

High Value Conversations program -

a transformational learning solution for improving workplace culture, teacher wellbeing and student success in Queensland schools

Mater Education's High Value Conversations (HVC) Program is an award-winning professional learning experience which strengthens teachers' capability to communicate effectively, maintain psychological safety, and navigate challenging interpersonal situations with confidence and clarity.

Originally developed for high-pressure healthcare environments, HVC translates seamlessly into schools, where relational dynamics, emotional demands, and communication quality significantly shape staff wellbeing and student outcomes.

HVC equips educators with practical, evidence-based tools to communicate respectfully, address unsafe or ineffective behaviours, give and receive feedback well, and manage difficult conversations early and constructively. Participants will learn structured conversational methods, apply neuroscience informed communication techniques and practise skills that reduce misunderstanding, strengthen relationships, and foster a culture of collaboration and trust.

Why Queensland schools need HVC

Teacher wellbeing, communication culture, and student success are deeply interconnected in Queensland schools. The research paper by Cross & Falconer (2021) highlights the increasing pressures faced by Queensland teachers: escalating workload, complex student needs, high parent expectations, and rising behavioural challenges. These stressors contribute to emotional exhaustion, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction, factors that directly affect teaching quality and student learning. The report also identifies poor communication, relational tension, and insufficient support as major drivers of teacher stress.

HVC directly addresses these challenges by building teachers' confidence to speak up, engage in difficult conversations, and cultivate supportive professional relationships. HVC can also help reduce the emotional load associated with daily school life. When communication improves, so does psychological safety - leading to stronger teams, more effective collaboration, and better wellbeing.

How does HVC align with QCT CPD criteria?

- HVC activities offers genuine new learning and actionable tools that is directly connected to the real communication challenges teachers face at work. Teachers can immediately apply the learning in classrooms, staffrooms, and parent interactions.
- HVC aligns with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and supports standards across Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, and Professional Engagement, strengthening collaboration with staff, students, and parents.
- The Program's content is evidence-based and draws on psychological safety research, neuroscience, and established communication frameworks (Fey et al, 2022).
- The Program addresses the communication and relational factors that influence teacher wellbeing, connection, and effectiveness.
- Participants receive a Certificate of Attendance to upload to their myQCT CPD record.

The CPD mapping shows how each **Intended Learning Outcome** (ILO) of the High Value Conversations (HVC) Program aligns with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) criteria and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).

Alignment of HVC ILOs with CPD criteria for QLD teachers

HVC Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	Alignment with QCT CPD criteria	Alignment with APST
<p>ILO 1: Discuss the positive and negative impacts of conversations on employee wellbeing and team deliverables within a professional setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wellbeing & collegiality: Supports QCT's emphasis on staff wellbeing and the importance of healthy workplace relationships in effective professional practice. ✓ Genuine new learning: Teachers learn research informed insights about the impact of communication on wellbeing and team performance knowledge that goes beyond routine teaching practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Professional engagement (APST 6 & 7): Builds educators' capability to reflect on their own communication behaviours and their influence on colleagues and school culture. ✓ Professional practice (APST 3 & 4): Strengthens teachers' ability to communicate more effectively within teams, contributing to improved collaboration and more efficient achievement of school deliverables.
<p>ILO 2: Identify the benefits of psychological safety and use evidence-based technique to create psychologically safe environment to optimise both giving and receiving feedback and productive conversations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Genuine new professional learning: Teachers gain evidence-based frameworks not part of regular school routines (e.g., psychological safety models, communication scaffolds). ✓ Enhanced wellbeing and culture: Psychological safety is directly linked to improved teacher wellbeing, belonging, and team functioning, aligning with QCT's focus on sustainable, supportive school cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Australian Professional Standards (APST 7.4 & 4.1): Supports teachers to build collaborative, safe, and respectful professional environments. ✓ Strengthening professional relationships: QCT specifically encourages CPD fostering collegial trust, constructive communication, and emotionally safe workplaces, which are all core outcomes of psychological safety training.
<p>ILO 3: Compose feedback using the With Good Judgment Methodology and the Two Challenge Rule to enhance workplace culture and team productivity through respectful, helpful, and curious dialogue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Genuine skill advancement: The Good Judgment Methodology and Two Challenge Rule represent new, formalised strategies teachers can immediately apply to improve communication and team productivity. ✓ Improving culture & collaboration: QCT emphasises CPD that contributes to safe, ethical, and effective professional interactions, directly aligned with HVC's focus on respectful, curious dialogue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Professional Practice (APST 3.5 & 5.2): Teachers strengthen their skills in giving and receiving feedback which is core professional expectations across teaching, collegial review, mentoring, and leadership. ✓ Professional Engagement (APST 6): Use of structured, evidence-based feedback models supports reflective practice and professional growth.
<p>ILO 4: Apply and integrate brain-based approaches, tips and techniques before, during, and after feedback conversations to maximise productive outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence-based learning: grounded in research and practice, the brain-based communication tools and strategies meet this expectation. ✓ Enhancing teacher effectiveness & wellbeing: Brain-based strategies reduce stress in conversations, supporting both teacher wellbeing and improved professional functioning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Professional Knowledge (APST 1.1 & 1.5): Applying brain-based communication supports teachers' understanding of human behaviour, emotional regulation, and interpersonal dynamics. ✓ Professional Practice (APST 4 & 6): Applying brain-based techniques enhances classroom communication, behaviour management, and staff interactions.

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Building psychologically safe, connected school communities

Psychological safety is a foundational pillar of HVC. Schools that cultivate safe communication environments experience clearer expectations, healthier relationships, and more constructive problem-solving. In their report, Cross & Falconer (2021) found that supportive communication and positive professional relationships significantly improve staff wellbeing. The report also found it can enhance teacher's capacity to build strong connections with students - a key predictor of engagement and achievement. This in turn enables a better behaviour management and more consistent and effective learning environments.

HVC enables more effective teams by developing teachers' capabilities to:

- Communicate concerns early, respectfully, and confidently.
- Give and receive feedback using structured, research informed models.
- Strengthen trust within teams and across the school community.
- Maintain calm, constructive dialogue in high stakes situations.
- Create environments where staff feel heard, valued, and respected.

HVC provides staff across Queensland schools with:

- A shared language for difficult conversations and improved communication with parents and community.
- Tools to reduce interpersonal conflict and cultivate stronger collegial trust and collaboration.
- Opportunity to increase teacher wellbeing and therefore improved student success through conversations.

Program delivery options:

Program	Participants	Location	Cost
<u>HVC Foundations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face 3.5-hour workshop 	Up to 16	Workshops can be hosted at Mater Education, South Brisbane or your preferred training venue.	Schools: \$1,750 (Ex. GST) per group workshop (up to 16 staff members) Individuals: \$290 (Ex. GST) per person
<u>HVC e-learning</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-paced micro learning modules 		Can be purchased individually or in bulk	

Mater Education's HVC Program empowers staff members to have open conversations with colleagues and question unsafe or unprofessional behaviour – regardless of their status. [Register now!](#)

References

Cross, D., & Falconer, S. (2021). School leaders' and staff wellbeing is critical for student success. Independent Schools Queensland. <https://www.isq.qld.edu.au/media/1kii1et2/school-leaders-and-staff-wellbeing-is-critical-for-student-success-2021.pdf>

Fey, M.K., Roussin, C.J., Rudolph, J.W. et al. Teaching, coaching, or debriefing With Good Judgment: a roadmap for implementing "With Good Judgment" across the SimZones. *Adv Simul* 7, 39 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41077-022-00235-y>