



Professional Society of Religious Educators

Research Project Professional Standards for Teachers of Religious Education

Aim and Significance of Research Project

Religious education is an essential key learning area in all South African Catholic schools and given its significance to and for the Catholic school's identity, mission and curriculum, the idea of specific teaching standards for this area needs some attention.

The aim of this research is to investigate and design in consultation with members of the society and other interested parties, a manifesto of professional standards for teaching religious education in Catholic schools in South Africa.

Some of the purposes for the design and implementation of professional teaching standards include:

- Acting as aspirational standards;
- Acting as guides for improving practice;
- Acting as a framework for continuing professional learning; and
- Acting as a tool for assessing excellence.

This project will focus on the following four domains:

- Professional knowledge;
- Professional practice;
- Professional values; and
- Professional relationships

Description of Research Project

The project will happen in three stages:

1. A questionnaire, based on a similar project in Victoria, Australia, will be sent to all Professional Society members for completion and return. The same questionnaire will be distributed at meetings and workshops for religious educators in the various regions during the first quarter of 2012.
2. Responses will be analysed in the second quarter using content analysis to identify elements of best practice in the field, taking into consideration the contexts in which respondents practise.
3. Products of the research will be:
 - A comprehensive report will be sent to all respondents and to Catholic education offices on professional standards for teachers of religious education;
 - A paper describing the project and its results will be submitted to an international journals;
 - An instrument for teacher self-evaluation and reflection on their competencies in religious education teaching will be developed.

The Research Questionnaire

Kindly complete the accompanying questionnaire and return to us by 31 March 2012 at the following address: *Professional Standards, RE Department, Catholic Institute of Education, P O Box 2083 Southdale 2135.*