ASPIRING LEADERS PROGRAM COHORT 2- PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Aspiring Leaders Program (the Program) aims to enhance the contemporary knowledge, skills and attributes of leaders that contribute to student, school and system improvement. The Aspiring Leaders Program will form one part of the ACT Education Directorate’s leadership strategy, aligning policy and practice with a focus on building leadership capacity to promote a culture of continuous improvement and transformation. The Program is aligned to the ACT School Leadership Capability Framework, the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles within the context of the ACT public school system.

Cohort 2 of the Program will consist of a high-quality, evidence-based professional learning program spanning approximately 12 months (April/May 2017- April 2018), combining face-to-face delivery (Canberra) with online or distance learning elements. The Program will be accredited by the University of Melbourne, and will enable credit towards approved higher education qualifications.

Cohort 2 will cater for up to 30 participants.

ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to participate in the program if:

- you are currently employed as a permanent teacher, including School Leader C and B levels, with the Directorate; and
- you have been employed by the Directorate as a teacher, including School Leader C and B levels, with the Directorate permanently or temporarily for at least three years.

Program participants are expected to commit to their employment with the Directorate for a period of 3 years following the conclusion of the program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Part A: Workshops (run concurrently with Part B)

A series of five face to face workshops over approximately 12 months (expected dates for 2017: 27 July, 28 July, 26 October, 27 October; expected dates for 2018: 16 March), focused on visible learning and the use of data; evidence based effect sizes; understanding data collection; the impact of teaching and school leadership on school and student outcomes; the role of pre-service and professional learning; leadership approaches; and leading change. Workshop content will be academic yet practical, and participants will use their newly acquired knowledge to form their school-based action research intervention (Part B).

These workshops will seek to meet the ACT Teacher Quality Institute Program Accreditation Standards in order to be counted as accredited professional learning.
Part B: Action Research Projects (run concurrently with Part A)

The Program will include the completion of an in-school action-research project, assessed at a post-graduate equivalent level. This project will focus on building collective responsibility through identifying a problem of practice (related to participants’ in-school context) and implementing an intervention or innovation designed to address the issue. The action learning process will enable participants to begin a process of using evidence to inform their instructional practice. The collaborative nature of the projects means that participant learning will be enacted with and transferred to other staff members in each of the participant’s schools and systems.

Participants will be allocated a University of Melbourne mentor (distinct from the system mentoring program outlined in Part D) to work with them throughout the program, specifically with respect to the in-school action research project. Participants will be introduced to their mentor throughout the teaching and learning days, and will have a total of up to 3 hours of mentoring time. The University mentors will be specifically tasked with the role of:

- Assisting with forming and developing the research project
- Monitoring the progress of the project
- Providing advice on conducting and modifying (if necessary) the project.

Participants (with support from university mentors) will be required to complete:

- a project plan outlining their identified project goals and research methodology
- a formal project report consisting of approximately 4,000 words, and
- a compulsory, but not assessed, presentation to program peers, Directorate and University of Melbourne personnel sharing the identification, implementation and outcomes of their project.

Each Workshop will incorporate a session dedicated to the research project to allow ample time for discussion amongst academic staff and peers.

Part C: Personalised Reflective Learning

Participants will undertake the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 360° Reflection Tool twice during the program—once upon commencement (pre-program), and once upon completion (post-program). Results will be provided to participants to provide objective feedback regarding leadership strengths and areas for development. These results will be used to provide guidance for system mentoring sessions, and form an ongoing component of personal Professional Pathways Plans.

Part D: Mentor Program

All participants will be matched with an identified ACT education system leader at the deputy principal or principal level to provide personalised mentoring support.

All participants will undertake one day of face to face mentor training (31 May 2017), and Mentors will undertake two days of face to face mentor training (30 & 31 May 2017) provided by the University of Melbourne. These sessions will focus on the purpose, structure and protocols for a successful coaching and mentoring relationship; the skills of a successful mentor coach; and how the results of the AITSL 360° Reflection Tool can be incorporated into personal leadership development plans. Participants and their
mentor will negotiate regular contact in which personal leadership development needs can be addressed; and development of a portfolio of evidence to support applications for Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher status, or to showcase leadership capabilities, can be undertaken.

This program will seek to meet the *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Program Accreditation Standards* in order to be counted as accredited professional learning.
EXPECTATIONS

Time Commitment

Participants are expected to commit sufficient time to undertake the activities and study required to successfully complete the Program. It is expected this will involve:

- approximately 170 hours to complete Part A and Part B of the Program. Included in this calculation are contact hours (5 full days in-school time to attend workshops), reading and preparatory work, private study and preparation for assessment¹;
- 1.5 hours to complete Part C of the Program, being two sittings of the AITSL 360° Reflection Tool;
- 1 full day in-school time to attend a mentor training session involved in Part D of the Program;
- negotiated regular times to meet with your system mentor.

Attendance and Completion

Participants are expected to:

- attend all workshops and sessions conducted by the University of Melbourne as part of the Program at the times notified by the Directorate; and
- complete the Program within the timeframe notified by the Directorate, which is expected to be approximately a 12 month period.

If a participant is unable to attend any workshop or session conducted as part of the Program, the participant must notify the University of Melbourne contact person, and the Manager- Aspiring Leaders Program, as soon as possible.

Non-completion of the program (constituting not meeting the participation or learning requirements), will be identified and managed as per the University of Melbourne and ACT Education Directorate policies. Should a participant fail to meet these requirements, their school (as at the time of acceptance) will be liable for costs as outlined in the ‘Financial Commitment’ section of these Guidelines.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for Cohort 2 of the Aspiring Leaders Program will consist of:

- online Expression of Interest (Part 1)
- online Principal/ Senior Manager Recommendation (Part 2)
- Principal/ Senior Manager verbal reference
- Selection panel to select and match participants and mentors.

¹ Time commitment and workload outlined for a 12.5 subject taken from the University of Melbourne Subjects and Credit Points Policy available at https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1015#section-3.2
SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Aspiring Leaders Selection Committee will comprise:

- Senior Manager- School Improvement and Performance Area (Chair);
- People and Performance branch representative;
- 2 x school network leader representatives; and
- 2 x principal representatives (nominated by the ACT Principals Association).

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Participants will be responsible for costs associated with any reading materials required by the University of Melbourne, as well as personal stationary and other sundry material costs incurred.

The Participant’s school (at the time of acceptance into the program) will incur the following costs, to be charged at the conclusion of the program:

- $246 if the participant successfully completes the program (drawn from TPLF funds allocated to the school from the Directorate); or
- $924 if the participant withdraws from the program without successful completion (drawn from TPLF funds allocated to the school from the Directorate).

If a participant wishes to withdraw from the program on compassionate grounds, they must provide the Directorate with a written statement explaining the reasons for consideration. The Directorate may, in its absolute discretion, cover a portion of the fees the participant’s school is liable for (as determined by the Directorate). This will occur if the Directorate is satisfied the participant has failed to complete all or part of the Program due to extenuating circumstances, that is, circumstances beyond their control. This may, for example, include a serious personal illness or the death of a close family member. This will NOT include inadequate planning, organisation or time management; or family, work, social, financial or other general problems.²

NOTIFICATION

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application. Decisions made by the committee are final.

Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer and Recipient Deed Poll. The successful applicant must sign the Recipient Deed Poll and return the original to the Directorate in order to proceed with participation in the Program.

Upon receipt by the Directorate of the signed Recipient Deed Poll, the successful applicants will be contacted by the provider in relation to enrolment in the Program.

Applicants who are unsuccessful may seek feedback by contacting the Aspiring Leaders Program Selection Committee chairperson.

² Taken from the ACT Education Directorate Study Assistance Guidelines (excluding examples, which are taken from the University of Melbourne Special Consideration Policy, Sections 3.4 and 3.5. https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1297)
SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION


Applications must be submitted via the online application forms. Links to these forms are available from INDEX.

For further information please contact the Aspiring Leaders Program Secretariat on 6207 1173.