ensure quality outcomes for Aboriginal people**

Applicants may wish to refer to their skills, knowledge and experiences in relation to some of the following:

- Proven capacity to establish effective partnerships between the school and students, staff, parents and community that serve to promote and support the improved achievement, increased attendance and retention of Aboriginal students.
- Strategic planning ability and capacity to lead the staff in professional learning in the area of Aboriginal education and the management of strategies to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving in the higher bands in accordance with school, system and government targets.
- Providing all students with opportunities to develop deeper understandings of Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages.
- Detailed knowledge of and capacity to implement the Department's policies and strategies relating to Aboriginal education.  
[Aboriginal Education and Training Policy](#)  
[Aboriginal Human Resource Development Plan](#).
- Proven ability to identify and implement resources related to Aboriginal education to improve the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students and strengthen partnerships with the Aboriginal community, including local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups.  
[Aboriginal Human Resource Development Plan](#)  
[Aboriginal Education and Community Engagement Directorate](#).

Note: Applicants for positions in Connected Community Schools may become familiar with the strategy at [Connected Communities](#).