Middle Leadership Structure Implementation

FURTHER FAQs NOW AVAILABLE

Joint Advisory to Queensland Catholic Schools – No. 5

Dear Colleague

There has been extensive engagement with Middle Leader School Consultative Committees (ML SCC) and principals, as schools work towards the commencement of the new Middle Leadership structure and operational provisions that will come into effect on 1 January 2015.

Thank you for all you are doing to contribute positively to a smooth and successful transition for our school communities, as together we strive to progress this significant change to better recognise the importance of middle leadership to school success.

Middle Leader School Consultative Committees (ML SCC) will now be well into the process of engaging, consulting and deliberating on appropriate recommendations for a new Middle Leadership structure suited to their school context.

In the course of this important work, a number of further questions have been raised, necessitating some further discussion between employing authorities and IEUA-QNT. Please see attached a list of new Frequently Asked Questions, which have been recently developed to bring further clarity and support to your ongoing school level considerations.

Kind regards

TERRY BURKE         MIKE BYRNE
SECRETARY           EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Attachment
Additional flexible hours per year

1. **When are the ‘additional flexible hours’ for particular Middle Leader positions allocated?**

   Ahead of each new school year commencing, the ML SCC will reconvene and either confirm or amend the allocation of ‘additional flexible hours per year’ for particular Middle Leader positions.

   As well as making recommendation to the principal regarding ‘which’ Middle Leader positions may receive ‘how many’ additional flexible hours per year, the ML SCC will also consider and recommend whether the extra time should be regularly timetabled each week of the school year – or whether it should be accessed by the Middle Leader at particular pressure points in the school year.

   To be clear, although the Middle Leader position and tier designation are contracted for the full appointment period, the allocation of the ‘additional flexible hours’ may be subject to confirmation or amendment each year.

   Please see Diocesan EB7 Schedule 4, Clause S4.18.4 and Clauses S4.20.3 (a) (iii), (b) (iii), (c) (ii) or Religious Institute EB7 Schedule 4B, Clause S4B.18.4 and Clauses S4B.20.3 (a) (iii), (b) (iii), (c) (ii) for further details.

2. **There is an option to convert up to half of the ‘additional flexible hours’ back into new Middle Leader units to use in creating the school’s Middle Leadership structure, if both the principal and ML SCC agree. How do we do this?**

   An excel table has been produced showing ‘how many’ Middle Leader units and ‘how many’ additional flexible hours would apply for each school enrolment size, where the full amount permissible (50%) of additional flexible hours were converted into extra Middle Leader units – and also where 30% and 25% of additional flexible ours provided for were converted to extra units. The excel table also contains a final column where any percentage between 0 and 50% may be inserted, to discover any number of possibilities besides.

   Remember that the option to convert up to half of the additional flexible hours back into Middle Leader units requires agreement of both the principal and ML SCC.

   This online excel table tool can be found at [www.qieu.asn.au/PAR](http://www.qieu.asn.au/PAR)

**Middle Leader SCC processes**

3. **When does the ML SCC meet, deliberate and formulate recommendations?**

   Ideally, special release time should be provided by the principal to enable employee representatives to the ML SCC time to consult, consider, deliberate and formulate recommendations for option(s) for the school’s new Middle Leadership structure.
Consistent with the existing consultative provisions in EB7, an allocation of time for meetings shall be determined by the employing authority, having regard to provisions of hours of duty for teachers.

ML SCC meetings should not be scheduled during an employee representative’s allocated preparation and correction time, as the “primary and main function of such designated preparation and correction time shall be to undertake necessary preparation and correction to effectively carry out the role as a teacher.”

4. It is a new requirement for the ML SCC and the principal to consult with the entire teaching staff, prior to deliberations commencing. Is this the only opportunity for consultation throughout the process?

More rigorous and transparent consultation is a fundamental feature of the new ML structure. The entire teaching staff must have an opportunity to share input, ahead of deliberations commencing.

In addition to this, as there are two employee representatives and two employer representatives on each ML SCC, it is helpful that these representatives keep in touch with their constituencies to protect against any unforeseen and significant issues that may emerge with any model option that may ultimately be recommended by the ML SCC.

It would be appropriate for the School Consultative Committee to determine a number of options for the middle leadership structure which take account of the current organisation and future needs of the school. Consultation by the whole committee with the entire teaching staff is necessary, prior to any decisions being made.

Finally, while the principal has the final responsibility to determine the appropriate Middle Leader structure for the school, genuine consultation is an essential support to good decision-making. It would be ‘best practice’ (although not mandated in EB7) for the principal to release the ML SCC recommendations to the entire teaching staff and invite their feedback ahead of making a final determination as to the Middle Leadership structure for the school and publishing it widely.

5. What should you do if the prescribed new consultation process is not being adhered to?

Under the new Positions of Leadership Schedule, there are two elaborated clauses that step out in detail the mechanism and process for consultation that must occur in coming to the recommendations of the ML SCC, and the Principal’s determination of the final ML structure for the school.

It is prescribed in EB7 that the ML SCC and principal will consult with the entire teaching staff, to inform their deliberations. This step occurs ahead of deliberations on various models, options and structures at ML SCC level.

If consultation has not occurred with the entire teaching staff, the process must pause immediately so that this can be undertaken. It is a formal requirement of EB7 that this consultative process do occur.
6. In a P-12 school setting, do the secondary teachers only need to be consulted ahead of deliberations in the ML SCC commencing?

Consultation must occur with the entire teaching staff.

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**Projected ‘nominal student enrolment’ for 2015**

7. What happens if there are higher student enrolment numbers than were projected for 2015, when Year 7s join Secondary? Do schools have access to the additional Middle Leader units to distribute, appropriate to the higher student enrolment number?

Yes. If the projected ‘nominal student enrolment numbers’ estimated for 2015, when Year 7s join Secondary, are exceeded – the number of ML units and additional flexible hours per year available to a school of the (now enhanced) particular student enrolment size will be made available.

8. What happens if there are fewer student enrolment numbers than were projected for 2015, when Year 7s join Secondary? Do schools have to redesign their Middle Leadership structure to accommodate the fewer Middle Leader units due to the lower than expected student enrolment number?

No. The projected ‘nominal student enrolment numbers’ estimated for 2015, when Year 7s join Secondary, is the basis which ML SCCs are deliberating, consulting and developing options. The principal will make a determination of the structure based on the work of the ML SCC and the subsequent structure and positions will be published prior to the appointment process. Middle Leaders appointments will be in accordance with the contractual arrangements as set out in the provisions. Middle Leader positions, arrangements and contracts will all be in place and may not be disturbed to the detriment of the appointed Middle Leader.

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**Classification matters**

9. Are the criteria guidelines contained in Table 4 ‘suggested’ or ‘essential’ to the correct tier designation of Middle Leader positions?

The Positions of Leadership Schedule (EB7) includes criteria to guide the classification of positions, based on the various levels of responsibility, complexity and / or autonomy required in the roles of Curriculum Leader, Pastoral Leader and Program Leader.

It should be noted however that this Table 4 contains guidelines only and is to be read in conjunction with the supporting clauses in the Schedule (that is, the clauses immediately prior to and following Table 4).

Remember, Table 4 is important, but it’s not all about Table 4. Similarly, the ‘number of students’ contained therein is but one of the guidelines to consider – not the only thing that matters.

When the ML SCC deliberates as to the appropriate tier designation for any Middle Leader position – and the consideration of a complexity loading - a few things are worth noting for consideration:
• The suggestion of an appropriate tier designation of a ML position doesn’t solely rely on the ‘numbers of students’ as contained in Table 4. Note the use of the words “or” and “and / or” to enable some, but not all, of the criteria guidelines to be met at any tier level in Table 4. For example, in looking at the differences between Tier 2 and Tier 3 criteria guidelines in Table 4, the use of the words “and / or” means that one might fulfil some but not all criteria guidelines and still be designated into that particular tier.

• Table 4 begins with a preamble in the table that notes differences in role due to differences in schools, and reminds to take account of that in determining a classification suggestion.

• The above preamble also refers to reading Table 4 in conjunction with clause S4.20.3 (immediately following Table 4) that details other matters to be mindful of.

• Also important to inform the appropriate tier designation is the clause that goes before Table 4 (clause S4.20.2 a and b). Clause S4.20.2 refers to the fact that the Table 4 contains “criteria to guide the appropriate tier designation” (ie not a rigid determinate) and that the tiers increase according to the “level of responsibility, complexity and / or autonomy entailed in the particular role.” This also points to the need to explore local circumstances as part of the thinking (see part b of this clause).

• The process is to consider Table 4 ‘criteria guidelines’ in conjunction with a careful look at the responsibilities, complexities and autonomy of the role for the peculiar school setting. For example, the scope of a role in one school may not be the same as that required in a different school setting.

• Guidelines for responsibilities, attributes and typical duties for each type of Middle Leadership role have also been included in Tables 5-7. These are also relevant and provide further guidance on appropriate tier designations as well.

10. When should a complexity loading be applied?

The new Middle Leadership structure enables a ‘Complexity Loading’ of one unit ($2,387 plus one hour of weekly release time) to be recommended by the ML School Consultative Committee for certain Middle Leadership positions.

Positions which are classified as Tier 2 – 4 may attract a ‘Complexity Loading’ where a particular Middle Leadership position falls in the upper end of the established criteria, there is a special character necessitating additional release, or the release time is otherwise considered inadequate for the expectations of the role.

This also gives additional flexibility for the local ML SCC to tailor allocations to the demands of each Middle Leadership position.

While the application of a complexity loading is certainly arguable in many circumstances, it’s also true that when you spend an extra ML unit on a complexity loading for one ML position (or several ML positions, if it is to apply to a particular group of Middle Leaders) it is effectively one or more
ML units that you don’t have to use for the creation / retention of other ML positions in other deserving areas. Ultimately, the number of ML positions and the suggestion of an appropriate tier designation for each is a matter for the ML SCC. If after discussion, the collective judgement is not to apply a complexity loading, perhaps think about compensating a particular group of Middle Leaders using the ‘additional flexible hours per year’ that can be allocated to particular ML positions?

11. Where does VET fit in the new Middle Leader structure?

Vocational education and training is an integral and expanding curriculum provision in Queensland Catholic schools. In circumstances where the ML SCC recommends, and the principal determines, that the school’s Middle Leadership structure will include vocational education and training, the designated teachers responsible for its coordination and / or leadership, and who accept a Middle leader position, shall be appointed to a ‘Program Leader’ position.

12. Our Middle Leader School Consultative Committee is under a lot of pressure to agree to a proposed structure now, given the suggested timeframes. What should we do?

Some timeframes have been suggested, in response to many inquiries from ML SCC members as to ‘where their school should be up to’ in the process moving towards a new Middle Leader structure. However, while the timeframes are only ‘suggested’, the actual process to be undertaken at school-level is actually prescribed in EB7 and must be followed.

If your ML SCC is having difficulty in meeting either the suggested timeframes – or other timeframes that have been set by an employing authority – there are two possibilities to explore:

- Is the timeframe set realistic – and can it be extended to best support the prescribed process to occur at school level?

- If the timeframe cannot be changed, what do we need to meet it? Speak to your principal urgently about further resourcing the ML SCC to meet more often and for longer periods by increasing the special time release provided for the purposes of consultation, consideration, deliberation and formulation of recommendations for option(s) for the school’s new Middle Leadership structure. (See FAQ number 3 above).

13. How may teachers with sole responsibility for a subject area be affected by the new Middle Leadership structure?

It is important to note that nothing would preclude a higher tier ML position being assisted by one or more lower tier ML positions within a school’s ML structure.

For example, a Tier 3 Curriculum Leader could be assisted by one or more Tier 1.2 Curriculum Leaders, who each take responsibility for sole or small subjects under the overall leadership of the Head of Department position.

While guidance is provided as to the particular Middle Leader Tier that may be designated for a Middle Leader who is also a teacher with sole responsibility for a subject area (Tier 1.1, Tier 1.2 or Tier 2 are all possible, with reference to the criteria guidelines contained in Table 4 of the jointly
developed practical user guide and to be read in conjunction with the provisions that follow), the ML SCC is not bound to include a Middle Leader position for all (or any) teachers with sole responsibility for a subject area as part of their recommended Middle Leader structure for the school.

The Middle Leader structure for a particular school recommended by the ML SCC must be developed within the available Middle Leader units allocated for the school. (This means that though the ML SCC may wish to allocate each teacher with sole responsibility for a subject area a Middle Leader position, it may not be possible due to the number of Middle Leader units available for the school structure).

If the Middle Leader structure of the school does not allocate a Middle Leader position to a teacher with sole responsibility of a subject area, the particular academic area shall be supervised by another Curriculum Leader or a member of Senior Administration.

The deliberations of the ML SCC in coming to their recommendations for an appropriate Middle Leader structure for the particular school now must occur subsequent to consultation with the entire teaching staff. Any advocacy for the situation of teachers with sole responsibility for a subject area would be most effective at this stage.

14. Will teachers with sole responsibility for a subject area end up as ‘de facto coordinators’?

PARs and ET6 are separate and distinct pathways of contribution to school success, not one elevated above the other in terms of value or importance.

Current PARs who are also ET6 (or who are ET6 eligible and are undertaking that application process this year) should be mindful of the following:

- In the last round of Catholic bargaining, the availability for ET 6 teachers to perform additional tasks was the subject of negotiation. EB7 now states that “An Experienced Teacher 6 may be requested to perform additional duties. Such additional duties shall be discounted from a teacher’s hours of duty as defined in the hours of duty provisions in this Agreement.”

- If an ET6 teacher agrees to perform additional duties, and adequate time to do so is provided as release from contact time, this is another pathway by which experienced teachers may continue to contribute – in exchange for the equivalent of a Tier 1.2 annual financial allowance and negotiated time release. (Currently, PAR 1 and PAR2 role holders perform middle management roles for less than the ET6 allowance, with only 0.8 or 1.6 hours weekly time release respectively).

- In light of the criteria guidelines contained in Table 4 of the jointly developed practical user guide, it is possible that a teacher with responsibility for a sole subject area would be designated at either Tier 1.1, Tier 1.2 or Tier 2, if this position was to be included in the ML SCC’s recommended Middle Leadership structure for a school. An ET6 teacher may be requested to perform additional duties, with appropriate release time to do this work.
discounted from your maximum contact time and within the maximum hours of duty that can be asked of you.

- EB7 contains relevant reference points in the ‘Hours of Duty (Teachers) Schedule’ and clause Workload / Intensity of work (managing significant change) should workload concerns emerge.

## Application and appointment

### 15. What will inform the development of role descriptions and selection criteria for the various Middle Leader positions, once a structure is recommended by the ML SCC and determined by the principal?

The final Middle Leadership structure will be widely published to teaching staff to enable all an opportunity to apply, where appropriate.

Full details of each Middle Leader position will include: a list of all Middle Leadership positions; existing appointments / vacancies; unit allocation; time release; financial allowance; and flexible hours per year allocation. (An example of the table that may be used for this purpose has been included in the Positions of Leadership Schedule in EB7).

Criteria guidelines for the appropriate designation of all middle leadership positions in Secondary schools are described in Tables 5 (Curriculum Leader), 6 (Pastoral Leader) and 7 (Program Leader). These tables may inform the ‘responsibilities’, ‘attributes’ and ‘typical duties’ of each type of Middle Leader at each tier level. This may be a helpful reference point for use as role description and/or selection criteria, as relevant to the particular school context.

### 16. Will role descriptions for each Middle Leader be available at the time of advertising the various positions?

Yes, this should certainly be the case.

As required under EB7 provisions, the Middle Leader position; unit allocation; time release; financial allowance; and flexible hours per year allocation will be published. This will occur ahead of applications being invited for each Middle Leader role.

Any potential Middle Leader applicant may also consult the relevant Table 5, 6 or 7 and check the listed ‘responsibilities’, ‘attributes’ and ‘typical duties’ for the type of Middle Leader role they intend to apply for at the advertised tier level. There is likely to be strong reference to this information in the role descriptions provided for each Middle Leader role, adapted for the particular school context.

### 17. What are the principles underpinning appointment to a Middle Leader position?

As a minimum, EB7 prescribes that the fundamental principles forming a transparent appointment process shall include:

- Advertisement of promotional position vacancies to existing staff;
• Opportunity to provide written response to key selection criteria;
• Interview of short listed applicants;
• In circumstances where an existing employee is unsuccessful in application for a vacant promotional position, the employee may request employer feedback on aspects of their written application and/or interview performance.

18. If a current PAR does not become a Middle Leader under the new structure, do they retain a classroom teaching position in the same school?

Yes. Current PARs who no longer retain a Middle Management role under the new structure would revert to a classroom teaching position, as is currently the case.

19. I’m a current PAR but I’m still deciding whether or not I want a Middle Leader role under the new structure. What are my options?

Transitional arrangements apply to a teacher who is a current PAR and who is not successful in their application for a Position of Leadership under the new structure. Put another way, current PARs need to both make application for a Middle Leader position, and be unsuccessful in their application, in order to access the negotiated arrangements.

The effect of the transitional arrangement shall equate to a twelve-month advantage in acceleration through the teacher classification structure. Each ‘Level at conclusion of PAR contract’ has been translated over to ‘Level after accelerated transition’ within the replacement Positions of Leadership Schedule.

Transitional arrangements shall apply from the conclusion of a PAR’s contracted appointment term.

PARs can safeguard their financial interests by applying for ET6 status this year, where eligible. The ET6 annual financial allowance is the same as the Middle Leader Tier 1.2 allowance at all times.

Current PARs don’t have to go through the usual eligibility criteria to access ET6. PARs who have been ET4 for at least 4 years; or who have been a practicing teacher for at least 12 years; or who would meet either of the above criteria within 12 months can apply for ET6 status right now. There are two ET6 application intake opportunities this year: either by 5 pm on the second Friday of Term 2 or by 5 pm on the second Friday of Term 4.