

Accreditation to Teach Religious Education in Catholic Schools

Teachers in Catholic primary schools are normally required to teach Religious Education. A very similar program of study is necessary to also teach the diocesan curriculum in the secondary years and to teach the HSC/QCE/VCE senior secondary study. The terminology used is that a teacher is 'accredited' to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools in a particular diocese.

Accreditation is one means of ensuring that teachers' professional qualifications and competencies are formally recognized by Catholic Education Commissions and diocesan Catholic Education Offices with respect to the character and philosophy of Catholic schools. Each Catholic diocese in Australia stipulates specific requirements to achieve accreditation to teach religious education within their schools.

If you wish to teach in a Catholic school, you will need to apply to the diocesan education office where you aim to teach. They will identify whether you are 'accredited' to teach Religious Education in their Catholic schools. This is a process which complements the application process to the state registration body to be registered as a *teacher*. The administration processes for accreditation are managed through each Catholic Education Office. Each diocesan website should clearly outline the steps for Applying for Accreditation to Teach in Catholic schools. Please refer to your local Catholic Education Office for the most accurate and up to date information regarding RE accreditation requirements, sponsorship possibilities and the application process.

ACU has established a sequence of units (both Theology and Religious Education units) which provide (a) a structured program of study for teaching Religious Education in Catholic Schools, and (b) a program of study which will enable students to advance confidently towards accreditation. That sequence of units is as follows, noting that Diocese may require a commitment to the Catholic faith in addition to academic studies.

Unit Code	Unit Name	Prerequisites (P); Incompatible Units (I)
THBS100	Introduction to the Bible	Nil (P)
THCT100	What Christians Believe	Nil (P)
EDRE299 ¹	Religious Education 1: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment	Nil (P)
EDRE399 ¹	Religious Education 2: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment	EDRE299 (P)
THCT202	Christian Symbol, Ritual and Sacrament	THBS100, THCT100 (P); THEO228 (I)
UNCC100	Self and Community: Exploring the Anatomy of Modern Society	Nil (P)
or		
UNCC300	Justice and Change in a Global World	UNCC100 or PHCC102 or PHCC104

Note that the 'full sequence' includes **either** UNCC100 or UNCC300. Units such as EDES101, PHCC102, PHCC104, UNCC301, UNCC302 or PHCC320 **do not** meet the requirement.

As there is no space in the Pri/Sec program for electives, a desire to teach RE in Catholic Schools determines your secondary teaching area, which will be either Theological Studies (Victoria) or Study of Religion (NSW, Qld)²

Victoria

The VCE study "Religious Education" is available in government and non-government schools. Theological studies are required to be fully qualified to teach this subject. Within Catholic schools, the emphasis is also on teaching the diocesan curriculum throughout the secondary curriculum, through the 'RE accreditation sequence' (as above). A similar program study is needed to meet either career objective.

Your secondary teaching area would be Religious Education, achieved through a Theological Studies sequence of two 100-level units, two 200-level units and two 300-level units, ensuring that you include THBS100, THCT100 and THCT202. You would also include EDRE299 and EDRE399 as the CPA units. UNCC100 or UNCC300 could be included as an overload unit, but confirming the exact requirements for accreditation by the Diocese is the student's responsibility.

¹ The CPA sequence for Primary is EDRE290 and EDRE291 and must not be confused with the secondary sequence.

² The ACU major/minor is called "Study of Religions" whereas the NSW HSC study is "Studies of Religion" and the Queensland QCE study is "Study of Religion"

Bachelor of Education (Primary and Secondary)

(Information last updated on 29 September 2023)



In the secondary courses, a single unit which leads to accreditation to teach 'in' Catholic schools (rather than teach RE) is available in Victoria and can be combined with any other teaching area(s). This option is not available in the Primary/Secondary course because there are no electives. Students could discuss studying this unit (EDRE429) as an overload (i.e. full fee-paying unit) with their co-ordinator.

Queensland

The QCE study "Study of Religion" (SoR) is available in government and non-government schools. To be fully qualified to teach this subject requires studies of religion including comparative religions and culture.

We must be clear: the secondary teaching area of SoR is available to you in this program. Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic schools is **not** a teaching area as such (in this respect, Queensland is different to Victoria), although some units required for accreditation will also be completed through studies in SoR.

Your SoR studies must incorporate two 100-level units, two 200-level units and two 300-level units. Units from the RE sequence, THCT100 and THCT202, can also be counted among the SoR units, *but THBS100 cannot*³. And, somewhat confusingly, THBS100 is one of the pre-requisites for THCT202. Therefore, there are two options:

- Complete an SoR sequence, which does not include THBS100 or THCT202. This will meet the requirements for teacher registration, but only three units for RE Accreditation (THCT100, EDRE299, EDRE399) will be included.
- Complete an SoR sequence, and also complete THBS100 an overload (ie full fee-paying) unit (ensuring that THCT100 and THCT202 are also included). This would meet the requirements for teacher registration and also complete the RE Accreditation Sequence. (THBS100 would usually be completed in the same semester as PHIL107, usually in the second year of the program.) UNCC100 or UNCC300 could be included as an overload unit, but confirming the exact requirements for accreditation by the Diocese is the student's responsibility.

New South Wales

The NSW HSC study "Studies of Religion" (SoR) is available in government and non-government schools. To be fully qualified to teach this subject requires studies of religion including comparative religions and culture, and also studies in curriculum and pedagogy relating to History at junior secondary levels.

We must be clear: the secondary teaching area of SoR is available to you in this program. Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic schools is **not** a teaching area as such (in this respect, NSW is different to Victoria⁴), although some units required for accreditation will also be completed through studies in SoR.

NSW students need to be advised that to fit all the necessary units for Accreditation to teach RE in Catholic Schools into the program is a significant challenge. Your SoR studies must incorporate two 100-level units, two 200-level units and two 300-level units. Units from the RE sequence, THCT100 and THCT202, can also be counted among the SoR units, *but THBS100 cannot*³. And, somewhat confusingly, THBS100 is one of the pre-requisites for THCT202. Therefore, there are two options:

- Complete an SoR sequence, which does not include THBS100, THCT202 or EDRE299. This would be a valid program to meet the requirements for teacher registration, but only two units for RE Accreditation (THCT100, EDRE399) will be included. To meet the requirements of SoR in NSW, your CPA units must be EDHI299 and EDRE399.
- Complete an SoR sequence, and also complete THBS100 and EDRE299 as overload (ie full fee-paying) units (ensuring that THCT100 and THCT202 are also included). This would meet the requirements for teacher registration and also complete the RE Accreditation Sequence. (THBS100 would usually be completed in the same semester as PHIL107, usually in the second year of the program, and EDRE299 in the same semester as EDHI299, in the third year of the program). UNCC100 or UNCC300 could be included as an overload unit, but confirming the exact requirements for accreditation by the Diocese is the student's responsibility.

NSW and Queensland: Alternate pathways to teach RE in Catholic Schools

In some dioceses provision is made for teachers to hold Temporary Accreditation to Teach RE for a maximum period while they complete the appropriate qualifications. This, in particular, applies to students who may have only studied THCT100 and the CPA units.

³ "Introduction to the Bible" is an area of scholarship which is narrower than a comparative study of religions and is not included within an ACU SoR minor (4 units). The only way to include it in this course is as an overload.