Issues Paper Response Document

Establishing the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership

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The Allen Consulting
Group

1   MAKING A SUBMISSION

Preparing a submission

This response document provides a pro forma for you to use in preparing your submission. Pro forma sections follow each of the key issues for consultation and the questions they pose. Please provide your responses to the questions in the relevant space. Your response can be returned via email or mail.

Not all the questions need be answered, only those on which you have views.

If you choose not to answer some questions, just leave the space blank. Your comments need not be narrowly confined and you are invited to address broader relevant issues.

If you wish to present a submission in continuous prose, papers of ten or more pages will require an executive summary of 250 words or less.

Contact details

This document includes a cover page for your contact details. We require these details to verify submissions.

If the submission is from an individual, emailed submissions must include your name, phone number and postal address. Hard copy submissions must be signed.

If the submission is from an organisation, please indicate this clearly on the cover. Include the signatory's position, and at what level the submission was authorised. Hard copy submissions must be signed.

Please note that we might contact you during the consultation process to clarify or seek further information on any issues raised in your submission. If you do not wish to be contacted, please indicate this on the cover page of your submission.

Submission format

If possible, please provide submissions by email or on computer disk (include a hard copy). Electronic submissions should be provided as a Word document. Hard copy submissions should be typed or written clearly in black ink on A4 paper. Submissions should not be bound in any way or presented in ring binders. One copy of the submission is sufficient — multiple copies are not necessary.

Confidentiality and publication of submissions

If you wish your submission or executive summary to be kept confidential, please indicate clearly at the front of the submission, or in a covering note. If you want part of the submission or executive summary to be confidential, please indicate this clearly and put that part on a separate page(s). Please note that obligations of confidentiality will not apply to any part of your submission that is available from the public domain or from any other source without restriction.

Copies of your submission and the executive summary (if provided) will be made available (on a confidential basis if you have notified us of the confidentiality) to personnel of The Allen Consulting Group, Dr Gregor Ramsey, Deloitte Consulting and the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), for consideration as part of the consultation process.

However, you should note that DEST will not be in breach of its obligation to maintain the confidentiality of your submission or executive summary if it is disclosed by DEST to the Minister for Education, Science and Training, or in response to a request by a House or a Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, or is authorised by law to be disclosed.

Unless you request that your submission or executive summary be treated confidentially, they may be made publicly available on the NIQTSL website and authorship will be acknowledged. Before making your submission, you must have obtained each author's consent to the inclusion of this acknowledgement on the NIQTSL website. Where submissions contain executive summaries, these may be published instead of your submission. DEST reserves the right in its absolute discretion to determine whether any particular submission, executive summary will be published.

If you have any concerns about these matters relating to confidentiality or personal information, it suggested that you should seek your own legal advice.

Acknowledgement of submissions will be provided in writing by email or by post. If you do not receive acknowledgement, please contact The Allen Consulting Group (details below).

Where do I send my response?

Submissions can be made in writing or on disk and forwarded by mail or electronically to:
The Allen Consulting Group
Level 4, 128 Exhibition St
Melbourne Vic 3000
'The NIQTSL Project'

or

NIQTASL@allenconsult.com.au

The closing date for making submissions to the Issues Paper is 4.00 pm, Friday, 9 January 2004.
If you have any questions or problems, please contact Andrew Read, ph. (03) 9654 3800.

2   Submission Cover Page

Is the submission made by individual?   No

If yes, please complete the details below:

Name					
Address					
City		State		Postcode	
Phone					
Signature	*(required for hard copies only)*				

Is the submission made on behalf of an organisation?   Yes

If yes, please complete the details below:

Name organisation	*Australian Association of Mathematics teachers Inc.*				
Address organisation	*GPO Box 1729*				
City	*Adelaide*	State	*SA*	Postcode	*5001*

Name of authorising person	*Steve THORNTON*		
Position	*President*		
Phone	*08 83630288*	Email	*office@aamt.edu.au*
Signature	*(required for hard copies only)*		

Does the organisation consent to being identified in a report that proposes an implementation strategy for the NIQTSL?   Yes

Does the submission contain any confidential information?   Yes

Please note that we might contact you during the consultation process to clarify or seek further information on any issues raised in your submission. If you do not wish to be contacted please check the box   ❑

| 3 | INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESPONDENT |

Please describe the nature of your organisation's activities or your interest in the NIQTSL.

<u>Your Comment:</u>

The Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers is the pre-eminent professional association in school mathematics and numeracy education. It exists to support and enhance the work of teachers, to promote the learning of mathematics and to promote progress in mathematics and numeracy education.

The Association's members come from all states and territories and all levels of schooling. They form an extensive network of committed and enthusiastic mathematics and numeracy education professionals including teachers, academics, policy leaders and administrators. Through the work of its many volunteer members and a highly skilled staff, the AAMT provides a range of services in support of quality teaching of mathematics that includes:

- Three refereed journals (primary, middle school and secondary)
- Student Activities to promote involvement in mathematics
- A catalogue of teaching materials
- Professional Development activities
- Projects
- Representation of the views of teachers of mathematics on a range of government and non-government committees, boards etc.
- Advocacy and promotion of excellence in mathematics teaching in the media and wider community

The Association's major project since 1999 has been the development and implementation of the *AAMT Standards for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics in Australian Schools* (see attached brief description of current work on implementation— more detail is available on request).

As part of the AAMT's involvement in work in this area, the Association has endeavoured to be open and engaged with other organizations interested in promoting quality teaching through work on and with professional standards. This has led to significant interest in and respect for the work on the part of a wide range of stakeholders (see for example the report of the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education). It has resulted in the AAMT making a considerable contribution to more general work in the area of professional teaching standards.

The commitment, track record of achievement and expertise of the AAMT makes our views on the development of an Implementation Strategy for the NIQTSL both well-informed and important in the context of this consultation process.

4   GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NIQTSL

Chapter 2 of the Issues Paper identified four guiding principles for the NIQTSL. These are that the NIQTSL should:

- impact positively on the quality of teaching, school leadership and learning outcomes for students across all schools;

- be managed by the profession for the profession;

- complement without duplicating existing relevant activities; and

- promote national perspectives and consistency.

QUESTION 1
Comment on the appropriateness and adequacy of these as guiding principles for the NIQTSL.

Your response:

These principles are both appropriate and adequate — a good set. Individually and collectively they set a 'tone' for the Institute. Practically they have far-reaching and this response often refers to them.

QUESTION 2
Should the NIQTSL have additional guiding principles? If so, what might they be?

Your response:

No

QUESTION 3

There are several ways that the NIQTSL could interact with members of the profession. For example, the NIQTSL could have a direct relationship with individual school teachers and leaders (such as individuals being members of the NIQTSL) or an indirect relationship (such as through registration bodies, professional associations).

To achieve its objectives most effectively, how should the NIQTSL interact with individual teachers and school leaders? Please explain the benefits of your proposed model of interaction.

Your response:

The response depends somewhat on the *what* of the interaction.

There would seem to be three alternatives:

Universal individual and direct contact with all teachers

This appeals from the point of view of basic 'democracy', but is not likely to be engaging for more than a small handful of teachers, at least in the first instance — the NIQTSL will appear distant and is likely to be viewed with suspicion.

Universal individual contact through other organizations

This could be through employers, and although this could be cost effective but it is not supported as it would diminish the sense of *by the profession, for the profession* (principle 2). It would also not reach those teachers currently not employed for whatever reason.

The likelihood is that each jurisdiction will have a board/council/institute of teaching/teachers in the near future. These will have a universal roll of teachers, and communication to the masses by the NIQTSL could operate through them. This would serve to reinforce the complementarity of the relationship between these state and territory organizations and the Institute. This is clearly consistent with principle 3 (complementarity).

Selective individual contact through other organisations

Professional associations such as the AAMT represent the interests of many, but certainly not all teachers in their particular field (as an aside it would be useful to have statistics on the number and breakdown of teachers who do belong to at least one such organization). Members are those who have made a commitment to their profession and their own professionalism by becoming a member. Hence it is logical that they — and the organizations that represent them — have a special stake in an institute devoted to 'quality teaching' and governed by principle 1 above. Communication with these teachers — the committed — should be at a level greater than for the general populace. See also comments on Governance below. These associations provide a mechanism for obtaining considered, high-level input to the NIQTSL and its functions.

In summary

The AAMT supports universal information disseminated in cooperation with state and territory boards/councils/institutes of teaching, with 'specialised' information distributed to and consultation with members of professional associations through those organizations.

QUESTION 4

If you have proposed a direct relationship between the NIQTSL and individual teachers and/or school leaders, would you expect that this would involve every teacher and/or school leader in Australia? If so, how do you propose this could be achieved?

Your response:

See above

QUESTION 5

Would the nature of the relationship between the NIQTSL and teachers and NIQTSL and school leaders differ? If so, outline ways and reasons.

Your response:

Emphatically no.

5   ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

The roles and functions of the NIQTSL will be determined with a view to achieving the NIQTSL's agreed objectives. It has been suggested that the NIQTSL may have the following functions as a means of achieving its objectives:

- *development of school leadership capabilities* — supporting both current and potential school leaders.

- *development of professional standards* — developing and implementing national professional standards by the profession, including through the MCEETYA endorsed National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching; a national framework of standards for both professional growth and accreditation for school leaders; and by recognising/accrediting those who achieve high professional standards.

- *developing professional learning* — recognising the need to support the national development and implementation of a national framework for professional learning aligned with professional standards.

- *quality assurance of Australian teacher education courses, other professional learning courses and overseas qualifications* — contributing to national quality assurance of Australian teacher education courses, other professional learning courses (particularly those developed to facilitate the implementation of professional standards) and the qualifications of people wishing to migrate to Australia to teach.

- *research* — providing national leadership, direction setting and sharing on research into best practice principles and approaches for quality school leadership and teaching.

QUESTION 6
Are there other roles/functions that the NIQTSL should perform to meet the guiding principles identified in Chapter 2 of the Issues Paper and set out in Section 4 above? If so, what might they be?

Your response:

We do not envisage any other functions. See also comments on 'credentialling/accreditation' in Section 11.

The AAMT's experience strongly suggests a re-orientation of the expression of these functions in a way that reflects the over-arching importance of clearly defined professional standards. These standards represent what practitioners in the particular field (ie that covered by the standards) *know, do and are like*. This is alluded to in the text of the second, but we think it should be explicit. Hence we recommend that the statement of functions be the following:

"The function of the Institute should be to build the culture and practice of teaching and school leadership on agreed national professional standards by:

- development of statements of professional standards for education professionals (note the concept of distinguishing capabilities for school leadership from standards for teaching at this level of general statement is illogical and unhelpful)

- implementation of these as frameworks for professional learning (note the plural is necessary to reflect specialisations) and for quality assurance

- supporting research into quality teaching and school leadership that is used in the dynamic process of continuous improvement of the statements of professional standards."

DEVELOPING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPABILIITIES

QUESTION 7

Identify up to three activities, in order of importance, that the NIQTSL could undertake to have a significant and positive impact on the development of school leadership capabilities.

Why do you consider these activities to be the most important? For example, they are not currently provided, they are available but not of satisfactory quality, they are available but not well understood/publicised.

<u>Your response:</u>

See Question 8. There is (or should be) no activities directed toward 'school leadership capabilities' that are not directly contributing to the quality of teaching. This is *not* to say that improving the work of those with positionally defined roles in school leadership (principals, deputies, coordinators, heads of departments etc.) is not an important task. This work is and should be a priority. It is not, however, in which the AAMT has sufficient expertise to suggest 'activities'. We do note, however, that school *leadership* is not synonymous with school *administration* and that this has implications for the work of the Institute.

In response to question 8 we suggest an activity involving positional school leaders that has direct impact on teaching quality and student outcomes.

Activity 1:

Comment:

Activity 2:

Comment:

Activity 3:

Comment:

QUESTION 8

Identify up to three activities, in order of importance, that the NIQTSL could undertake to have a significant and positive impact on the capacity of school leaders to develop and support teacher quality.

Why do you consider these activities to be the most important? For example, they are not currently provided, they are available but not of satisfactory quality, they are available but not well understood/publicised.

<u>Your response:</u>

Please note that we do not view this as distinct from the second function — the nomenclature should be "professional standards for …" where the space is filled by the name of a type of education professional. However, the first of these activities does involve working with positional leaders; the second is about leaders who may or may not hold positions with that classification.

Activity 1:

Research and development to build leadership capabilities in all types of schools that draw on existing sets of professional teaching standards in mathematics, English/literacy and science.

Comment:

The intention would be for a few schools to develop the capabilities of positionally defined leaders (principals, deputies, heads of department) to identify and extend the usefulness of existing sets of teaching standards to enhance curriculum leadership within a context of broader leadership and succession intentions. This is an example of the way in which the NIQTSL can sponsor needed research and development, and then play a role in effective dissemination of results.

Note that this project could be commenced very early in the Institute's life. It is practical, and directly connected to improved teaching and student learning. It would bring together subject and principal professional associations working together under the banner of the Institute.

Activity 2:

Creation of program of 'sabbaticals' for groups of outstanding professional school educators from across the country to be 'practitioners in residence' at the Institute and/or at other institutions such as universities for periods of, say, six months. They would be engaged in research, thinking and writing. They would also become close 'friends' to the Institute for focussed consultation and analysis that would be particularly useful in the early stages.

Comment:

Putting these people in a 'hot house' environment where they are informed and challenged by each other, and by the professional staff engaged to oversee and provide input to this program will result in remarkable developments. Each team (or individual) should have responsibility for contributing to a major piece of writing as part of their program.

Activity 3:

See discussion of 'initial roll-out' in Section 11.

Comment:

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

QUESTION 9

There has been considerable investment in the development of professional standards for educators both in Australia and overseas. In Australia, standards have been developed by some State and Territory education authorities and some professional teacher associations for a range of purposes, including providing a framework for:

- pre-service education, teacher registration and induction;

- continuous professional learning;

- reflection on and appraisal of professional teaching practice;

- recognition and certification of teachers who attain standards for highly accomplished professional practice; and

- recognition of leadership capabilities.

Some of the potential activities discussed by stakeholders to date include: identifying the need for standards; initial and/or on-going development of standards; monitoring and managing the application of standards; working to see standards introduced at school level; and identifying overseas developments in standards.

Comment on whether you consider that there is a need for the NIQTSL to take a role in determining whether professional standards for school teachers and leaders are nationally consistent.

Your response:

It is the AAMT's view that all professional standards for education professionals should be *national*, not merely *nationally consistent*. *AAMT Standards for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics in Australian Schools* are national (adopted by the Council of the AAMT in January 2002), as are the English/literacy and science standards. Professional standards for other specialisations, and particularly for 'high end' performance have a high probability of being able to be agreed at the national level.

However, the reality is that the current political climate will allow, at best, for national consistency between the professional standards that may exist or be developed in the various jurisdictions. A properly constituted NIQTSL is a logical locus for the responsibility to ensure consistency. Current work being done by the MCEETYA Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce could be seen to be moderated by the political forces in that organization. It would not be appropriate for the further responsibility for monitoring consistency to be located within MCEETYA in the future.

QUESTION 10

If you consider that there is a need for the NIQTSL to take such a role, what activities do you see it undertaking?

Your response:

For national standards

The following is premised on the NIQTSL being developed into an organization with which the AAMT and other similar professional associations *want* to be involved. This would be characterised by it being a feasible 'umbrella' for the associations' professional standards statements and associated processes (eg of assessment and credentialing).

Such an umbrella would be dependent on there being equivalence between the different expressions and implementations of the different sets of professional standards. Hence processes that ensure this equivalence would need to be developed and used by the NIQTL. A part of this — and an important initial research and development task for the Institute to undertake — would be development of a meta-position that is best described as 'standards for professional standards'. There would need to be an associated willingness on the part of associations and others to adjust what they say and do according to the analysis by the Institute. The function would need to be designed to be transparent and fair, with independence and expertise important criteria for those involved in the process.

For jurisdiction-specific standards

A similar (or even the same) process of developing and using 'standards for standards' would be envisaged. This time the referents would be the other similar sets of standards and processes across the country, and any national frameworks that may come to exist in the same domain. Consistent the view on nationalness outlined above, we would not favour any of these jurisdiction-specific sets of standards dealing with highly accomplished teaching.

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

QUESTION 11

The NIQTSL has the potential for two main roles in relation to professional learning – delivery/support and/or national co-ordination.

Taking into account existing activities that support professional learning for teachers and school leaders, comment on whether and how the NIQTSL should:
a) engage directly in the development and delivery of professional learning;
b) provide support for organisations which currently offer professional learning activities; and
c) co-ordinate at a national level the provision of professional learning activities.

Your response:

There is significant logic associated with the location of the responsibilities such as allocation of funding and managing programs like the Australian Government Quality Teaching Program with a properly constituted NIQTSL. The quality of such programs would be much enhanced by direct engagement of the profession in the processes of identifying priorities and monitoring the work being supported. It would necessary for the NIQTSL to be subject to appropriate accountability. This type of arrangment would serve to symbolise the Australian Government's commitment to the principle of *'by the profession, for the profession'*.

Such outsourcing arrangements are common. The advantage of this sort of arrangement is that the Institute would provide an inbuilt mechanism for dissemination and sharing of results of research and developments in best practice. This dissemination function is a natural strategy for the NIQTSL to support educators' professional learning.

It is likely that there will continue to be a split between government funding for programs like the AGQTP between resources directed through education authorities in the states and territories and those used for national purposes. The AAMT makes two points about this arrangement. Firstly, we see the national funds as being best used for research and development of professional learning programs that 'push the boundaries'. This is needed to create new knowledge about teaching, learning and, importantly, educators' professional learning. Second, and while not directly relevant to this consultation, we make the point that this creating new approaches and knowledge should be the Australian Government's *main* role in this area and therefore receive a much increased proportion of the funds. Taking risks is not something the education authorities in the states and territories can actually do very well, given their constitutional responsibility for delivery and the associated need to be doing things that are known to enhance that delivery.

Engage directly in the development and delivery of professional learning:

See above — in general only direct engagement with national activities, particularly those that are designed to create new approaches.

There may also be some highly specialised areas of need that transcend jurisdictions that could see the Institute directly involved in the delivery of programs. Example might be teachers in extremely remote Indigenous communities or those in juvenile remand facilities etc.

Provide support for organisations which currently offer professional learning activities:

See above — again only of national activities that are designed to create new knowledge and approaches. The NIQTSL could play a strategic and enabling role in bringing together existing expertise such as universities, professional associations and practising teachers.

Co-ordinate at a national level the provision of professional learning activities:

See above — to the extent that it relates to the outsourced conduct of projects like the AGQTP. It would not be feasible or desirable for the NIQTSL to try to be an umbrella over all that happens in the name of teacher professional learning.

QUESTION 12

If the NIQTSL were to engage directly in the development and delivery of professional learning, what methods would be most effective and consistent with the NIQTSL achieving its aims? For example, would the use of on-line learning be a necessary and sufficient method or would school-based, action research projects or other methods be appropriate?

Your response:

The modes will be determined by the situation — the parameter of creating new knowledge is the most important determinant of what is legitimate for the Institute to do. This orientation is consistent with principle 3 (complementarity) — other organizations have expertise in a range of delivery modes that could be tapped into, but not be duplicated.

QUESTION 13

In order to be most effective, it would be preferable for the NIQTSL to operate in a manner that allows it maximum flexibility and responsiveness to need.

In regard to professional learning, comment on ways in which the NIQTSL could maximise its capacity to identify and respond to need. Should it, for example, build in an approach which allows it, from time to time, to focus its activities on a specific group of teachers and school leaders, for example, entry level teachers, advanced teachers, aspiring leaders, existing leaders? Where would you place the highest priority – in the initial stages, and then when the NIQTSL is fully established?

Your response:

The important early focus in research and development terms should be helping to reconstruct 'leadership' in schools. The suggestion made in response to Qu. 8 represents a practical example of value adding to existing work of English/literacy, science and mathematics professional associations. This should be a strong motivation for the initial phases as this will enhance the credibility of the Institute and help form useful alliances.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Areas in which the NIQTSL could be involved in quality assurance activities include:

- professional standards and competencies;

- teacher education courses;

- other professional learning; and

- recognition of overseas teaching qualifications.

What role do you consider the NIQTSL could play in quality assurance related to the areas listed above? What other areas can you suggest?

Your response:

As argued above, the basic framework for quality assurance — the measures of quality — needs to be the agreed professional standards for the domain. In any domain can and should be strong and explicit enough for this role to be relatively easily implemented, with little need for translation or explication.

Professional standards and competencies

The 'standards for professional standards' would be the vehicle for this and its use to go beyond ensuring consistency to assuring quality is natural and desirable.

Teacher education courses

It is our information that there are existing processes for this in the higher education sector, although these may not be nationally consistent. It may also be true that the current concerns about the pre-service preparation of teachers indicate that these processes are not working to support or enhance quality. Hence, although principle 2 (complementarity) would not be fulfilled by a duplication of this function, some involvement may be productive. Doubtless there is some worth in the notion of the profession (through the Institute) having a quality assurance role in terms of these courses. It would need to be carefully designed in order to add value to existing statutory requirements, and voluntary participation by higher education institutions (in the same way that the participation of professional association in the Institute's processes can only be achieved) would ensure that the function is wanted, positive and worthwhile. A strength that the Institute's processes would have would be their grounding in profession developed professional standards (for beginning teachers/graduates in the case of pre-service courses; for 'competent' and highly accomplished teachers in the case of post-initial courses; and, conceivably, teacher educators). It could be instructive to consider the approaches to this issue in other professions.

Other professional learning

The complexity of the provision of professional learning (providers, formats etc) makes it hard to conceive of a process that captures the totality of the field. Probably the most that can be envisaged is a voluntary engagement with an external quality measure developed and implemented by the Institute. Something along the lines of an AS-9002 type of assurance provided by the Institute that programs and activities meet a standard. It is likely that some 'providers' would see a commercial advantage in having such an endorsement. The catch is that for the 'tick of approval' to have worth there need to be examples where the endorsement is withheld, and this opens up the potential for litigation.

Probably better is to rely on the notion of *caveat emptor*. This is especially true in the context of an environment where practitioners (teachers and positional leaders) use the language of professional

standards to describe good practice and to define their learning needs.

Recognition of overseas teaching qualifications

Again, it is our information that there are existing processes in the states and territories. This is an example where the jurisdictions could see logic in ceding the responsibility to the Institute. There is presumably a great deal of duplication that could be avoided if a single entity undertook this work, without any obvious risk of loss of 'control' by the state and territory jurisdictions.

RESEARCH

QUESTION 15
What role do you consider the NIQTSL could play in relation to research supporting quality teaching and school leadership? What would be the relationship between this role and the traditional role of universities in this area?

Your response:

As above, the key role should be initiation and support of research and development projects that push the boundaries for professional learning in terms of content and process. Activities must be directed towards potentially practical outcomes that are useful to schools. Dissemination of the findings from this work would be a natural and sensible further role. Extending this, there is a possibility for the Institute to act as a clearinghouse for other research that relates to quality teaching and school leadership.

The research and development work supported by the Institute should be driven by practitioners in ways that see their ideas and approaches tested and refined. University personnel can play a role in support of such projects through effective and respectful partnerships. The current AAMT Teacher Standards Assessment Evaluation Project is an example of a research and development project being run by the profession, with appropriate support from university personnel. Such projects can and do work well — the practicality of results is much more assured.

QUESTION 16
What model could be used so that any NIQTSL research function incorporated the expertise available from the three Canberra universities, universities outside Canberra, other professional researchers, teachers and school leaders?

Your response:

As above. Respectful partnerships that meet the needs of the projects as defined by the practitioners who are in the 'driving seat'.

OTHER ISSUES

QUESTION 17

In which areas or activities mentioned above, or of an additional nature, is there a need to promote national perspectives and consistency in school teaching and leadership? How might the NIQTSL achieve this consistency?

Your response:

It is worth noting the recent MCEETYA commitments to more 'nationally consistent curriculum', and the adoption of this as one item in the Australian Government's 10 Point National Education Agenda. From the perspective of a national professional association this is an important and much needed development. History suggests, however, that the full potential may not be realised because of the need to gain assent from the eight jurisdictions.

The reality is that quality teaching can be moderated by the quality of the curriculum. In mathematics, for example, there is a strong argument that existing curricular expectations at senior secondary level mitigate against teachers using some approaches that have been demonstrated to enhance learning and dispositions towards the subject .

Hence, there is a possible role for the Institute in providing input to the development of 'quality curriculum' as an 'enabler' of quality teaching. In the current context, the involvement of the practitioner's view expressed through its *national* institute could well serve as a counter-balance for any parochialism arising from the jurisdictions. In line with the thinking of the vast majority of the wider community, many, perhaps most, teachers do not see the current inconsistencies in curriculum as sensible or sustainable in a country of this size.

QUESTION 18

In consultations to date, some stakeholders have identified that the NIQTSL should disseminate information. What type of information might be disseminated and what should have the highest priority? How could such dissemination occur? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the NIQTSL performing such a role?

Your response:

The following addresses this question as being about information directed towards the general population of teachers. Information to key stakeholders (such as associations like the AAMT) is a separate issue — open access to information about and from the Institute will be necessary for these stakeholders to continue to shape the way the Institute operates and what it achieves.

Information to the wider community will be of a promotional nature, aimed at raising the status of teachers through an understanding of their work and professionalism. Expert help with this sort of 'campaign' must be obtained. This sort of PR drive is arguably something of a priority, however, not the least because teachers themselves are grounded in the wider community and this will be a strategy for engaging their interest in the Institute for its potential to contribute to their professional lives.

Type of information (to teachers)

Initially there need to be clear statements about key elements of the work of the Institute (perhaps built around the principles):

- benefits of professional standards,
- assurances about the uses being envisaged as being developmentally supportive rather than 'checking up' and potentially punitive.
- connections between all the different developments

Following this the information needs to be useful and practical for practitioners. Certainly they need access to the results of research and development work, and other developments that the Institute can disseminate because of its potential to contact all teachers. The actual bulk of material needs to be small, however, with details easily accessible.

How could such dissemination occur

Some material needs to be produced as hard copy, directed through state and territory boards/institutes/councils of teaching/teachers, with directions to websites for more extensive information (eg readings, project reports etc.). A voluntary electronic 'alert' process could be useful.

Where information is relevant only to a sub-set of the profession, electronic alerts and/or hard copy could be forwarded through the relevant professional associations. Distribution could piggy-back on existing structures and processes in the associations.

Advantages and disadvantages

It is difficult to determine these before the event. As with all functions of the Institute, the provision of information will need to be carefully monitored in the early stages with a view to improving the content and process of the communication function. Certainly the NIQTSL taking on a role in communicating with the wider community will have the advantage of bringing a national focus in support of teachers and teaching and will, hopefully, be associated with sufficient resources to do the job well over a sustained period.

QUESTION 19

To best achieve its objectives, how should the NIQTSL prioritise its roles and functions? Provide a ranking starting at 1 for the highest priority activity and using each number once. If you believe that a listed function is not appropriate for the NIQTSL please indicate this by 'NA'.

Note that in the table below we have adjusted the roles in line with the suggestion made in our response to Qu. 6.

Proposed NIQTSL function	Ranking of priority
~~Developing of school leadership capabilities~~	NA
Developing *and coordinating implementation of existing* professional standards for practitioners (teachers and positional leaders)	1
~~Developing professional learning~~	NA (as it is stated)
Providing quality assurance of *professional standards*, Australian teacher education courses, other professional learning courses and overseas qualifications	4
Research *and development in the content and process of school educators' of professional learning*	2
Information dissemination	3
As outsourced 'manager' of Australian Government programs such as the AGQTP	5
Contributing to the nationally consistent curriculum developments	6

6	GOVERNANCE

The governance structure for the NIQTSL raises many issues to be resolved. These include corporate form, management structure, financial framework, decision making mechanisms, accountability and reporting requirements. For these consultations, however, we wish to focus on options for board/council structure and accountability.

In determining the structure of a board or council of management, the aims of making the body representative must be balanced by the necessity to operate effectively and efficiently. The desire for representativeness has led some professional and related organisations to establish large governing bodies that are unwieldy and often ineffective. The results can be a lack of real voice, poor decision-making, frustration with meetings and the appropriation of power by small in-groups.

It is in this context that a number of issues regarding structure of a board/council would be determined. These include:

- representation of organisations, or experts in the field (or both);

- state, federal or national arrangements;

- election or nomination, and by whom; and

- mechanisms to include other professional bodies.

QUESTION 20
What structure would enable the governing body of NIQTSL to be most focussed and effective, given the points raised above about size and operations?

Your response:

A small Board (8-10 perhaps). The Board to have legal and fiduciary responsibilities at least as demanding as those for Company Directors in Australia.

Chair appointed by Commonwealth Minister. It is suggested that the Chair be an eminent Australian, but not someone with a background in education. The Executive Director of the Institute to be a non-voting member of the Board.

None of the Board members to be representatives of any organization or group. There is no way that any form of representation could be fair and inclusive.

Members to be elected by an Electoral College. The College to be several hundred practitioners appointed by professional associations (the argument is that those teachers who are members of professional associations have made a demonstration of their professionalism by being a member of the association and therefore have the right, through their association, to be one of the electors or at least to select those who are). A respectable formula would need to be established. All relevant practitioners are eligible to be nominated for election for the Board. Some kind of preferential ballot would be required. Terms for Board members to be, say, 3 years. The Board would need to work out details such as phasing in arrangements and the filling of casual vacancies etc.

The advice of the Australian Electoral Commission may be useful in designing and conducting the process.

Please note that this may appear to be a 'radical' option. It is accepted that resolving the issues of governance is important. Hence the main motivation needs to be getting it right and this will include considering many options. An interim board, all appointed by the Commonwealth Minister could get the ball rolling and resolve the issues through a longer term consultative process (say over the first 12 months of the Institute's existence after which the board could be established according to the arrangements decided).

QUESTION 21

What would be the hallmarks of an effective system of governance that should be adopted? What would be some of the marks of an ineffective system of governance that should be avoided?

Your response:

An effective system would be characterised by responsiveness, transparency, accountability, focus on policy and broad directions, not day to day running of the organization. The benchmarks for the performance of the Board would be the four principles underpinning the Institute. Effective delegation of responsibilities (with accountability) to the Executive Director and a small number of expert subcommittees would be an important ingredient.

The quickest way for the Board to become ineffective would be for it to degenerate into a focus on the day to day running.

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELEVANT EDUCATION BODIES

Aside from governance arrangements, it is envisaged that the NIQTSL will have clear relationships with existing professional teaching bodies, employing authorities and the State and Territory organisations and institutions with roles in promoting and supporting quality teaching and school leadership.

QUESTION 22

What relationship do you anticipate your organisation having with the NIQTSL? For example, how can you or your organisation contribute to the NIQTSL, and how can the NIQTSL contribute to your organisation's goals?

Your response:

The core principal in this and subsequent responses in this section is the third one about 'complementarity'. In the initial development of the relationships there will need to be clear identification of current work and responsibilities. Duplication must be avoided — the questions will need to be how the Institute can fill gaps and how it can add value to existing work.

As discussed, subject to the Institute being developed and working in accord with the four principles, the AAMT could see itself being an 'institutional member' of the Institute. In broad terms this would mean that the AAMT would nestle its work on professional standards and associated within the umbrella of the Institute. The Association would maintain independence of 'position' on issues and action, subject to the agreements negotiated as part of the institutional membership. The Institute would add value to the Association's work in various ways and would assist in promoting the AAMT's work to teachers of mathematics. The benefit for the Institute would, in the first instance, be access to the experience and expertise that the AAMT brings to the relationship. One of the core rights for the institutional members would be in nominating people to the Electoral College. The special relationship of being institutional members would see the AAMT actively consulted by management and the Board to inform the further development of the Institute, particularly, but not exclusively in its formative stages.

QUESTION 23

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and existing principals associations? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

As 'institutional members' as described in Qu.22 — we see no distinction between principals' professional associations and other professional associations.

QUESTION 24

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and existing teachers associations? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

As 'institutional members' as described in Qu.22 — we see no distinction between principals' professional associations and other professional associations.

QUESTION 25

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and other professional groups? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

The nature of these groups is not clear. If it is a sensible category, our response would be as for Qus 23 and 24.

QUESTION 26

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and State and Territory teacher registration and accreditation authorities? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

Negotiating the boundaries between responsibilities and activities between the national and state/territory organizations will be challenging, but needs to be done well. These organizations are not likely to cede responsibility or activity in relation to 'beginning teachers' or 'competent (ie re-registrable) teachers' but they will benefit from ensuring national consistency between standards and associated processes, under some sort of national framework. On the other hand, when it comes to 'highly accomplished teachers' or 'positional leaders' the national approach seems most feasible and cost-effective. Hence the AAMT would see the state and territory organizations locating (ceding) these developments with the Institute which would in turn rely on existing national work and processes such as those of the English/literacy, mathematics and science professional associations.

In response to questions about information flow etc. above it has been argued that an efficient mechanism for contacting all teachers would be through the state and territory

boards/institutes/councils of teaching/teachers. These bodies have a universal roll of teachers and are professional in their focus. Hence the relationship would require the state and territory bodies to act as conduits. This would also be a role for professional associations in relation to more specialised information. So, although there is a particular need for there to be effective and complementary relationships between the Institute and the state and territory boards/institutes/councils of teaching/teachers this relationship is essentially the same of for professional associations — that of 'institutional member'.

QUESTION 27

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and employing authorities? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

There is an argument that both employing authorities and unions not have any influence on the Institute through any formal partnership or involvement. This would serve to underline the purely professional intentions of the Institute.

QUESTION 28

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and unions? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

As for employing authorities (Qu. 27). Note that most members of professional associations are members of their appropriate union, just as they are employees of education authorities. The Institute has the potential to be the exclusive national professional 'space' for school educators.

As set out in Chapter 2 of the Issues Paper, the NIQTSL will have a relationship with the three universities with a presence in Canberra.

QUESTION 29

Please describe the nature of the relationship between the NIQTSL and the three Canberra universities that would best meet the NIQTSL guiding principles.

Your response:

It is not clear to the AAMT why these universities have been singled out from other universities, apart from locality. A hosting institution would give the Institute access to facilities (rooms for seminars etc.) and services (library access, for example) but any of these would necessarily need to be on a paid basis.

QUESTION 30

What relationship should the NIQTSL work to establish with universities outside Canberra to help meet its guiding principles? What role would the Canberra universities play in this?

Your response:

In general the role of universities would be limited to supporting the work undertaken or driven by practitioners; feeding in results of relevant research for dissemination through the Institute's communication channels; providing expertise in advisory and other subcommittees of the Institute.

QUESTION 31

To be effective, what relationship would be appropriate between the NIQTSL and the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training? How should this relationship be progressed?

Your response:

It is likely that the Institute will be accountable to the Minister of Education. Hence there is a clear role for DEST in that relationship.

The Institute needs to have, and be seen by the education and wider communities to have, clear independence from all forms of government. This includes the Australian Government. This will be hard to engineer (given that the initial funding is derived from the Australian Government), but essential. The consequence of the second principle (*'by the profession, for the profession'*) is that governments need to trust the profession to get on with the job, albeit within a framework of adequate accountability and safeguards.

Further, it is possible that DEST will decide to outsource the conduct of all or some (eg the 'national component') of programs like the AGQTP to the Institute. This will result in the management of these programs being in the hands of 'the profession' and therefore more likely to be well-targeted and productive.

QUESTION 32

Are there other relationships critical to success that the NIQTSL should pursue? For example with, other professions? the learned academies? research bodies? teaching in VET and higher education?

Your response:

The categories indicated include several that could become important over time. However, the initial and ongoing emphasis in relationship-building by the Institute needs to be with core partners — professional associations, state and territory boards/institutes/councils of teaching/teachers and, to a lesser extent, the universities.

8 OPERATIONAL MATTERS

The later stages of this project will involve the development of a business plan after there is a clearer view of roles and functions and related matters. At this stage, there are some preliminary questions to consider on the operational dimensions of the NIQTSL.

QUESTION 33

In consultations to date, stakeholders have discussed various operating models for the NIQTSL. Examples of models include a 'hub and spoke' model that would involve physical facilities in different locations and 'networked models' that would have a physical location in Canberra only, with formal relationships (without physical facilities) with relevant bodies. What operating model would be most effective for the NIQTSL?

Your response:

A single location with access to facilities of partners/institutional members spread throughout the country. Extensive use of electronic communications.

QUESTION 34

What operating characteristics would most effectively support national coverage of the NIQTSL?

Your response:

Working through the state and territory boards/institutes/councils of teaching/teachers and professional associations in the manner outlined in response to previous questions would provide the means for national coverage..

QUESTION 35

What operating characteristics would most effectively support the engagement of teachers and school leaders?

Your response:

An information strategy that provides timely, relevant and useful information. A good public profile (see below)

QUESTION 36

What operating characteristics would most effectively support raising the professional standing of teachers and school leaders within the broader community?

Your response:

Engage a professional image and public relations consultant to devise and implement a public promotion strategy for teachers, schools and teaching. Make this a sustained and determined effort that makes teachers feel good about themselves and that allows the public to see the qualities of schools and teaching. This is a long term ask that requires significant and sustained resources.

Of course school educators need also to be convinced that they are valued and appreciated for doing a 'good job' for the society. Hence, although it is outside the scope of this consultation and the work of the Institute generally, the issues around support, career structure and performance-based remuneration will need to be addressed along the lines suggested in *Australia's teachers: Australia's future* (the report of the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education 2003)

QUESTION 37

Considering the likely roles and functions of the NIQTSL:

- what facilities will be required?

- should facilities be located on a university campus or should they be free standing and why?

- what staff will be required?

- what skills and expertise will key staff require?

Your response:

what facilities will be required

Offices, board room, IT infrastructure, access to other spaces from time to time; perhaps access to some appropriate living quarters for staff from outside of Canberra on short term secondment to the Institute (there will be need for these sorts of appointments to underline the nationalness of the NIQTSL)

should facilities be located on a university campus or should they be free standing and why

the advantage of being on a campus is the access to associated and important infrastructure, particularly library services.

what staff will be required

In the set up phase probably an Executive Director (plus Personal Assistant); Business Manager; Communications and Promotions Manager; Assistant Director(s) to coordinate professional work relating to standards, professional learning and relationships; Office/Administrative manager plus other administrative assistant(s); ICT Manager.

what skills and expertise will key staff require

Most titles indicative of the work done and therefore the skills required; Executive Director and Assistant Director(s) will be education professionals with expertise in relevant areas (professional teaching standards, professional learning, practitioner driven research and development in education etc.)

QUESTION 38

What products would the NIQTSL offer?

Your response:

Apart from initial information and promotional material that clearly identifies the place of the Institute and its relationships with others, the first product will need to be the 'standards for professional standards' document. Drawing from the experience of English/literacy, mathematics and science professional associations and others, a product that assists other similar groups to develop professional standards would be possible, followed by documents that relate insights of those groups into the process of assessing teachers against professional standards and using them as a framework for professional development. Results of Institute-supported research and development activities around foci and processes for professional learning would then begin to flow.

9   PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

A key matter is to identify how stakeholders will know if the NIQTSL is performing its role effectively. It will therefore be important that appropriate performance indicators are developed for the NIQTSL. A robust system of performance measurement and evaluation is critical so that the functions and activities of the NIQTSL remain focused on its core objectives.

In general, it is desirable that a set of performance indicators be:

- *focused* on the organisation's aims and objectives;

- *appropriate* to and useful for the stakeholders; and

- *balanced*, giving a picture of what the organisation is doing, covering all significant areas of its work.

QUESTION 39
What will determine whether the NIQTSL is considered a success?

Your response:

Creation of good and lasting working relationships; engagement of teachers; community awareness and appreciation of the work of school educators and the Institute that supports them; professional standards accepted as the professions' statements of the what, how and why of good practice and therefore the frameworks for professional learning and quality assurance; national consistency among and across these standards; pathways for practitioners to develop along the trajectories identified by the standards.

QUESTION 40

Considering the guiding principles of the NIQTSL, what type of performance indicators would be appropriate in relation to quality in the areas listed below?

Note: Given the lack of definition of activities it is only possible to make some indicative suggestions below.

Working objective	Your Response
Teaching	Numbers of teachers accredited as 'highly accomplished' against national professional standards.
School leadership	As above
Student learning outcomes	Emphatically not as improvement on system-wide tests. Student learning outcomes must be measured by a comprehensive range of assessment techniques responsive to a broad range o valued learning outcomes.
Involvement and engagement of the profession with NIQTSL	Number of educators involved in professional learning related to national professional standards. Engagement of professional associations.
Complementing without duplicating existing relevant activities	Levels of agreement with a 'standards for standards' document.
Promoting national perspectives and consistency	

10   FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

Minister Nelson has announced that the Australian Government will provide initial funding of $10 million to establish the NIQTSL. In consultations we would like to concentrate on sources of ongoing operational funding for the NIQTSL.

There is a range of possible sources of funding and revenue for the NIQTSL, although these are linked to the nature of the organisation and its roles and functions.

QUESTION 41
How should the NIQTSL be funded in the future?

Your response:

The only sustainable funding source for the Institute is ongoing core funding from the Australian Government. Other governments will not fund it. Practitioner fees cannot be made compulsory, and the experience of the Australian Teaching Council indicates this is not a sensible alternative. Corporate support would only ever be a small fraction of what is needed for a viable Institute. The level of 'service' that the Institute provides will be insufficient for any kind of 'user pays' arrangement.

11   FURTHER COMMENTS

The space below is for any additional comments that you consider would be helpful in developing the implementation strategy for the NIQTSL.

<u>Your Comment:</u>

Leadership

Footnote 1 in the paper ("'leaders' or 'school leaders' refers to principals and teachers with identified leadership responsibilities in schools.") is a mostly unhelpful distinction. Throughout this response the term 'positional leader' has been used to denote these employment-related classifications. The AAMT asserts that leadership in schools is a distributed capacity within the organization. All teachers can and should be educational leaders. Different players may have different roles, but it is certainly true that the best schools enable and expect all members (including para-professionals, parents and students) to be leaders from time to time. It is for this reason that the response has argued that there should be no distinction between the overall thinking about school education professionals (principals or teachers). Their work is different, so the professional standards and associated processes (assessing and credentialing against standards; professional learning within the framework provided by the standards) will be different. But the over-arching intention must be the same — the improvement of teaching and learning (principle 1).

As a result, the AAMT will be looking, within any implementation plan, for clear evidence of actual and practical commitment to this notion of distributed leadership. Lip-service will not be satisfactory.

The importance of relationships

Developing relationships with all the stakeholder groups will be among the most challenging initial tasks for the Institute. It cannot be assumed that the initial good-will and willingness of the AAMT to be involved in the thinking to create the Institute will translate into the Association being a partner in the Institute. That will depend on the extent to which the AAMT is comfortable that its independence of thought and action can be maintained within the relationship; evidence that our views are and will be heard and considered in the future development of the Institute to make it an organization that helps the AAMT in its mission of supporting teachers of mathematics and enhancing students' learning of mathematics; and the extent that the effort put into the Institute by the Association is matched (and hopefully exceeded) by the value that is added to what the AAMT is doing. It is likely that other groups will approach the relationship with similar views.

Accrediting/credentialing as a potential role for the Institute

We note that the second last dot point of the previously released *Initial Consultation Questions* document referred to a potential role in "accreditation through the NIQTSL…offered to Australian teachers and school leaders." The *Issues Paper* does not appear to mention this possible role for the Institute.

As can be seen from Appendix 1, the AAMT is committed to developing and awarding its credential of *Highly Accomplished Teacher of Mathematics* and is currently well on the way to achieving this goal. One of the core principles that underpins that credential now and into the future is that the assessment will be undertaken by people with current expertise in the area in a process managed and owned by teachers of mathematics, through the AAMT. There is a role for the Institute in endorsing the AAMT credential. We would seek this through equivalence studies with other credentials based on demanding professional standards. There is no place, however, within what we envisage for the Institute (or anyone else for that matter) to be in the position of accrediting teachers against *our* standards.

We welcome the omission of the notion of accrediting/credentialing for the potential roles of the Institute at this time.

Initial roll-out phase

It seems a given in the document that some 'leadership-related functions' will be rolled out before 'teacher quality related functions'. This is doubtful logic. It may be that it is seen as a relatively simple matter for there to be national programs, initiatives and development in 'school leadership' under the umbrella of the NIQTSL. However, the area of 'school leadership' (used in the same positional sense as the *Issues Paper*) is an important strategic component for all employers of school leaders. We only need to think of the business of devolution of authority and accountability to see that education authorities will say, with some justification, that they have and are investing a great deal of faith in quality leadership by principals, and supporting their people to become the sorts of leaders they (ie their schools) need. To what extent will the employers see any initial work (programs, emphases etc) of the Institute as being complementary or adding value?

The answer is that it depends. If what is done is core and important business then the answer would be 'not much', given that the jurisdictions are attending to it anyway in their own programs for principals. The education authorities would probably resist these kind of initiative(s) as the first things the Institute does. If the work of the Institute is on a peripheral issue, then perhaps it will be supported. But it is not sensible for the Institute to be involved with peripheral issues. Early roll-out in terms of 'school leadership' programs would therefore not seem to be a pathway to establishing positive relationships.

An alternative that does have the Institute engaged in something practical and worthwhile would be totake the view that working to share progress and sort out issues around teacher professional standards in practice by building on the work in mathematics, science and English and literacy is both timely and feasible. This could very well catalyse a lot of other work in a supportive framework that the Institute could provide. The associations involved in the professional standards work (AAMT, ASTA, ALEA and AATE) have already had some preliminary discussions about a process to share their learning with the wider educational community and seek constructive criticism. This could be quickly developed into a fully costed proposal.

Thank you for providing your or your organisation's views on this important initiative of the Australian Government. You may be contacted for follow-up information or comment.

Appendix 1— AAMT Work on Professional Standards (December 2003)

The AAMT's *Standards for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics in Australian Schools* was adopted by the Association's Council in January 2002 and subsequently published and has been widely distributed.

Since then we have been working, albeit slowly until now, to implement the *Standards*. We have established the National Professional Standards Committee — Mathematics to take carriage of the work on behalf of the Council. The NPSCM is chaired by Prof John Mack and consists mostly of practicing teachers. Judy Mousley is the MERGA nominee to the Committee.

The key areas for implementing the *Standards* are:

Framework for professional development in mathematics. The AAMT professional teaching standards are a road-map for professional growth. They enable people to set trajectories so they can develop in areas they identify as relevant in their context and level of growth, and know they are heading in the directions defined as important by the profession. We believe the *Standards* should be integral to the work of associations, education systems, universities when they engage teachers of mathematics in professional growth. This work is being advanced within associations PD programs by linking offerings to the *Standards*, as a by-product of work to develop a credentialing process and a collaborative professional development project under development with ACER.

Peer acknowledgment of high accomplishment. Having defined the professional teaching standards for teaching mathematics, the Association is working towards a voluntary, fair and rigorous system of assessing teachers against these standards. The *AAMT Teaching Standards Assessment Evaluation* Project (TSAEP) will trial and evaluate this process. The project is funded by the Australian Government through its Quality Teaching Program. It will report in mid-2004.

Inform and influence wider discussions about teaching standards. The AAMT's work (and that of the other national subject associations) has come to be well-accepted and respected in the wider education community. Far from being merely 'consulted', teachers of mathematics are taking a leading role in theoretical and practical developments.

Criterion for career advancement. If and when the industrial process provides for career advancement for teachers based on achievement and certification of high standards, the AAMT would argue that its credential could be adopted by employers and systems as one of the mechanisms.

The AAMT is committed to using and promoting its *Standards* as a key means for enhancing the quality of teaching and the status of teachers. Please go to the AAMT Standards website (http://www.aamt.edu.au/standards) or contact Will Morony, AAMT Executive Officer (wmorony@aamt.edu.au) for more information.

Will Morony
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