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Selection guidelines

In their 2014 report *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) recommended a sophisticated approach to selection of entrants into initial teacher education (ITE) programs in order to select those who will make the best teachers. This approach includes taking into account academic capability, literacy and numeracy skills and personal characteristics.

The Australian Government asked AITSL to develop and set clear expectations of ITE providers in ensuring that entrants into ITE programs have the right mix of academic and non-academic capabilities that give them the best chance of becoming effective classroom teachers.

AITSL developed *Action Now: Selection of entrants into initial teacher education: Guidelines* (Selection Guidelines) that were agreed by the Education Council in September 2015.

Selection forms a key part of the requirements that all ITE programs must meet to be accredited. ITE providers are required to provide a rationale for their approach to selection, including selection mechanisms and threshold entry standards applied.

The Selection Guidelines state that all ITE providers should:

- Set both academic and non-academic criteria and apply these to every student they admit to their programs

- Publish information about their selection mechanisms to ensure transparency, including:
  - selection mechanisms used
  - threshold entry standards applied
  - student cohort data
  - any exemptions used.

These selection requirements apply to all new entrants to ITE programs from January 2017. All entrants are required to demonstrate their academic and non-academic capabilities before admission to an ITE program.

Greater transparency about selection processes and their outcomes supports evaluation of the effectiveness of selection mechanisms, and contributes to an evidence base on what mechanisms work best in selecting effective teachers.

The updated selection requirements have been incorporated into Program Standard 3 in the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures.*

The *Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia* provide elements requiring verification and professional judgement which guide accreditation panels in the assessment of the evidence for Program Standard 3.

How can academic capabilities be measured in selection processes?

Indicators of academic capability could include:

- demonstrated academic ability at year 12 (e.g. tertiary entrance score, academic achievement in required subject disciplines)

- successful prior studies at university, a vocational education provider or other tertiary education provider that demonstrates relevant academic ability (e.g. prior study scores, average grade results in partially or fully completed qualifications)

- successful completion of appropriate prior professional qualifications

- performance in a range of tasks or activities that demonstrate academic capability to meet the intellectual requirements of the course of study (e.g. assessment centre, writing tasks, literacy and numeracy tests)

- performance on validated measures of cognitive and verbal ability undertaken as part of the selection process.

What non-academic capabilities are important for initial teacher education students?

The key capabilities associated with successful teaching identified in the research are:

✓	motivation to teach
✓	strong interpersonal and communication skills
✓	willingness to learn
✓	resilience
✓	self-efficacy
✓	conscientiousness
✓	organisational, and planning skills

How can non-academic capabilities be measured in selection processes?

Indicators of non-academic capability could include:

- performance on a specifically designed and validated assessment of teaching aptitude and/or other capabilities utilised as part of the selection process

- work and life experiences that have required demonstrations of the non-academic capabilities listed above

- expression of applicants' understanding and motivations about the program to which they are applying.

How will we know that the selection guidelines are making a difference?

ITE providers select, use and analyse data on the effectiveness of their selection mechanisms, using measures such as student retention and student success data in relation to each entry cohort within each program. This data is used by the provider to evaluate the effectiveness of their selection mechanisms, and inform any changes needed.