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## IEU welcomes paid practicum for teachers

The union representing staff in Queensland and Northern Territory non-government schools has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement to reduce the financial burden on student teachers by introducing government payment during a practicum.

Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke said the move follows long-running advocacy from our union for students to be compensated for compulsory placements which currently lead to high dropout rates and financial stress.

"Our union has long called for such payment during a practicum, and we commend the Federal Government for addressing our concerns," Mr Burke said.

"Providing financial support for student teachers is crucial to ensure the future of the teaching profession and improving graduation rates.

"We know that placement poverty is a real issue caused by mandatory university requirements.

"Placement poverty leads to unfavourable early workplace experiences and contributes to negative perceptions of teaching, which is counterproductive in addressing the longstanding skills shortage within the sector.

"Moreover, loss of income during a practicum exacerbates concerns about disenfranchising lower-income students from pursuing a career in education," he said.

Mr Burke said the IEU-QNT supported the announcement of financial support for teaching alongside nursing and social work, which were all key industries.

"An unpaid practicum is also an equity issue, with the caring professions required to do extensive unpaid placement often being highly feminised industries.

"The introduction of payment during a practicum in these sectors is a step in the right direction towards addressing gender-based pay issues," Mr Burke said.

**ENDS**

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*The Independent Education Union – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEU-QNT) represents more than 17,000 teachers, school support staff, principals, early childhood education and VET and RTO employees across Queensland and the Northern Territory. [www.ieuqnt.org.au](http://www.ieuqnt.org.au)*