

New academy aims to fill the gap in university teacher training

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A group of pioneering advocates for expanding teaching using phonics and explicit instruction in Australian schools has launched a new venture to train teachers in evidence-based teaching skills.

[MultiLit](#), founded and led by Macquarie University emeritus professor Kevin Wheldall and [Robyn Wheldall](#), has set up The Academy for the Science of Instruction which will offer courses to teachers in areas ranging from effective instruction in teaching and spelling, to managing classroom behaviour.

The academy aims to fill a gap identified in the [Teacher Education Expert Panel](#) report, which told the federal government last year that too many new teachers felt, after completing teacher training, that they needed to be better equipped for the classroom.

Mark Carter, dean of the new academy, said it would train teachers in skills that universities generally did not cover in initial teacher education courses.

“Despite reports identifying a lack of course content around critical subject matter areas, such as how to teach children to read based on the science of reading, university education faculties have largely not addressed these omissions,” Dr Carter said.

He said that with only a few exceptions, there was limited evidence that university education faculties were prepared to make the significant changes that were implicit in the TEEP report's recommendations, or had the expertise to deliver new core content to meet the needs.

“We established the academy to fill a necessary niche in educating teachers about evidence-based teaching practice applied in the classroom,” Dr Carter said

Its first course, Effective Instruction in Reading and Spelling, begins on June 17 and will be delivered in four online modules, each costing \$400 and lasting six to seven weeks, with participants working in groups to support each other.

Dr Carter said it included phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. It draws on a text book published last year by MultiLit, [Effective Instruction in Reading and Spelling](#).

In the longer term the academy plans to expand into postgraduate education for teachers at graduate certificate, graduate diploma, and master level, which will mean it would need to obtain accreditation as a higher education provider or partner with an existing provider.

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Tim Dodd is The Australian's higher education editor. He has over 25 years experience as a journalist covering a wide variety of areas in public policy, economics, politics and foreign policy, including reporting f... [Read more](#)

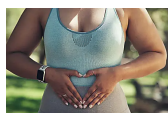


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