

Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia

Guide to the accreditation process

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Background	4
1.2	Context - the purpose of accreditation	4
1.3	Accreditation or re-accreditation	6
2.0	Application for accreditation	6
2.1	Documentation	6
2.2	Key stages in the accreditation process	8
2.3	Program changes	9
2.4	Re-accreditation	10
2.5	Types of evidence	10
	TEMPLATES	
A	Application cover sheet	A1
	Application declaration form	A2
B	Graduate Teacher Standards mapping matrix	B1
C	Program Standards mapping matrix	C1

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In April 2011 the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) endorsed standards and procedures for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia. For convenience *initial teacher education programs* will be referred to as 'programs' in the remainder of this document.

These standards and procedures, developed through consultation with the teaching profession, teacher educators, employers of teachers, teacher regulatory authorities, schools and the education community more broadly, are detailed in AITSL's document entitled *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (April 2011) and referred to in this document as 'Standards and Procedures'.

This *Guide to the accreditation process* (the 'Guide') forms part of the supplementary materials as outlined in the Standards and Procedures. It provides an overview of and advice on the accreditation process, and relevant templates to be used by providers in their application. The Guide requires providers to map their programs against the National Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate career stage. This is to ensure that the Graduate career stage of the Standards is met and even exceeded by those seeking to become teachers. The types of evidence required to show how a program will or does meet the Graduate Teacher Standards and Program Standards will come mainly from existing documentation.

This Guide is for the use of providers applying for:

- initial accreditation of a *new* (proposed) program under the national approach
- initial accreditation of existing programs (i.e. programs accredited under the state system that have not yet been accredited under the national approach) OR
- re-accreditation of a program that has previously been accredited under the national approach.

1.2 Context – the purpose of accreditation

The accreditation of programs is a key element in improving initial teacher education and therefore improving teacher quality. The national approach to accreditation has two key objectives:

- improving teacher quality through continuous improvement of initial teacher education, and
- accountability of providers for their delivery of quality teacher education programs based on transparent and rigorous standards and accreditation processes.

Accreditation of programs is informed by six principles:

1. **Continuous improvement:** The accreditation process contributes to the improvement of the quality of initial teacher education and consequently of teaching and learning in Australia, providing a guarantee of graduate teacher quality and building public confidence in the profession. It will lead to change where performance needs improvement, and challenge effective providers and programs to improve further. The Standards and Procedures document is regularly reviewed and improved.

2. **Outcomes focus:** The accreditation process sets high standards for graduate outcomes, and focuses on ensuring these are met.
3. **Flexibility, diversity and innovation:** National accreditation celebrates and encourages the capacity of providers to be innovative in the delivery of programs to meet the diverse needs of students and the profession. Accordingly, teacher education providers may present an evidence-based case that an element or elements of their programs meet the intent of the Program Standards and that their graduates satisfy the Graduate Teacher Standards.
4. **Partnerships:** National accreditation is built around partnerships involving shared responsibilities and obligations among teacher education providers, schools, teachers, employers, and teacher regulatory authorities.
5. **Building on existing expertise:** National accreditation adds value to and builds on the strengths of jurisdictional accreditation experience, and the considerable expertise that exists in Australian teacher education. It acknowledges the professional prerogatives of Australian universities.
6. **Evidence:** The credibility of national accreditation is built on evidence-based practice and contributes to the development of evidence through research about what works in quality teacher education. This evidence in turn informs the development of accreditation, allowing it to focus on those things shown to be related to outcomes.

Accreditation also serves the more practical purpose of ensuring that the academic qualifications achieved by graduates of the relevant programs are automatically accepted for the purposes of teacher registration in all Australian jurisdictions¹. Providers may offer non-accredited programs, but the qualifications of graduates of such programs may not be acceptable for teacher registration purposes.

It is acknowledged that programs and/or the providers offering these are also subject to several other assessment processes. This includes internal accreditation of programs and the quality assessment undertaken by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

The national approach to accreditation of programs is intended to complement, not duplicate, these processes. Whilst both AITSL and TEQSA have roles in regard to quality assurance, the role of TEQSA in relation to self-accrediting providers is to accredit the provider itself, across faculties and disciplines, rather than individual programs.

The accreditation process described in this document is clearly focused on accreditation of individual degree programs, is specific to teacher education and has a direct link to teacher registration. Assessment of programs as part of this process is therefore undertaken from the point of view of the program's adequacy as professional preparation for school² teaching.

¹ Registration of individual graduates would still be subject to other requirements as set out by the relevant teacher regulatory authority.

² The term 'school', here, may include, where appropriate, other educational settings where accredited programs of learning occur for school aged students.

1.3 Accreditation or re-accreditation

The term 'accreditation' is used in the Standards and Procedures in a general sense, to refer to the endorsement of a program, as well as in a more particular sense, to refer to the *initial*, or first-time, accreditation of a program under the national approach. Accreditation under the national approach is granted for a specified period (up to five years), after which time a provider will need to apply for re-accreditation of the program. The term 're-accreditation' thus refers to the periodic review and re-endorsement of programs that have been previously accredited under the national approach.

Note on transitional arrangements:

All applications for program accreditation submitted under the national approach to accreditation for the first time, whether new or already accredited under state/territory processes, will be considered as an initial accreditation. Programs currently accredited under state/territory processes will maintain their accreditation status until the expiry date unless otherwise negotiated with the relevant state/territory regulatory authority. Such programs will have been accredited on the basis of meeting the former state/territory based standards. When applying for accreditation under the national approach for the first time, providers will need to supply full documentation to demonstrate that their programs meet the national Program Standards.

Further information on the specific documentation and information/evidence required to demonstrate how the (proposed) program meets the Graduate Teacher Standards and Program Standards and further detail on the Graduate Teacher Standards, is set out in the following sections of this Guide.

2. Application for Accreditation

2.1 Documentation

Before completing an application, providers should ensure that the following documents have been read and understood:

- *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (2011)*
- *Guide to the accreditation process.*

All templates contained in the Guide are available on AITSL's website.

When preparing an application providers will:

- Submit a separate application for each program (although several applications may be submitted concurrently).
- Ensure each attachment has a title, is sequentially labelled and has page numbers.
- Ensure that each unit outline has a title and indicates the name of the provider, the name of the program, and the unit code.
- Ensure all attachments are included.

Please ensure that documentation is provided in sequential order.

Before submitting the application providers should check that the application is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned, which may delay assessment of the application.

Submitting the application

Applications should be submitted with the declaration form signed by the dean of education (or other appropriate person) to the relevant officer in the relevant jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority. (A list of relevant positions in the various authorities, with contact details, is available on the AITSL website.)

Applications will include the following documents:

- completed Template A — Application for accreditation or re-accreditation of an initial teacher education program: Application cover sheet and declaration form
- completed Template B — Graduate Teacher Standards mapping matrix
- completed Template C — Program Standards mapping matrix
- full program documentation that includes information on all units. In most cases this will be the program documentation already prepared for the provider's internal or external accreditation processes depending on the provider's self-accreditation status
- additional material that the provider believes constitutes evidence for the purposes of demonstrating that program standards are met. This Guide provides advice on what may comprise such evidence.

The format of the application is to be negotiated with the relevant teacher regulatory authority.

If more than one program is to be submitted for accreditation, a separate application should be submitted for each program. However, closely related programs that contain a number of common units may more efficiently be considered as one program. If there is uncertainty about what constitutes a separate program, providers should liaise with the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority to determine whether separate applications will be needed. If separate applications are required and these are considered by different panels, the teacher regulatory authority will take steps to ensure consistency across panels in advice relating to the common elements. It may be more efficient to consider multiple programs from one provider at the same time. Again, in this case the provider should liaise with the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority.

To ensure timely accreditation or re-accreditation of programs, it is strongly recommended that providers liaise with the local teacher regulatory authority regarding timelines to allow time for all stages of the accreditation process to be completed by the date by which (re-) accreditation is desired.

Where applications are submitted outside the negotiated timeframe, the process may not be completed before the proposed program commencement date, or before the current accreditation expires, resulting in uncertainty for providers and pre-service teachers.

If a non self-accrediting provider wishes to have the accreditation of its program(s) under the national approach undertaken concurrently with other applicable accreditation requirements (as suggested by Program Standard 2.3), the provider should contact the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority about this as early as possible.

2.2 Key stages in the accreditation process

2.2.1 Prior to submission

Prior to the formal submission of an application for the accreditation of a program, the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority will support the provider through undertaking preliminary consultation, negotiating timeframes and clarifying matters relating to the accreditation process.

2.2.2 The assessment process

On submission of all necessary documentation, the assessment of the application will commence. The assessment process may include a site visit to the provider or locations where major components of the program are delivered.

The assessment panel may also decide that further documentation is required before any decisions can be made and may forward advice to a provider identifying areas for further information or clarification.

2.2.3 Reporting

On finalisation of the assessment by the panel a report is prepared. This report is forwarded to the provider to verify accuracy in relation to the program. In its response, the provider should correct any inaccuracies but should not indicate whether or not it agrees with the panel's views.

Upon receipt of the provider's response, the report is finalised. The finalised report is forwarded to the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority for consideration through established approval mechanisms. Normally the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority will only receive the final report. However, in certain cases (e.g. where a lengthy delay has occurred as a result of substantial changes being made to a program), an interim report may be provided.

2.2.4 Assessment outcomes

Accreditation with conditions

If the standards are broadly met but there are aspects of the program requiring further evidence or adjustment, a panel may recommend accreditation be granted with conditions. A timeframe within which the conditions are to be met will be specified.

Non accreditation

A panel may decide to recommend that a program not be accredited if the panel believes it has exhausted all reasonable possibilities to obtain the assurances it needs that the program will meet the standards. It is expected that such a situation will be rare, and that normally any serious deficiencies identified in a program will be resolved through a collaborative and constructive process of discussion and negotiation.

If necessary, the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority may seek further information from the provider before making a decision.

If the authority decides not to accredit the program, it will supply the provider with detailed reasons for the decision and will provide information about how to apply for a review of the decision.

2.2.5 Jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority's decision

The panel will be informed of the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority's decision on all programs considered. The authority will provide AITSL with a summary report on the program's accreditation suitable for publication on AITSL's website.

The summary report will include:

- the name of the provider
- the program name
- program code
- program duration
- qualification awarded
- location, campus and delivery mode(s) of the program
- a short description of the program including the quantity and nature of professional experience
- the date of accreditation, the date by which any conditions must be met, and the date on which accreditation expires.

While five years is the maximum period, accreditation may be granted for a shorter period in certain cases, e.g. where accreditation is granted with conditions.

Where accreditation has been granted with conditions, the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority will follow up with the provider to obtain evidence that conditions have been met. If necessary, the panel may be reconvened to consider the evidence.

2.2.6 Appeals

Where an application for accreditation or re-accreditation of a program is unsuccessful, the provider may apply for a review of the decision or appeal against it.

Providers applying for review or appealing against a decision not to accredit an initial teacher education program will do so in accordance with the legislative, policy and administrative requirements of the relevant jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority.

The Authority will immediately advise AITSL when it becomes aware of an appeal or request for review.

2.3 Program changes

Accreditation is granted on the basis that the program will be and will continue to be implemented as indicated in the documentation submitted or as amended for approval. In the case of accreditation with conditions, it is expected that program aspects apart from those specified in the conditions will and will continue to be implemented as indicated in the documentation submitted.

Continuing accreditation of any program will be subject to the provider providing to the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority satisfactory annual reports on the operation of the program.

Providers will seek approval from the Authority for proposed significant changes to an accredited program before making the proposed changes. As a guide a program change that would normally be reported within the provider's program approval structures would be considered a significant change for this purpose. A significant change includes, for example, a major change to the content of the program or to the mode of offering of the program.

The application for approval will be in writing. The Authority will assess these program changes. Where changes are considered to substantially affect an accredited program, the Authority will ask the institution to re-submit the amended program for accreditation.

Where the change affects the information held in its database, the regulatory authority will provide that information in writing to AITSL.

2.4 Re-accreditation

Normally a program will be accredited for a period of up to five years.

Re-accreditation needs to occur before expiry of current accreditation. The provider must apply for re-accreditation within a timeframe that ensures the completion of the re-accreditation process before the accreditation is due to expire.

If no application for re-accreditation is received within the existing accreditation period, accreditation will lapse. The jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority will remind the provider at least 12 months in advance that accreditation of a program is due to expire.

The re-accreditation process will be essentially the same as initial accreditation but with additional types of evidence. The provider will supply documentation to demonstrate that the program meets the Program Standards, giving greater weight in the re-accreditation process to evidence that graduates of the program meet the Graduate Teacher Standards.

2.5 Types of evidence

The Standards and Procedures acknowledge that there are multiple pathways to excellence and that the accreditation process provides for flexibility in how both providers and program participants achieve high standards and demonstrate them. The Graduate Teacher Standards and Program Standards are the central requirements for accreditation of programs.

The types of evidence that may be provided to show how a program will or does meet both the Graduate Teacher Standards and Program Standards can come from a variety of sources. These sources are highlighted in template B and C, mapped against the relevant standards. The templates are to be used to cross-reference where in the documentation provided the standards are located and met.

The rest of this Guide details the types of evidence that might be provided against each standard. Providers should use existing material as far as possible. The major types of evidence are likely to be:

- rationale for program design and sequence
- program outline
- unit outlines
- assessment requirements
- evidence of graduate outcomes (for existing programs)
- professional experience assessment handbook
- professional experience outcomes
- evidence of existing partnerships
- relevant policy documentation
- evidence of processes for gathering feedback on the program and using this to inform improvement
- admissions data.

TEMPLATE A

APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Name of program: _____

Program code: _____

Qualification awarded: _____

Awarding provider: _____

Faculty/School/Department: _____

Website: _____

Duration of program (in FTE years): _____

Delivery mode/s: _____

Length of professional experience component (days of supervised practice): _____

Teaching area(s): _____

Program contact person:

Name: _____
Title First name Last name

Position: _____

Postal address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Is this application for: Initial accreditation OR Re-accréditation

If application is for initial accreditation, is the program: new/proposed OR existing

If existing program, date program commenced: _____

If initial accreditation, date of last accreditation under state system (if applicable): _____

If reaccreditation, date of initial/previous accreditation under national approach: _____

Date(s) of any preliminary meeting(s) with panel for this application: _____

Date of application: _____

Date of proposed program commencement: _____

TEMPLATE A

APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM DECLARATION FORM

DECLARATION BY DEAN/HEAD OF SCHOOL

I, _____, being _____
(Name) Title of position)

endorse the attached as the formal application from _____
(Name of faculty/school)

We undertake to comply with the reporting requirements specified in Program Standards 7.2 and 7.3.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

TEMPLATE B

APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Graduate Teacher Standards Mapping Matrix

This template requires providers to identify how the **Graduate Teacher Standards** will be, or are, met in their program.³ In the case of re-accreditation, all required information should be provided, even if details have not changed since any previous accreditation. Attention should be drawn to any areas that have changed since the original submission.

This template is designed to:

- assist higher education providers to indicate how the program will ensure that graduates meet the Graduate Teacher Standards
- help higher education providers to ensure that the program addresses all the Graduate Teacher Standards
- assist the accreditation panel to identify where in the program each Graduate Teacher Standard is met
- assist the panel in making its decision.

The completed template must be included for all program applications for accreditation. Completion of the template should primarily consist of cross-referencing to the relevant section(s) in program documentation (usually unit outlines) and any supporting material.

Use of the matrix is not intended to be onerous for either providers or panels. **It is recognised that one standard may be achieved in several units of the program and one unit may assist students to meet several different standards. Providers need not reference every single location where a particular standard is addressed, but should ensure the main places are included. If a standard is addressed in a number of places in the program, it is necessary only to include major examples.** The template should be completed electronically so that the cells can be expanded as required.

It is also recognised that, particularly for undergraduate programs, unit outlines may not be fully developed for the later years of a program. In this case, sufficient detail should be provided to give a panel assurance that the relevant Graduate Teacher Standards will be addressed during the program.

The provider should indicate the evidence which would be provided at the site visit if the Authority requires one. The requirement for a site visit is at the discretion of the Authority.

³ Indicators and illustrations of practice that model the Graduate Teacher Standards in action are currently being developed. These indicators and illustrations will allow teacher educators and their students to benchmark practice and assess performance against the Graduate Teacher Standards, giving confidence that students are meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards as identified through the template. These indicators and illustrations will be made available in.

Template B: GRADUATE TEACHER STANDARDS

Following is a description of what should be contained in the two blank columns in Template B.

Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards: Indicate where the Graduate Teacher Standards are addressed, practised and assessed in the program. This is accomplished by referencing the sections in the program documentation (for example unit outlines) where this is evident.

Evidence: Indicate what evidence there is, or will be, of individual students' attainment of the standard and how it is or will be collected. This is accomplished by referencing the sections in the program documentation (for example unit outlines) where this is evident. Providers are encouraged to make use of a range of types of evidence.

If a standard is addressed in a number of places in the program, it is necessary only to include major examples.

Standard one title: <i>Know students and how they learn</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
1.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.		
1.2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.		
1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.		
1.4 Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.		
1.5 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.		
1.6 Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.		

Standard two title: <i>Know the content and how to teach it</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
2.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.		
2.2 Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.		
2.3 Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.		
2.4 Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.		
2.5 Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.		
2.6 Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum learning opportunities for students.		

Standard three title: <i>Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
3.1 Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.		
3.2 Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.		
3.3 Include a range of teaching strategies.		
3.4 Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.		
3.5 Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.		

3.6 Demonstrate broad knowledge of strategies that can be used to evaluate teaching programs to improve student learning.		
3.7 Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process.		
Standard four title: <i>Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
4.1 Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.		
4.2 Demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.		
4.3 Demonstrate knowledge of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.		
4.4 Describe strategies that support students' well-being and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.		
4.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues and the strategies available to support the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.		

Standard five title: <i>Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
5.1 Demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.		
5.2 Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.		
5.3 Demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.		

5.4 Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.		
5.5 Demonstrate understanding of a range of strategies for reporting to students and parents/carers and the purpose of keeping accurate and reliable records of student achievement.		

Standard six title: <i>Engage in professional learning</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
6.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.		
6.2 Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.		
6.3 Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.		
6.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.		

Standard seven title: <i>Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</i>	Program response to the Graduate Teacher Standards	Evidence
7.1 Understand and apply the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.		
7.2 Understand the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.		
7.3 Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.		
7.4 Understand the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers' professional knowledge and practice.		

TEMPLATE C

APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF AN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Program Standards Mapping Matrix

This template requires providers to identify how the **Program Standards** will be, or are, met in their program. In the case of re-accreditation, all required information should be provided, even if details have not changed since any previous accreditation. Attention should be drawn to any areas that have changed since the original submission.

This template is designed to:

- assist higher education providers to indicate how the program meets the Program Standards and possible sources of evidence
- help higher education providers to ensure that the program addresses all the Program Standards
- assist the accreditation panel to identify where in the program each Program Standard is met
- assist the panel in making its decision.

The completed template must be included for all program applications for accreditation. Completion of the template should include cross-referencing to the relevant section(s) in program documentation and any supporting material.

Use of the matrix is not intended to be onerous for either providers or panels. **It is recognised that one standard may be achieved in several units of the program and one unit may assist students to meet several different standards. Providers need not reference every single location where a particular standard is addressed, but should ensure the main places are included. If a standard is addressed in a number of places in the program, it is necessary only to include some examples.** The template should be completed electronically so that the cells can be expanded as required.

The provider should indicate the evidence which would be provided at the site visit if the Authority requires one. The requirement for a site visit is at the discretion of the Authority.

Template C: PROGRAM STANDARDS

‘Response to Program Standards’ column should: In most cases, indicate where (with reference to page numbers) in the program documentation this standard is met. (Included below are examples of possible evidence for each standard.)

If a standard is addressed in a number of places in the program, it is necessary only to include major examples.

Standard 1: Program outcomes	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
1.1 At the time of initial accreditation , providers must show that graduates of their programs will meet the Graduate career stage of the <i>National Professional Standards for Teachers</i> and how this will be demonstrated.	<i>Note:</i> for transitional arrangements ⁴ see footnote	To be provided in template B
1.2 At the time of re-accreditation , providers must demonstrate that graduates of their programs meet the Graduate career stage of the <i>National Professional Standards for Teachers</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from graduates, employers and other stakeholders • How feedback is used to improve the program 	To be provided in template B
1.3 Programs meet the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) so that, on satisfactory completion, the graduate has a four-year or longer full-time-equivalent higher education qualification structured as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a three-year undergraduate degree providing the required discipline knowledge, plus a two-year graduate entry professional qualification⁵, or • an integrated qualification of at least four years comprising discipline studies and professional studies, or • combined degrees of at least four years covering discipline and professional studies, or • other combinations of qualifications identified by the provider and approved by the teacher regulatory authority⁶ (‘the Authority’) in consultation with AITSL to be equivalent to the above, and that enable alternative or flexible pathways into the teaching profession⁷. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program outline including the program structure, sequencing and duration • Where a program submitted represents an ‘other combination of qualifications’, a rationale for choosing the particular structure and presenting it as equivalent to the approved qualifications should be provided. 	

⁴ For **initial accreditation** (under the national approach to accreditation of initial teacher education programs) of an **existing program** the provider will also provide evidence that graduates of the program meet the Graduate Teacher Standards. This may include evidence of feedback from graduates, employers and other stakeholders, and evidence that this has been used to improve the program.

⁵ In this document, references to the duration of academic programs or elements of them should be read in terms of ‘equivalent full time student load’ (EFTSL). This defines the amount of study required for completion rather than the calendar duration.

⁶ While in most jurisdictions the accreditation functions will be undertaken by teacher regulatory authorities, jurisdictions may choose to make other arrangements, including cooperative arrangements with other regulatory authorities. In this document, the teacher regulatory authority or other body performing this function in a jurisdiction is referred to as ‘the Authority’.

⁷ The Authority will make an initial determination about the eligibility of a program for accreditation, based on Program Standard 1.3. Where a program is “(an)other combination of qualifications” as provided for in the standard, the Authority will report its determination to AITSL, who will confer with all of the teacher regulatory authorities and either endorse or recommend reconsideration of the determination before a final decision is reached by the Authority .

Standard 2: Program development	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
<p>2.1 Programs take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contemporary school and system needs • current professional expert knowledge • authoritative educational research findings and • community expectations. <p>This occurs through consultation with employing authorities, professional teacher bodies and/or the direct involvement of practising teachers, educational researchers and relevant cultural and community experts (e.g. local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander groups, parents' organisations).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the following has influenced the development and review of the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ range and nature of consultations undertaken ○ communications, reports and other forms of feedback from various stakeholders ○ evaluations of existing program(s) ○ the research base including investigation into the provider's own practices • A mechanism for ensuring the program is informed by school and system needs, such as ongoing involvement by practising teachers, or staffing arrangements. 	
<p>2.2 Programs at self-accrediting higher education institutions⁸ have been assessed as meeting internal accreditation processes such that there is coherence and rigour in the intended program outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning, and related student assessment.⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented outcome of internal accreditation of program such as minutes or date of internal accreditation. 	
<p>2.3 Programs of non self-accrediting institutions meet both the relevant accreditation requirements for such institutions and the requirements for national accreditation of initial teacher education programs.</p> <p>Wherever practicable, the two accreditation processes will be undertaken concurrently, ensuring there is coherence and rigour in the intended program outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning and related student assessment, as well as economy of effort¹⁰.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented outcome of certification of program through the relevant external accreditation process. 	

⁸ For these purposes, a self-accrediting provider is defined as a university or a self-accrediting higher education institution listed in Table 1 or 2 of the Australian Qualifications Framework Register <http://www.aqf.edu.au/RegisterAccreditation/AQFRegister/tabid/174/Default.aspx>.

⁹ Please note: Depending on the whether a provider is a self-accrediting or non-self-accrediting institution, only one of the items will apply, that is either 2.2 OR 2.3 but **NOT** both.

¹⁰ If a non self-accrediting provider wishes to have the national accreditation of its initial teacher education program(s) undertaken concurrently with other applicable accreditation requirements (as suggested by Program Standard 2.3), it should contact the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authority about this as early as possible.

Standard 3: Program entrants	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
<p>3.1 All entrants to initial teacher education will successfully demonstrate their capacity to engage effectively with a rigorous higher education program and to carry out the intellectual demands of teaching itself. To achieve this, it is expected that applicants' levels of personal literacy and numeracy should be broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider's policy outlining selection criteria and entry procedures • Mechanisms for identifying students requiring support¹¹ • Unit or program pre-requisites • Admissions data 	
<p>3.2 Providers who select students who do not meet the requirements in 3.1 above must establish satisfactory additional arrangements to ensure that all students are supported to achieve the required standard before graduation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms for identifying students requiring support • Compensatory units and other support provided to these students • Assessment procedures and graduation requirements • Graduate outcomes demonstrating that standards 3.1 / 3.2 are met 	
<p>3.3 Graduate-entry initial teacher education programs have clear selection criteria and equitable entry procedures that require students to have achieved a discipline-specific qualification relevant to the Australian curriculum or other recognised areas of schooling provision. For secondary teaching this is at least a <i>major study</i>¹² in one teaching area and preferably a second teaching area comprising at least a <i>minor study</i>¹³. For primary teaching this is at least one year of full-time-equivalent study relevant to one or more learning areas of the primary school curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider's selection policy outlining selection criteria and entry procedures • Unit or program pre-requisites • Admissions data 	
<p>3.4 Students admitted to programs on the basis of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) assessment, or an equivalent English language proficiency assessment, have attained an overall IELTS (or equivalent) score of 7.5 (with no score below 7 in any of the four skills areas, and a score of no less than 8 in speaking and listening), either on entry to or on graduation from the program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider's policy outlining selection criteria and entry procedures • Mechanisms for identifying / monitoring students requiring additional support • Unit or program pre-requisites • Admissions data 	
<p>3.5 Recognition of prior learning or credit transfer arrangements are determined by providers in accordance with the AQF <i>National Principles and Operational Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning</i> and <i>Good Practice Principles for Credit Transfer and Articulation from Vocational Education and Training to Higher Education</i>¹⁴.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General policy on credit transfer • Details of Articulation agreements/arrangements 	

¹¹ **Note:** AITSL has commissioned further work on defining the levels of personal literacy and numeracy that are broadly equivalent to the top 30% of the population, and will provide more detailed advice before the end of 2011.

¹² Study undertaken for a major study will be equivalent to a total of three-quarters of a year of successful full time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years. In most programs, this equates to six units, with no more than two at first year level and no fewer than two units at third year level.

¹³ Study undertaken for a minor study will be equivalent to a total of half a year of successful full time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over two years. In most programs, this equates to four units, with no more than two at first year level.

¹⁴ http://www.aqf.edu.au/Portals/0/Documents/Handbook/AQF_Handbook_81-99.pdf#Page=11 and <http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/default.asp?id=11908>. These documents provide agreed guidelines for the assessment of learning undertaken outside the program, and for granting credit or standing as a result of that assessment.

Standard 4: Program structure and content	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
4.1 Program structures must be sequenced coherently to reflect effective connections between theory and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear aims and objectives or intended outcomes • Rationale for sequence of program and balance and relationship between theory and practice • Duration and nature of each professional experience 	
4.2 Professional studies in education include discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies, general education studies and professional experience. The professional studies in education will comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent study ¹⁵ ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program and unit outlines clearly identifying the units addressing this standard • Aims and objectives of the units including assessment policies and procedures, identified level, credit point value (weighting within total program) and pre-service teacher workload • Identification of pre-requisite and co-requisite units, compulsory and elective units 	
4.3 Discipline studies will normally be completed either in a separate discipline degree completed prior to a graduate-entry initial teacher education program, or as part of an integrated undergraduate teaching degree or combined teaching/discipline degree program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For graduate entry programs – a combination of the selection policy and admissions data • For undergraduate programs – shown in program and unit outlines 	
<p>4.4 Primary programs Teacher education programs that prepare primary teachers must include study in each of the learning areas of the primary school curriculum sufficient to equip teachers to teach across the years of primary schooling.</p> <p>In <u>undergraduate primary programs</u>, at least one half of the program (i.e. normally two years of full-time-equivalent study) must be dedicated to the study of the discipline of each primary learning area and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the relevant curriculum¹⁷ • Program and unit outlines with clear links to all learning areas (or equivalent) in the relevant curriculum and clearly indicating the duration of units 	

¹⁵ These standards refer to the amount of study to be undertaken in particular areas in terms of years of full-time equivalent study. This is compatible with the measurement of student load in terms of equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL). In a traditional structure of eight units per year, one unit would be equivalent to one eighth of a year of full-time equivalent study. The use of 'equivalent' recognises that many programs are now structured to deliver more than one year's study in a calendar year, and the increasing use of flexible delivery options.

¹⁶ *In graduate entry programs up to one-quarter of a year of full time equivalent study of relevant discipline studies may be undertaken as electives - see 4.4 and 4.5.*

¹⁷ Until the Australian curriculum is fully implemented, specification of minimum discipline requirements will be as described in the Programs Standards, unless a jurisdiction has greater requirements. In these cases, the minimum requirement will be the same as what is currently required in that jurisdiction. For further information please refer to Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures. p3

<p>This must include at least one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in each of English/literacy, mathematics/numeracy, and at least one eighth of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in science.</p> <p>The remainder of the program may be structured to include extension or specialist studies in priority areas or related curriculum areas.</p> <p><u>Graduate entry primary programs</u> must comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent professional studies in education.</p> <p>These programs must include at least one year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies across the learning areas of the primary school curriculum. Programs must include at least one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in each of English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, and at least one eighth of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in science.</p> <p>These programs may include up to one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of relevant discipline studies as elective units which could be undertaken by applicants who do not fully meet prerequisite discipline study requirements.</p>	<p>Where literacy, numeracy and science are not covered in clearly identifiable separate units, providers should clearly identify where these are covered</p>	
<p>4.5 Secondary programs <u>Undergraduate secondary programs</u> must provide a sound depth and breadth of knowledge appropriate for the teaching area/s the graduate intends to teach.</p> <p>These programs should provide at least a <i>major study</i>¹⁸ in one teaching area and preferably a second teaching area comprising at least a <i>minor study</i>¹⁹.</p> <p>In addition, these programs must include a minimum of one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies for each teaching area the graduate intends to teach. Discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies will prepare graduates to teach across the years of secondary schooling.</p> <p><u>Graduate entry secondary programs</u> must comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent professional studies in education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the relevant curriculum (refer to footnote 17) • Program and unit outlines with clear links to all learning areas (or equivalent) in the relevant curriculum and clearly indicating the duration of units²⁰ 	

¹⁸ Study undertaken for a major study will be equivalent to a total of three-quarters of a year of successful full time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years. In most programs, this equates to six units, with no more than two at first year level and no fewer than two units at third year level.

¹⁹ Study undertaken for a minor study will be equivalent to a total of half a year of successful full time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over two years. In most programs, this equates to four units, with no more than two at first year level.

²⁰ Where requirements are not undertaken in clearly identifiable separate units, providers should clearly identify where these are covered, and that they add up to the required amount of study.

<p>Programs must include a minimum of one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies for each teaching area that the graduate intends to teach. The discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies should prepare graduates to teach across the years of secondary schooling.</p> <p>These programs may include up to one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of relevant discipline studies as elective units which could be undertaken by applicants who do not fully meet prerequisite discipline study requirements.</p>		
<p>4.6 Specialist programs Where initial teacher education programs include specialist area studies (e.g. primary physical education, secondary special education, secondary teacher-librarianship etc), these studies must comprise one year of full time equivalent study relevant to that specialist area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program outline clearly identifying the units addressing this standard (refer to footnote 15) 	
<p>4.7 Non-traditional and other settings Some teacher education programs prepare graduates for teaching across traditional boundaries.</p> <p>Programs that prepare graduates to teach in both early childhood settings and primary schools are expected to prepare graduates for teaching the curriculum in both contexts.</p> <p>Programs that prepare graduates for middle school teaching may have a stronger emphasis on teaching particular year levels (e.g. Years 5 to 9) but must fully address the requirements for primary teaching and for secondary teaching in at least one <i>major study</i> or two <i>minor studies</i> in secondary teaching areas.</p> <p>Programs that prepare graduates for teaching across P/F/R/K-Year 12 must address the requirements for both primary and secondary teaching.</p> <p>Programs that prepare graduates for teaching in other specialised teaching roles in schools and other educational settings must address the specific content and pedagogy of the specialisation²¹.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the relevant curriculum • Program and unit outlines with clear links to all learning areas (or equivalent) in the relevant curriculum and clearly indicating the duration of units (refer to footnote 15) <p>Note: As required, and in discussion with regulatory authorities, AITSL may develop more detailed guidelines for specific types of programs.</p>	

²¹ Specific requirements will be developed for programs preparing teachers for settings other than traditional schools where required.

Standard 5: School partnerships	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
5.1 Providers have established enduring school partnerships to deliver their programs, particularly the professional experience component.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality (school) partnerships both existing and planned including the active engagement of the supervising teacher in the assessment • Partnerships that are broader than professional experience • Feedback processes • Feedback used to improve the program, quality and sustainability of partnerships 	
5.2 The professional experience component of each program must include no fewer than 80 days of well-structured, supervised ²² and assessed teaching practice in schools in undergraduate and double-degree teacher education programs and no fewer than 60 days in graduate entry programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program outlines indicating the duration of professional experience 	
5.3 Providers describe in detail the elements of the relationship between the provider and the schools, the nature and length of professional experience placements, the components of the placement, including the planned experiences and related assessment criteria and methods, and the supervisory and professional support arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality (school) partnerships both existing and planned indicating how they are developed, resourced and maintained • Arrangements in place to ensure a quality supervised teaching practice • Assessment arrangements, including clarity on the roles of school and provider staff • Collaborative work between providers and their partner schools • Feedback from partners on the quality and sustainability of partnerships 	
5.4 Providers and their school partners ensure the professional experience component of their program provides their program's students with professional experience that enables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with learners in a variety of school year levels • appreciation of the diversity of students and communities which schools serve (e.g. rural and metropolitan settings, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Indigenous communities, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of supervised teaching practice a graduate will normally have experienced through the program • Arrangements in place to ensure a quality supervised teaching practice • Data from pre-service teachers, partner schools and stakeholder organisations on the quality of the professional experience and/or partnership 	

²² "Supervised teaching practice" refers to the required component of an initial teacher education program during which pre-service teachers engage in teaching and learning processes in schools and other educational settings, supervised and mentored by educational professionals with experience and expertise. The purposes are to develop, practise, improve and assess professional knowledge and skills.

<p>5.5 Providers and their school partners ensure that teachers supervising professional experience (in particular the supervised teaching practice) are suitably qualified and registered. They should have expertise and be supported in coaching and mentoring, and in making judgments about whether students have achieved the Graduate Teacher Standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations undertaken to assess strength and effectiveness of school partnerships • Documentation supplied to supervising teachers and how they are selected and supported • How school-based personnel are engaged in designing, implementing and assessing supervised teaching practice • Feedback from supervisors, mentors and other relevant staff on the quality of support provided 	
<p>5.6 Providers require that the supervised teaching practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mandates at least a satisfactory formal assessment of the program's students against the professional practice elements²³ of the Graduate Teacher Standards as a requirement for graduating from the program • is undertaken mostly in a recognised Australian school setting over a substantial and sustained period that is relevant to an authentic classroom environment, and • includes a designated role for supervising teachers in the assessment of the program's students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional experience placement requirements including handbook • Assessment arrangements, including clarity on the roles of school and provider staff • How the Graduate Teacher Standards are used as the basis for assessment of pre-service teachers in their supervised teaching practice • Requirement that pre-service teachers will not receive the award unless they have been assessed as satisfactory in classroom practice 	
<p>5.7 School partnership arrangements provide for the timely identification of program students at risk of not satisfactorily completing the formal teaching practice, and of ensuring appropriate support for improvement or program counselling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation supplied to supervising teachers and how they are selected and supported • The procedures for identifying and supporting students at risk of not satisfactorily completing this component of the program 	

²³ The standards and descriptors within the Professional Practice domain of the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

Standard 6: Program delivery and resourcing	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
6.1 Programs must use effective teaching and assessment strategies (linked to intended learning outcomes) and resources, including embedded information and communication technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program and unit outlines providing evidence of teaching and assessment strategies used, and documentation of the usage of digital resources and tools to complement teaching and assessment strategies 	
6.2 Programs are delivered by appropriately qualified staff, consistent with the staffing requirements in the relevant <i>National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes</i> ²⁴ , including an appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider/faculty/school staff recruitment policy and professional development policy • List of staff involved in the delivery of the program, including their qualifications and teaching experience 	
6.3 Providers ensure that programs use contemporary facilities and resources, including information and communication technologies, which students can expect to be available in schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit • Detail of resources and equipment used in the program • Student feedback on the adequacy of resources and facilities 	
6.4 Providers ensure that their facilities conform to the general expectation for a contemporary higher education learning environment appropriate to the mode of delivery, including such matters as access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education-related library resources • information and communication technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit • Detail of resources and equipment used in the program • Student feedback on the adequacy of resources and facilities 	

²⁴ http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Programs/StudentSupport/NationalProtocolsforHEApprovalProcesses/Documents/NationalGuidelinesOct2007_AandB.pdf, and in particular section 17.7, p.18. This section provides assurance that “students are taught and supported by staff with academic and professional expertise to facilitate quality learning outcomes and who contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding”.

Standard 7: Program information and evaluation	Examples of evidence	Response to Program Standard
7.1 Providers use a range of data, such as student assessment information, destination surveys, employer and other stakeholder feedback to drive program improvement and periodic formal evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of provider processes for ongoing monitoring, review and continuous improvement of the program content, delivery methods, assessment and learning outcomes • Feedback from students, staff, partners, graduate employers and other stakeholders on program outcomes 	
7.2 Providers report annually to the Authority outlining challenges encountered or any changes in programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers should provide a statement of willingness to comply with this standard in Template A • Providers should highlight: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ changes to program content/ delivery ○ how achievements influence program delivery ○ major challenges encountered and the response 	
7.3 Providers supply data as required to support local and national teacher workforce supply reporting, to support program and provider benchmarking, and to build a cumulative database of evidence relating to the quality of teacher education in Australia. Data collected is held in a centrally managed database and, under agreed protocols, will be available to all jurisdictions and teacher education providers for research, evaluation and program improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers should provide a statement of willingness to comply with this standard in Template A. 	

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