

Quality art teaching: What high quality art teachers know and do

All art teachers must:

- possess qualifications relevant to the level they teach
- conduct their professional teaching in a responsible and ethical way
- have a personal view of art and teaching that is conveyed in their teaching practice

High quality art teachers base their teaching on a strong knowledge of the visual arts. They know how to plan, make decisions and interact effectively with students and colleagues. They know how to engage students in art experiences so that students learn to work with ideas, develop artistic skills and respond to art works by others. They convey an appreciation of the role of the visual arts in differing cultural contexts and use technology appropriate to artistic processes.

Professional knowledge

1.1 Knowledge of students

High quality art teachers have a thorough knowledge of the students they teach. They understand the social and cultural context of their students and they know how to offer art experiences to cater for individual learning styles and artistic preferences.

1.2 Knowledge of the visual arts

High quality art teachers have a developed understanding of the arts practice in the Australian context. They know how to situate artistic learning experiences at the level of the students they teach and they see learning experiences in relation to the broad curriculum. They understand how the visual arts need to be communicated to young people and they understand the role of art in the school curriculum. They are confident in their own handling of art tools and techniques and have a broad view of diverse ways in which art may be made. They have a developed knowledge of art and artists in diverse social and cultural contexts and broad understanding of art criticism, art history and aesthetics.

1.3 Knowledge of student learning in art

High quality art teachers have an understanding of how students learn and engage in arts experiences. They are familiar with current theories in art education and are aware of the need to use varied teaching strategies. They know how to offer stimulating and challenging art experiences which make art an enjoyable, worthwhile and satisfying form of expression. They are aware of being seen as an appropriate role model for students and are able to communicate effectively with parents. They see students as individuals who differ in their aesthetic preferences, working processes and life experiences. They encourage students to think divergently, take risks and 'think outside the square'.

Professional qualities

2.1 Professional qualities

High quality art teachers are enthusiastic about art and art teaching. They hold a conviction that all students can engage effectively in making art and responding to art. They are committed to maximising opportunities for students to engage in art experiences and they set high standards for skill development in studio-like contexts. They aim for students to become autonomous and self-directed in their art practices. They demonstrate respect for their students and take responsible care with the handling of tools and equipment in the art room.

2.2 Professional development plan

High quality art teachers are committed to the continual improvement of their teaching practice. They engage in professional development activities designed to extend knowledge and expertise. They have a purposeful approach to career development. They interact effectively with professional colleagues, participate in curriculum development, engage in professional reading and actively seek new

classroom resources. They are reflective practitioners who learn from their experiences and who seek new ideas to improve their teaching.

2.3 Professional interests and commitments

High quality art teachers actively contribute to the wider professional field of the arts and education. They belong to their professional State teacher association and other arts organizations and read their journals and newsletters. They are enthusiastic advocates for the visual arts and its place in schools. They actively organise exhibitions of student art to parents and the wider community and see it as their responsibility to take students to art galleries and exhibitions. They actively participate in school decision-making and collaborate with colleagues to continually improve the teaching of art in their school.

Professional practice

3.1 Art room learning environments

High quality art teachers take pride in their art classrooms and the surrounding aesthetic environment. They are aware that students enjoy making art in relaxed, visually stimulating contexts. They provide a trusting and supportive environment in which students can experiment, try new approaches and enjoy being 'different'. They display student work and reproductions of work by artists. They urge students to be responsible for their working spaces and the equipment in the art room.

3.2 Planning for artistic learning

High quality art teachers plan organised art experiences that also allow for flexibility. They understand that art making is sometimes spontaneous yet at other times quite calculated and controlled. They teach sequentially organised skills and plan art experiences appropriate to their students' interests and needs. They plan culturally inclusive and gender inclusive programs and use a wide range of teaching strategies to cater for individual differences and learning styles. They plan artistic learning experiences which incorporate technologies and they keep up with innovative practices in contemporary art.

3.3 Art teaching in action

High quality art teachers motivate students to want to make art. They use stimulating visual resources to inspire students and they set challenging experiences. They draw upon students' worlds to help them see potential ideas for art making. Art teachers establish contexts and non-threatening situations in which creativity can occur. They know when to provide individual experiences and when to encourage collaborative learning teams. They facilitate problem-solving experiences which encourage students to seek artistic solutions, take risks, experiment and refine ideas. High quality art teachers know when to give students assistance and when to encourage students to discover possibilities for themselves..

3.4 Assessment in art

High quality art teachers inform students of the purpose of art activities. Their students have a clear idea of the criteria upon which art work will be assessed. High quality art teachers use a range of assessment strategies that are fair, inclusive and appropriate to art experiences. They offer students informed and constructive feedback and keep informative records which chart student progress. They involve students in assessment using self evaluation strategies and they provide opportunities for students to critique art works in class. High quality art teachers provide informative and purposeful assessment feedback to parents and school authorities in line with school policy.