

# TEACHING AT ST ALOYSIUS' COLLEGE

## A CHARTER OF EXPECTATIONS

### MISSION STATEMENT

St Aloysius' College is a Jesuit school for boys providing, in cooperation with families, a Catholic education which

- Proposes Christ as the model for human life;
- Pursues excellence in teaching and learning;
- Promotes lifelong learning and spiritual growth.

A M D G



### IGNATIAN EDUCATION – A WAY OF LIVING AND WORKING

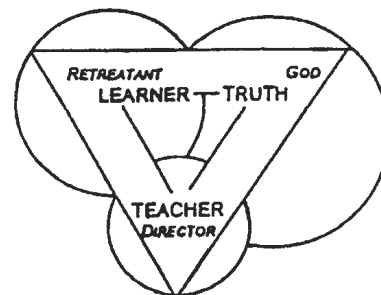
The role of the teacher at St Aloysius' College encompasses four specific areas, the classroom; as a member of faculty; Tutor group leader and participant in co-curricula life. With these focus areas in mind, this role statement seeks to reflect the spirit of what teaching at St Aloysius' College involves and provide a teaching model in keeping with The Characteristics of Jesuit Education, which give life to our Mission Statement, in order to enable reflection by all teaching staff; a comparative measure against current performance; goal setting for further professional development; and adherence to the Ignatian principles of Competence, Conscience, Compassion and Commitment, *Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*.

Our ministry of teaching is presented in the context of St Aloysius' College being a Catholic Independent day school for boys founded and administered by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) since 1879. We draw strength from the Foundational Insights of Ignatius Loyola; Conversation; Deepest Desires and Helping Others in a community of relationships.

The means by which we live out these Insights and underlying philosophies is centred in the context of being an academic school, teaching through the ideals of the IPP - Context, Experience, Reflection, Action and Evaluation. Here teachers need to not only be experts in their field for the classroom, but also commit to involvement across a number of spheres to model the sense of holistic education Jesuit schools offer. Educators in a Jesuit (Ignatian) school are seen as role models. We are challenged to be open to personal growth in the same way we are expected to challenge our students. Teachers are challenged not only individually, but also collectively, to learn, to grow, and to act coherently as a committed community, striving for 'competence, conscience, compassion and commitment' amongst their Faculty as much as amongst students.<sup>1</sup> In this way we model the dynamic of the retreatant, the director and God.

Two seminal documents underpin the ministry of teaching in a Jesuit school:

- The Characteristics of Jesuit Education (1987);
- The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (1994).



<sup>1</sup> Day SJ, Fr D, (1994), *Ignatian Education: From Foundational Insights to Contemporary Praxis*

## COMPETENCE, CONSCIENCE, COMPASSION AND COMMITMENT

Jesuit Schools in Australia seek to nurture students for competence; conscience and compassion, combined with personal love of Jesus and committed to a preferential option for the poor.

Competence embraces a broad spectrum of abilities – academic proficiency (including the ability to reason reflectively, logically and critically), technological and vocational skills, an appreciation of creative arts, sport and leisure, and effective communication skills.

A person of conscience discerns what is right, good and true and has the courage to do it, takes a stand when necessary, has a passion for social justice and is an influential leader in the community.

A compassionate person responds to those in greatest need and walks with others to empower them, in solidarity and empathy; such a person manifests a preferential love of the poor, which “ought to manifest itself in deeds rather than words” (Spiritual Exercises, no.230)

## A TEACHER’S ROLE IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to fulfil its mission, St Aloysius’ College expects that its teachers use the methodology outlined in the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP), or more simply, the Ignatian Way of Teaching, to witness the gospel values that are at the heart of the mission of Jesuit schools. Three words lie at the heart of the teaching method articulated in the IPP– Experience, Reflection, Action. Add to these two further elements, to complete the Jesuit model of teaching, which begins with a clear understanding of the Context of the group being taught and ends with a commitment to Evaluate the effectiveness of the process.

In common with other Jesuit schools, St Aloysius has a commitment to holistic education. Hence participation in cultural, sporting, spiritual and service programmes is expected of all students and staff. The College aims to develop within these young men the qualities of Conscience, Competence, Compassion and Commitment, and prepare him for the world in which to practise a faith that does justice.

Our curriculum emphasises the pursuit of academic excellence in the Humanities, Sciences and Creative Arts. In line with the Characteristics of Jesuit Education and the College’s mission, this programme of study is designed to promote a life long love of learning while developing the whole person.

Teachers are called to serve and provide a model for excellence for our students. It is therefore essential that our teaching staff not only support and are in keeping with the mission of the College, but also reflect openly these same qualities expected of students.

To sum up, a teacher at the St Aloysius’ College is required to:

- Propose Christ as the model for human life;
- Pursue excellence in teaching and learning;
- Promote lifelong learning and spiritual growth.

## **PROPOSES CHRIST AS THE MODEL FOR HUMAN LIFE;**

- Witness the Gospel values;
- Actively participate in the pastoral activities of the College;
- Embrace and promote the Characteristics of a Jesuit Education:
  - As a means to “assist in the total formation of each individual within the ... community”
  - And assist in preparing students to be people of Contemplation, Competence, Compassion and Conscience, committed to individual excellence and cooperative action;
- Support and participation in the co-curricular life of the College;
- Provide loyalty and support for other staff and students;
- Contribute to the collective professional development of the Faculty by sharing knowledge, ideas and resources.
- Embrace the Jesuit spirit of community and collaboration in team building as a means of achieving objectives.

## **PURSUES EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- Maintain a classroom environment that models good teaching practice and discipline;
- Use a variety of teaching strategies that challenge students to be actively involved in the learning process;
- Synthesise the Ignatian Way of Teaching (IPP) with appropriate curriculum material;
- Be conversant with modern developments in teaching and learning;
- Actively use Information Communications Technology and its various applications in preparation and teaching;
- Show a willingness to undertake continuing education and professional development;
- Support the day-to-day operation of the College through efficient completion of the administrative duties.
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## **PROMOTES LIFELONG LEARNING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH.**

- Give personal witness to Christian values in the daily performance of duties;
- Support and participate in the liturgical and retreat life of the College;
- Provide the opportunity and encouraging regular student prayer;
- Participate generously in all segments of Ignatian Formation seminars and reflections offered by the College.

## **RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Dress in a manner consistent with the professional status expected of teachers;
- Attend all parent teacher interviews, training courses, staff meetings, College Assemblies, Speech Day, school liturgies and Masses, where directed, as part of the College community;
- Adhere to all OH&S directives and protocols;
- Participate in the College Retreat programme for students years 3 – 12 as directed.
- Actively participate and contribute to any process of school renewal and review regularly undertaken;
- Participate actively in the wider life of the school and support it both formally and informally within and beyond the College;
- Whilst acting in direct supervision of children always exercise appropriate duty of care.

As well as the classroom obligations, the contractual requirements for a full-time, permanent member of the teaching staff also require involvement in both the pastoral and co-curricular programmes of the College.

#### **A TEACHER'S ROLE AS A TUTOR GROUP LEADER**

One of the Characteristics of Jesuit Education is the emphasis placed on individual care, *cura personalis*. At St Aloysius' College each teacher is required to undertake a mentoring role through involvement in the College's pastoral programme. In the Senior School this is known as the Tutor System. As every student in Years 7 –12 will have a tutor, so every teacher will be involved in this important ministry of accompanying and monitoring the physical, spiritual, academic and social development and interaction of each boy. In the Junior School context, the significant adult in the student's life is the homeroom teacher, to whom the responsibility for the following duties will usually fall.

As a Tutor group leader staff are required to:

- Provide a Christian example by word and action;
- Maintain professional dialogue and due discretion with regard to information on students;
- Facilitate activities and interaction during Tutor Period;
- Attend and supervise their Tutor Group at Wednesday Tutor Assembly;
- Meet with relevant teachers, Year Co-ordinators, College Counsellor or other members of the College staff as required, on relevant information pertaining to members of their Tutor Group;
- Check and writing concluding comments on their tutees' reports;
- Organise and supervise Tutor Group outings, as per the College's direction;
- Hold Student Review Interviews to monitor academic progress in Terms One & Three;
- Meet with Parents for formal and informal interviews held for parents.

#### **A TEACHER'S ROLE IN COCURRICULA ACTIVITIES**

Every full-time, permanent member of the teaching staff is required also to be part of, and contribute to, the College's extensive co-curricular programme. For the most part, this will encompass a Winter season and a Summer season co-ordination of a team activity. Participation in debating, cadets or drama in lieu of Saturday sport is only possible where vacancies exist and at the direction of the Director of Co curricula.

A member of the co curricula coaching staff is required to:

- Fulfil their co curricula obligations after school hours and on weekends;
- Attend, and direct training on two set afternoons per week;
- Attend, and direct match play on Saturday as part of the College's commitment to the CAS Sporting Association and other interschool games;
- Manage all equipment supplied;
- Liaise with other coaches of age groups to co-ordinate team selections;
- Advertise teams on the relevant noticeboard by Friday recess;
- Coordinate and oversee the end-of-season report for The Aloysian;
- Advise the Director of Co curricula of prize-winners for Assemblies;
- Attend to the writing of co curricula reports for the academic schedule.

## APPENDIX ONE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF JESUIT EDUCATION

Saint Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Order, established the first Jesuit secondary school at Messina, Sicily, in 1548. Within eight years another forty schools were founded. By 1773, apart from one hundred and seventy-six seminaries for the training of priests, and fifteen universities, the Jesuits were conducting six hundred and forty secondary schools in various parts of the world. Then the Order was suppressed. Since its restoration in 1814, the Jesuits have established over three hundred secondary schools worldwide.

The plan of study in these schools, called the *Ratio Studiorum*, was originally derived from the system being used in the University of Paris at the time of Saint Ignatius, and modified by his reflection and experience and that of the Jesuits who have served in education over the succeeding years. It sought to establish rules, methods and principles, which would enable Jesuits to achieve better their aims in education. For instance, there is no learning without the learner's activity; no action without motivation; mastery is attained by using, applying, even teaching what has been learned and understood. If you really want something you will use the means to get it, so there is no growth possible either in religious or secular learning without strenuous effort. Jesuits sought excellence in the sense that mediocrity was not good enough: one should seek to do better. Their methods were teleological, utilitarian and pragmatic in the sense of being efficacious, not expedient. Yet they recognised the need for variety; the need to make learning desirable and satisfying. Thus drama displays, competitions, were encouraged and rewarded.

From the outset, Jesuit schools stressed the development of critical analysis; the skills of analysing, evaluating and communicating, rather than knowledge for its own sake. Education was apostolic. Saint Ignatius sought to educate men to work for the betterment of others. For this they needed to be erudite, clear-sighted, generous and influential.

In the spirit of the Second Vatican Council came the renewal by the Society of the educational endeavour. Jesuit schools today seek to sustain a tradition which has honed many young men to be fine instruments of God in the service of others; men of contemplation, competence, compassion and commitment.

*The Characteristics of Jesuit Education* (1987) is the blueprint for this education. It spells out its aims in nine main characteristics. Jesuit Education –

1. Is world-affirming, assisting in the total formation of each individual within the human community. It includes a religious dimension that permeates the entire education and it is an apostolic instrument, promoting dialogue between faith and culture.
2. Insists on individual care and concern for each person, emphasising activity on the part of the student and encouraging life-long openness to growth.
3. Is value-oriented, encouraging a realistic knowledge, love and acceptance of self and providing a realistic knowledge of the world in which we live.
4. Proposes Christ as the model of human life. It provides adequate pastoral care, celebrating faith in personal and community prayer, worship and service.
5. Is preparation for active life commitment, serving the faith that does justice. It seeks to form 'men and women for others', manifesting a particular concern for the poor.

6. Is an apostolic instrument, in service of the church as it serves human society. It prepares students for active participation in the church and the local community, for the service of others.
7. Pursues excellence in its work of formation and witnesses to excellence.
8. Stresses lay-Jesuit collaboration relying on a spirit of community between teaching staff and administrators, the Jesuit community, governing boards, parents, former students and benefactors. It takes place within a structure that promotes community.
9. Adapts means and methods in order to achieve its purposes most effectively. It is a "system" of schools with a common vision and common goals, assisting in providing the professional training and ongoing formation that is needed, especially for teachers.

## APPENDIX TWO THE IGNATIAN WAY OF TEACHING (IPP)

### CONTEXT

Ignatius encouraged his spiritual directors to become as familiar as possible with the life experience of those they directed so that they would be better equipped to help them in the process of the retreat. The same advice is given to teachers about the process of education by the authors of Ignatian Pedagogy. Because the Ignatian way of teaching always begins with the life experience of the learner, the teacher needs to understand as much as possible about the actual context in which the learning and teaching of their students takes place. The authors raise many elements of Context for the teacher to consider: relationships with family and friends, youth culture and mores, economics, religion, previous experiences of learning, media...Paragraphs # 33-41 list many factors for the Ignatian educator to consider as he or she engages in the teaching process.

**Key Question: What do I need to know about my students in order for me to teach them well?**

### EXPERIENCE

The authors of Ignatian Pedagogy define Experience in broad and rich terms. They make the point a number of times that the Experience of learning for the student needs to be more than just a cognitive activity. Students need to be encouraged to do more than just know the material they study they should savour it. Ignatian education includes the knowing of facts, concepts and principles, but it moves beyond such knowing to stimulate affective ways of knowing (for example: intuition, imagination and the emotional responses the student has to the matter being covered). There are two reasons given for this insistence on the inclusion of an affective dimension to the learning process. Firstly, the whole person is called to growth by Ignatian education - this includes the maturing of the mind, heart and will. Secondly, and more importantly, Ignatian education has not taken place until such time as the student is moved to action. Students are not moved to act simply by an intellectual grasp of a piece of information; they are moved to act “*when internal feeling is joined to an intellectual grasp*” of the matter being covered. (IP # 42) In other words, students need to feel something about what they learn if they are going to end up doing something about it.

**Key Question: What is the best way for me to engage each of my students as a whole person in the teaching and learning process?**

### REFLECTION

In some places Ignatian Pedagogy is known as “*Reflective Education*”. This is an indication of how important Reflection is in the learning process as it is described by the authors of Ignatian Pedagogy. Reflection is not presented as an “*armchair philosophising*” moment in the educational process, rather it is described as the type of reflection that leads to Action. When students Reflect, the memory, understanding, imagination and feelings are all harnessed to capture the meaning and essential value of what is being studied. The student, having gained insight into the meaning of the material, is encouraged to consider the implications for the ongoing search for truth and freedom. Reflection is a formative and liberating process.

**Key Question: How can I help my students to be more reflective so that they more deeply understand the significance of what they have learnt?**

## ACTION

The “*bottom line*” for Ignatius was never the word, it was always the act. “*Love is shown in deeds, not words*”. Ignatian education climaxes when the student is led to Action. Cognitive and affective responses have been stimulated in Experience, the essential meaning and values implied in the experience have been drawn out in Reflection and the student is led to a new commitment in Action. The authors are keen to make it clear that it is not just any commitment that the student is led to, rather, whilst respecting human freedom, the Ignatian educator encourages a “*decision and commitment for the magis, the better service of God and our sisters and brothers*”. (IP # 61) Actions are described on two levels by the authors of Ignatian Pedagogy: “*interiorised choices*” and “*choices externally manifested*”. Interiorised choices take place when students, in light of all that has happened in Experience and Reflection, make a commitment to conform their lives more closely to what is the magis for them. In time, the deepening of this commitment will impel the student to act, to do something consistent with the new conviction.

**Key Question:           How can I create an environment where my students are positively challenged and changed by their learning?**

## EVALUATION

Few teachers would argue with the need to measure the academic progress of their students from time to time. The authors of Ignatian Pedagogy include this type of measurement when they use the term Evaluation, but they also have other measurements in mind. Because Ignatian educators are concerned with the development of the whole person, “*periodic evaluation of the student’s growth in attitudes, priorities and actions consistent with being a person for others is essential*”. (IP # 64) The authors provide a number of strategies for the teacher to measure this “*well-rounded growth*”; these strategies include: insights arising out of the relationship between tutors and their charges, the use of student profiles, self-assessment by the student, goal-setting activities and student journals. (IP # 65, 163)

**Key Question:           How can I create the reflective space for my students and myself to decide how we can do things better next time?**

## A SPIRAL NOT A STRAIGHT LINE

When the authors speak of the five dimensions of Ignatian education, they have in mind a spiral rather than a straight line. The educative process does not begin with Context and proceed in a linear fashion to Evaluation, rather a spiral movement is envisaged so that teachers create the condition for an ongoing process where there is a constant interplay between Context, Experience, Reflection, Action and Evaluation.

## THE PRAYER FOR GENEROSITY (SAINT IGNATIUS)

Dearest Lord  
Teach me to be generous.  
Teach me serve you as you deserve;  
To give and not to count the cost,  
Fight and not to heed the wound,  
Toil and not to see for rest,  
Labour and not to ask reward;  
Save that of knowing that I do your Holy will.



## AD MAJORA NATUS

The College motto, *Ad Majora Natus (born for greater things)*, reflects the sense of mission and service of Aloysius Gonzaga SJ who turned his back on his ancestral courtly life to minister to the young and care for the infirmed. It is his sense of service coupled with Ignatius Loyola's desire for us to seek and find God in all things, which animate our devotion to the ministry of teaching to which we are called as teachers in a Jesuit school.

## CONCLUSION

This role statement for a teacher at St Aloysius' College is the basis for the College's Annual performance review and appraisal of teachers. The effectiveness of such a teacher professional development programme depends on the way in which it is conducted and the framework on which it is established. St Aloysius' College aims to provide for its teaching staff a positive and supportive climate of trust and collaboration, in the same way Ignatius Loyola established the Society of Jesus on Companionship and faith.

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