



NSW School Leadership – Issue 02

Investing in our future and current leaders

Welcome

This newsletter provides an update on the development of the 'Aspiring Principals Leadership Program' and future directions of the School Leadership Institute (SLI).

Our First Offering: Aspiring Principal's Program - School Leadership Institute partnership with University of Wollongong

As a result of a highly competitive tender process, the School Leadership Institute has partnered with the University of Wollongong (UoW) to co-design and deliver the 'Aspiring Principals Leadership Program' for 2018-2020. The university will harness an experienced team of experts in leadership development to deliver a high quality program to 3 cohorts. As an additional benefit, the university is seeking endorsement for recognition of prior learning for 50% credit towards a Master of Education (Educational Leadership).

The co-design of the program began with university input during the interview phase of the selection process to assess the needs of aspiring school leaders.

Selection Process for the 'Aspiring Principals Leadership Program'

We were delighted with the interest in the program with over 200 applications from across NSW.

How were applications assessed?

Panels of experienced current and retired principals consistently applied marking criteria to ensure a valid and reliable judgement of each application. The written applications and digital stories were assessed against three levels: 'distinguished', 'promising' and 'developing'.

Applications that were identified as 'developing' did not progress to a referee call.

Remaining applications proceeded to referee checks to confirm details and seek additional information or clarification. The panels subsequently made an overall judgement against the marking criteria to determine whether applicants should progress to interview.

Interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams. Rich conversations between panels and applicants ensued, enabling a final determination about entry into the program. Further referee checks were conducted if required.

Data from applications and interviews has been collated to inform the co-design of the program to ensure it meet the needs of participants.

What did we learn from the process?

The combination of a written response to criteria, career summary, two minute digital story, referee checks and an interview proved highly effective in gaining an overall understanding of each applicant.

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Panels found that the marking criteria enabled them to confidently make consistent judgements about an applicant's readiness for the program. The inclusion of the digital story was overwhelmingly endorsed. Panels felt privileged to view the strong moral purpose that was so evident in many of the applications.

The concept of an 'interview' was interpreted by applicants as a very formal component of the process. Panels adopted a more conversational style and found that applicants were more willing to display greater self-awareness about their leadership impact when their interview was conducted as a 'leadership conversation'.

How will applicants receive feedback?

Feedback will be developed and provided to all applicants, Principals and Directors, Educational Leadership (DEs). It will describe the attributes of applicants at each level of the marking criteria and provide guidance for discussions with unsuccessful applicants. This will support an analysis of leadership practices and impact, and the areas on which applicants may focus their professional growth.

Will there be another opportunity to apply for the 'Aspiring Principals Leadership Program'?

As a result of the first selection process, two of three cohorts have been filled. An Expression of Interest for the third cohort will be advertised and a selection process will occur during Term 1, 2019. All suitable applicants are encouraged to discuss their readiness with their principal/line manager and Director, Educational Leadership.

What will be the role of Principal Facilitators?

Each cohort will be supported by a group of Principal Facilitators. These will be current principals with at least 5 years' experience. They will apply for the role addressing the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated educational leadership with significant impact on student learning outcomes.

2. Demonstrated understanding of how aspiring school leaders learn to lead with influence.
3. Demonstrated self-awareness of leadership practices that have a positive impact on the learning of teacher leaders.
4. Demonstrated commitment to the learning of others within the system.

The School Leadership Institute (SLI) and the University of Wollongong (UoW) are working together to develop a professional learning program to prepare the SLI Principal Facilitators. The program will be accredited at Lead Level. The university is also seeking endorsement for recognition of prior learning for partial completion of a Master of Education (Educational Leadership) with UoW.

Principal Facilitators will be trained in two groups of between 10-15 participants. Their professional learning will be aligned with the needs of each aspiring leader cohort. The first group will be trained this year while remaining Principal Facilitators will receive their training in 2019 at times to be advised.

Next steps and key dates

Complete the design of the first program

29 October – Principal Facilitator training for the first cohort

12-13 November – 'Aspiring Principals Leadership Program' begins

Course dates for all cohorts will be announced soon.

More information

To find out more about the School Leadership Institute, including updates and newsletters, please visit <https://education.nsw.gov.au/ourpriorities/school-leadership-institute>

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