



## **Australian Government**

### **Quality Teacher Programme**

# **Secondary case nine**

This case is open-ended and is designed to generate rich discussion about leadership issues affecting all head teachers.

## **Setting the scene**

You have an overseas trained teacher in your faculty. This teacher has been teaching at Greentops High School for three months. After initially teaching in a university overseas for 15 years the teacher migrated to Australia five years ago and retrained after having worked in the IT industry for four years.

A timetable allocation that includes a range of ability levels and a mix of junior and senior classes has been given to this teacher.

In every class, the teacher has found it difficult to maintain student engagement and tends to find the students rowdy and disrespectful. Students arrive late to class and most do not complete the set class work and homework. Some are very rude and criticise the teacher's accent and make racist comments.

Nearly every lesson students from this teacher's class are sent to the head teacher for misbehaviour.

## **Individual reflections**

1. What are the key issues?
2. As head teacher, what do you do?

## Leadership issues

<b>Educational</b>	pedagogy, programs, assessment, reporting, learning styles, learning environment, learning community
<b>Organisational</b>	timelines, resources, management, systems, accountability
<b>Strategic</b>	planning, vision, values, culture
<b>Personal</b>	social skills, ethics, commitment, personal vision
<b>Interpersonal</b>	relationships, team building, conflict resolution, communication

## Focus questions

### Educational

1. What is the teacher's philosophy about teaching, learning and the role of students and teachers?
2. What data and other resources will you use to inform what you will say and do to support students and teachers?
3. What are the teaching/learning issues for you and the students?
4. What help can you provide to the teacher?

### Organisational

1. How will you design a timetable to allow you to observe some of the teacher's lessons?
2. What resources do you need to help the teacher?
3. At what point would you consider recommending that a teacher should be put on a program?
4. How do you find the time to work with the teacher and students to solve the problems of attitude and expectations, behaviour, teaching methods and underlying philosophy?

### Strategic

1. What experiences, attitudes and expectations underpin the behaviours of the students and the teacher?
2. What is quality teaching and quality work and how is it achieved?
3. How could you use other members of the faculty and the school to assist mentoring or coaching the teacher?

### Personal

1. As head teacher how would you deal with the students' complaints?
2. What support and skills do you need to solve this problem?

### Interpersonal

1. How would you help the teacher and the students?
2. What would the students expect you to be doing about the situation?
3. What would you do about the feelings that the students have towards the teacher? How can you overcome this?
4. What is your approach when dealing with this teacher?
5. What do you tell parents?

# Considerations

**Notes to facilitators:** It is the process of analysing the case and the issues that is important in using the cases as a professional development tool. A selection of DET policy documents made available for quick referencing by participants will support informed decision making.

If participants are from the same school, they may identify with key issues in the case and become snared in a discussion of school-specific problems. Sensitive intervention and guidance back to the case may be required.

Using the considerations or sample solutions too early may defeat the purpose and value of head teachers reflecting on the issues and their own practice. It should be remembered that a single issue case is in fact highly complex. If limited time is available, groups could analyse different leadership domains or focus on just a few issues.

## Educational

- What is the key issue here? Is it about a different set of values and philosophy or is it behaviour management, teaching strategies or learning styles?
- What are the implications for teaching and learning in the short term and the implications for the longer term if you don't address the problem?

## Organisational

- What teaching, pedagogical readings or behaviour management course might the teacher need to attend or read and discuss?
- Consider the time and other resources required to solve the problem.

## Strategic

- What strategies, plans and procedures do you need to consider in order to address the problems the students and teacher are having?
- Do you have other issues in the faculty that need to be addressed in relation to teaching and learning?

## Personal

- How do you build your own personal resilience?

## Interpersonal

- Consider what process you will use to get the teacher to identify any problems.
- What alternative strategies could you use to solve the problem?

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### Disclaimer

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

### Acknowledgement

This project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training as a quality teacher initiative under the Australian Government Quality Teaching Programme.