

New National Awards for Outstanding Teaching and School Leadership

Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), Mr Anthony Mackay, today welcomed the announcement of new national awards to recognise the nation's outstanding teachers and principals.

The Australian Awards for Outstanding Teaching and School Leadership will celebrate and recognise excellent teachers and principals for their important role in delivering high quality education for young Australians.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers and National Professional Standard for Principals will form the basis for the new national awards.

"We all know that teachers make a difference to our children and to the country's future. The Standards are the foundation in this endeavour and they will assist us in identifying the 'best of the best' of Australia's teachers and principals," Mr Mackay said.

Peak school education bodies in each state and territory will be invited to nominate one outstanding teacher or principal in the five award categories. Nominees may be selected using the outcomes of existing award programs.

"Teaching is an exhilarating profession as well as being an enormous responsibility. Teachers and principals get to influence the lives of others and shape the future of this nation. These awards will recognise and share the experience and expertise of the very best of the profession, and aim to inspire others both within and outside of the profession."

Mr Mackay said that the five national award recipients will receive the "experience of their careers" through a sabbatical scholarship to work alongside eminent educators and practitioners. This scholarship can be taken either overseas or within Australia.

"The scholarships emphasise the importance of continual learning from the best in the world. Our national winners will have the opportunity to access the very best ideas, research and innovation and teaching practices within and beyond Australia so as to benefit the learning opportunities for students in our schools."

Nominations close on 30 June 2011. Further details of the categories, nomination and selection process can be found at aitsl.edu.au

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