

Accreditation to teach in a Catholic Secondary School

Primary teachers in Catholic schools are usually required to teach the Religious Education curriculum to their classes. Secondary teachers are not required to do so. Secondary teachers may seek 'accreditation to *teach in* a Catholic school' or 'accreditation to *teach Religious Education in* a Catholic school'.

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 particular character and educational 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 seek 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 in order to be registered as a *teacher* in any school in that state. The administration processes for accreditation are managed through each Catholic Education Office. A visit to each diocesan website should clearly outline the steps for Applying for Accreditation to Teach in Catholic schools. The most accurate and up to date information regarding RE accreditation requirements, sponsorship possibilities and the application process, can be viewed in Diocesan policy documentation. Please refer to your local Catholic Education Office for further information.

In Victoria, an elective unit is offered (usually studied in third year) – EDRE429: *Foundation Studies Teaching in Catholic Schools* – which is recognized by the Victorian diocese as leading to accreditation to teach in Catholic schools.

Accreditation to teach Religious Education in a Catholic Secondary School

Teaching the Religious Education program in a Catholic school requires a different form of accreditation. This is different from, though related to, having studies which lead to being fully qualified to teach the HSC/QCE/VCE senior secondary study.

Each Catholic diocese in Australia stipulates specific requirements to achieve accreditation to teach religious education within their schools. Through the application process mentioned above, they will identify whether you are 'accredited' to teach Religious Education in their schools.

Accreditation to teach Religious Education in Catholic school usually includes ability to teach "in" the school. That is, for Victorian students, if you have completed the following 5 units, you do not also need to complete EDRE429.

As with the form of accreditation described above, the administration processes for Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic Schools Accreditation are managed through each Catholic Education Office. This includes 'Temporary Accreditation' (as referred to, below). Please refer to your local Catholic Education Office for further information.

ACU has established a sequence of units (both Theology and Religious Education units) which (a) provide a structured program of study for teaching Religious Education in Catholic Schools, and (b) provide a program of study which will enable students to advance confidently towards accreditation. That sequence of units is

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)

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

Victoria

The VCE study “Religious Education” is available in both government and non-government schools. To be regarded as a teacher fully qualified to teach this subject requires a study in Theological studies. Within Catholic schools, such a teacher would also be expected to teach the diocesan curriculum throughout the secondary years, through the ‘RE accreditation sequence’ (as above).

There are two ways in which Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic Schools can be incorporated into this program in Victoria:

Program construction	Via a minor	Via adjunct studies
A minor (4-unit study): Second teaching area	Theological Studies minor that includes THBS100, THCT100 and THCT202 (the corresponding CPA units are EDRE299 and EDRE399)	Any minor
Up to 4 Arts electives – the “adjunct studies”. This would usually be used to (i) ‘upgrade’ the ‘second teaching area’ to a second first teaching area or second major, or (ii) add a third area	Any adjunct study	THBS100, THCT100, and THCT202 And one other Arts elective
An education elective	Any available education elective	EDRE299
EDES300 which is usually studied as a second education elective	EDES300	EDRE399

Queensland

The QCE study “Study of Religion” (SoR)² is available in both government and non-government schools. To be regarded as a teacher fully qualified to teach this subject requires studies of religion including comparative religions and culture. Within Catholic schools, such a teacher would also be expected to teach the diocesan curriculum throughout the secondary curriculum, through the ‘RE accreditation sequence’ (as above).

There are two ways in which Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic Schools can be incorporated in this program in Queensland:

Program construction	Via a minor	Via adjunct studies
A minor (4-unit study): Second teaching area	Study of Religions major that includes, THCT100 and THCT202 ³ (the corresponding CPA units are EDRE299 and EDRE399)	Any minor
Up to 4 Arts electives – the “adjunct studies”. This would usually be used to (i) ‘upgrade’ the ‘second teaching area’ to a second first teaching area or second major, or (ii) add a third area	THBS100 ³ must be included Three other Arts units	THBS100, THCT100, and THCT202 And one other Arts elective
An education elective	Any available education elective	EDRE299
EDES300 which is usually studied as a second education elective	EDES300	EDRE399

² The ACU major/minor is called “Study of Religions” whereas the Queensland QCE study is “Study of Religion”.

³ Units from the RE sequence, THCT100 and THCT202, can also be counted among the SoR units, but THBS100 cannot. And, somewhat confusingly, THBS100 is one of the pre-requisites for THCT202. Therefore, in this program this unit must be included as one of the “adjunct study” group of units if RE Accreditation is sought in addition to SoR qualifications.

New South Wales

The NSW HSC study “Studies of Religion” (SoR)⁴ is available in both government and non-government schools. To be regarded as a teacher 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. Within Catholic schools, such a teacher would also be expected to teach the diocesan curriculum throughout the secondary curriculum, through the ‘RE accreditation sequence’ (as above).

There are two ways in which Accreditation to Teach RE in Catholic Schools would be incorporated in a program in New South Wales.

Program construction	Via a minor	Via adjunct studies
A minor (4-unit study): Second teaching area	Study of Religions major that includes, THCT100 and THCT202 ³ (the corresponding CPA units are EDRE299 and EDRE399)	Any minor
Up to 4 Arts electives – the “adjunct studies”. This would usually be used to (i) ‘upgrade’ the ‘second teaching area’ to a second first teaching area or second major, or (ii) add a third area	THBS100 must be included ³ Three other Arts units	THBS100, THCT100, and THCT202 And one other Arts elective
An education elective	EDHI299 must be studied, complementing the SoR minor	EDRE299
EDES300 which is usually studied as a second education elective	EDFD454 must be studied in NSW	EDFD454 must be studied in NSW
		With course co-ordinator permission, EDRE399 may be studied as an overload unit ⁵

NSW: Alternate pathways to teach RE in Catholic Schools

In some diocese 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 choose the ‘adjunct studies’ program above. Students should discuss the possibility of studying EDRE399 as an overload with their course co-ordinator. This would bring them quite close to meeting the requirements for RE accreditation. Alternatively, they could the diocesan position on Temporary Accreditation, and delay further study.

⁴ The ACU major/minor is called “Study of Religions” whereas the NSW HSC study is “Studies of Religion”.

⁵ You might think that it would be tidy to complete EDRE399 as the elective. Unfortunately, that is not possible because EDRE399 is not an Arts elective. Units towards RE Accreditation work best in NSW via the SoR major/minor.