

Recognising the impact of great teaching

National certified teacher month

Champion
toolkit

#teachcertau
#myteachimpact

Certification 

aitsl Australian Institute
for Teaching and
School Leadership
Limited

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This toolkit was developed as a partnership between AITSL, the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network and certifying authorities. To view the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network Action Plan visit <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/halt>.

Background

We know, and have known for some time, that the biggest in-school influence on student outcomes is the quality of the teaching in the classroom. Put simply, the better the teaching, the better the outcomes for the student.

In March 2016, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) launched the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Network. The Network is the first of its kind in Australia, bringing together teachers nationally certified as Highly Accomplished or Lead against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

To mark the launch of the HALT Network, AITSL brought together members for the inaugural HALT Summit. The Summit provided an opportunity to connect and share expert practice. Members also collaborated to identify priority actions for the Network that would advance teaching quality across Australia to improve student outcomes. A month dedicated to promoting great teaching was one of the ideas proposed during the Summit and identified by members as a priority action.

This toolkit has been developed as a partnership between AITSL, the HALT Network and certifying authorities to support the first national certified teacher month.

To view the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network Action Plan visit
<http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/halt>

Further information about the HALT Network is available at
<http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/halt>

Message from the Minister for Education and Training

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham



Welcome to the inaugural National Certified Teacher Month to recognise, promote and honour the impact of quality teaching in schools across Australia.

To those of you celebrating this month as nationally certified teachers, national certification assessors or school leaders supporting the process, I thank you for your commitment to the profession. To those considering becoming nationally certified, I encourage you in your pursuit to further develop your expertise and contribute to increasing teaching quality nationally.

We owe it to Australian students, current and future, to ensure that high impact teaching is a priority. National teacher certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead stages of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* provides us with a rigorous process to recognise this.

I look forward to seeing national teacher certification continue to benefit the profession as it grows and the impact this will have on the learning outcomes of all students across the country.

I encourage you to get involved and help celebrate the commitment, expertise and impact of great teaching.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Simon Birmingham".

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham

Minister for Education and Training, Australian Government

Message from the AITSL Board Chair

Professor John Hattie



For many years I have provided research showing that quality teaching has the greatest in school impact. We have many examples of great teaching across Australia and as the Board Chair of AITSL I have the privilege of working with some of these teachers and can attest to their calibre, dedication, and expertise, both individually and collectively.

We have a unique situation here in Australia, where we have a national system for establishing the standards of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers and a process for recognising teachers at these advanced levels through a national teacher certification process. Working with states and territories,

AITSL has played a role in setting the standards, ensuring moderation across jurisdictions, and working with these teachers to esteem excellence in our schools. We work closely with the states and territories implementing these standards, and the certification of teachers is a wonderful recognition of the excellence that is in our schools.

I see tremendous potential for nationally certified teachers, and the school leaders and assessors who deeply engage in the process, to draw on their understanding of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and to cultivate quality practice within their schools. I am keen to see how we can work with these teachers so they can help others to join their ranks, demonstrate to our communities that we have many of these experts in our schools, and listen to their advice as to how to enhance the lives of teachers and students across our schools.

At the launch of the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network in March 2016 nationally certified teachers came together to collaborate and plan actions to increase quality within the profession. The idea of a national certified teacher month was one of these ideas and it is exciting to share with you this champion toolkit.

I am thrilled to support national certified teacher month as a way to bring attention to the impact of great teaching and encourage you to participate and help spread the word.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Hattie".
Professor John Hattie
AITSL Board Chair

Why a month to recognise the impact of great teachers?

All students deserve the best teaching because among school related factors, **teachers have the greatest impact on student performance**. Therefore it is vital that as a community we recognise, promote and support quality teaching in order to improve outcomes for all students. This month provides the opportunity to recognise, promote and honour the impact of great teaching.

While the impact that quality teaching has on student learning and achievement is of importance, the impact that expert teachers can have on their colleagues and school communities is also profound. Expert teachers have the capacity to enhance the practice of other teachers and improve the learning experience for many children.

Promoting the impact of great teaching, valuing expert practice and encouraging more teachers to become nationally certified can invigorate the professionalisation of teaching and increase teaching quality across Australia, leading to better outcomes for all students.

What is national teacher certification?

National certification is awarded at the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stages of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and provides a rigorous and reliable measure of high quality teaching. The two stage process requires an applicant to demonstrate the impact of their teaching through a portfolio of evidence as well as observation of practice. It is a voluntary process that through a focus on teacher expertise can ultimately improve student outcomes. **As expert teachers network and share great practice, students stand to reap the rewards.**

Further information about the national teacher certification process is at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/about-certification/certification-of-highly-accomplished-and-lead-teachers>.

National teacher certification can help improve student outcomes by:

- encouraging teachers to reflect on their practice and understand their impact on their students
- esteeming quality teaching and providing a pathway that supports them to be recognised as expert practitioners
- helping to retain our best teachers, especially when recognition is aligned to jurisdictional workforce initiatives or enterprise agreements
- providing a national indicator of quality teaching that can be used by school leaders to identify expert teachers, so as to leverage their expertise to improve practice within the school.

Why a month to recognise the impact of great teachers?

Campaign goals	Key messages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the impact of great teachers• Raise the status of teaching within the community• Inspire greatness in all teachers• Encourage schools and communities to recognise local nationally certified teachers• Build awareness of national teacher certification as a way to increase expertise within the teaching profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students deserve the best teaching—let's recognise great teaching• Teachers have the greatest in-school impact on students• Let's value and support great teaching• National certification is a way to build expertise and increase teacher quality across Australia



Get your free champion pack

If you'd like a champion pack containing a poster and bookmarks to promote national certified teacher month in your school, email your name and address to haltnetwork@aitsl.edu.au

Key dates for 2017

March 1–31	National certified teacher month
	All students deserve the best teaching. Let's recognise great teaching all month long. Check out page 8 for ideas on how to get involved.
March 6	Twitter chat with Professor John Hattie
	Join Professor John Hattie on Twitter from 4:00 pm (AEDT) to discuss the impact of great teaching and discuss why expertise matters. Follow #teachcertau and #myteachimpact to join the conversation!
March 17–18	Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Summit, Sydney
	Two action-packed days bringing together nationally certified teachers from across Australia to collaborate and share best practice
March 30	#myteachimpact day
	<p>A dedicated day for all champions of national teacher certification to come together to draw attention to the impact of great teaching.</p> <p>Champions can host local events to encourage others to share examples of expert teaching practice, stories of student impact and encourage others to become nationally certified and help get national certified teacher month trending on social media.</p> <p>Whilst champions can host an event or promote through social media any time throughout the month, there's something special about coming together nationally – and at one time – for a shared purpose.</p> <p>Check out the hosting an event checklist on page 19 and don't forget to tweet your event using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact</p>

How can I get involved?

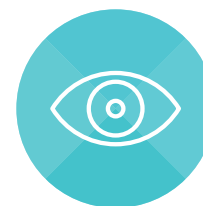
Be an online champion



Share a photo example of your impact on students, colleagues or the profession using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact.



Take a selfie. Complete the sign on page 14 (also available to download [here](#)) and take a selfie to share on social media. Encourage your colleagues to get involved and don't forget to use #teachcertau and #myteachimpact.



Recognise teacher impact all month using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact. We've even prepared some social messages on page 13 to get you started.



Spread the word and show your support with our shareables. Update your Facebook or Twitter cover photo and share some of the national certified teacher month graphics. They're on page 15–16 and can be downloaded [here](#).



Share your certification story on social media. How has being involved in national teacher certification impacted your practice, your colleagues and students? Tweet or post using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact.



Follow AITSL on Facebook and Twitter and share the national certified teacher month messages throughout March 2017.

For some other approaches, you might like to share an article about your certification journey in your school newsletter or submit an article to your local newspaper or professional association.
For further ideas, check out the suggestions on the following pages.

How can I get involved?

What else can I do to be a champion?

Below are some other ways to get involved. Check out the 'Tools and templates to get started' on [pages 13–16](#) for further inspiration.

For nationally certified teachers

- **Attend the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Summit** on 17 and 18 March in Sydney, and join other nationally certified teachers from across Australia to collaborate and share expert practice.
- **Write an article about your certification journey and how it's impacted your practice, your colleagues and your students.** Share your article through your school newsletter or website, submit it to the professional associations of which you're a member to publish in their journal, or even try your local paper. Check out the [article template on page 17](#) to get started.
- **Host an event in your school or network.** How about a wine and cheese evening for colleagues to share examples of expert practice and stories of student success? You can share your story of becoming certified and invite an assessor along to talk about the process from their perspective. Or run a drop-in session after school for colleagues interested in becoming nationally certified and form a support group for those who decide to pursue it.
- **Create a display** in the school staffroom with information to encourage others to become nationally certified. If you'd like to receive a free champion pack with a national certified teacher month poster and bookmarks, email your name and address to haltnetwork@aitsl.edu.au and we'll post one to you. Don't forget to share a photo of your efforts on Facebook and Twitter using **#teachcertau** and **#myteachimpact**.
- **Write a letter to the editor of your local or state/territory news outlets including print and radio.** National certified teacher month isn't just about encouraging others to become certified, it's equally about celebrating the impact of great teachers. Check out the [letter to the editor template on page 18](#) to get started.

How can I get involved?

For school leaders

- **Find out more** about the national certification process by contacting your local certifying authority. A list of the certifying authorities in each state/territory is at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/certifying-authorities>.
- **Set time aside** in the month for teachers in your school to share great practice and examples of teaching that have led to student success. Look for ways to promote and celebrate teacher impact in your school community. If you already have a nationally certified teacher then encourage them to chair and help organise the session.
- **Encourage students** and members of the community to share examples of the impact of great teachers at your school using the sign on [page 13](#) (also available to download [here](#)). Share these on social media using **#teachcertau** and **#myteachimpact**.
- **Encourage teachers** in your school to undertake the national certification process. Share the [Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia](#) with your staff and direct them to the local certifying authority to find out more. You could show the certification videos at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/about-certification/certification-of-highly-accomplished-and-lead-teachers> or invite a certified teacher or assessor to speak at an upcoming whole of staff meeting about the process and its benefits.
- **Look for practical ways to support teachers** undertaking national certification in your school. The [Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia](#) provides advice on the role of school leaders in the process.
- **Consider training as a national teacher certification assessor.** The rigorous national assessor training program will develop your own skills in assessing quality teaching practice against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Contact your local certifying authority to express your interest in becoming a national teacher certification assessor.
- **Recognise** nationally certified teachers at your school and seek opportunities for them to collaborate and share their expertise with others.

How can I get involved?

For national certification assessors

- **Host a time with colleagues** to share your learning about the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. As an assessor, you have valuable knowledge of what expert teachers do in the classroom. Share skills from your practice as a classroom observe that would assist other teachers and school leaders in their own observation practice.
- **Share your knowledge of national certification** and your unique role in the process within your networks.
- **Encourage those in your networks** to consider national certification as a way to recognise and promote teacher expertise within their communities. Share the [Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia](#) and direct colleagues to the local certifying authority to find out more.
- **Write a letter to the editor of your local or state/territory news outlets** including print and radio. National certified teacher month isn't just about encouraging others to become certified, it's equally about celebrating the impact of great teachers. Check out the [letter to the editor template on page 18](#) to get started.
- **Volunteer to speak about national certification** to teachers at a neighbouring school, drawing on your unique perspective of the rigour and value of the process.

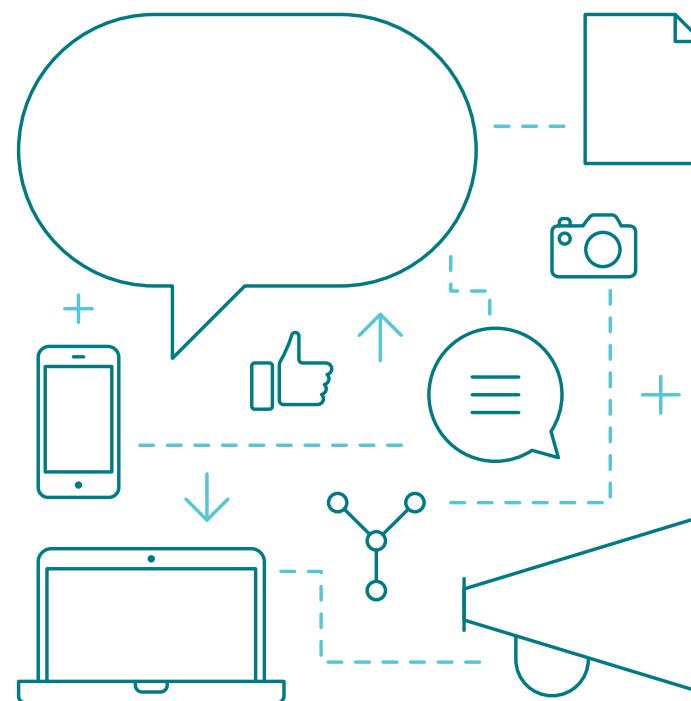
For certifying authorities

- **Host an information session** to share local evidence and stories of expert teachers impacting student outcomes. Invite a nationally certified teacher to share examples from their practice and encourage teachers to become nationally certified. Don't forget to share a photo from your event using **#teachcertau** and **#myteachimpact**.
- **Attend the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Summit** on 17 and 18 March in Sydney, and join nationally certified teachers from across Australia to collaborate and share expert practice.
- **Host a Twitter** chat about national certification, answering logistical questions about the process as well as sharing facts and figures pertinent to your jurisdiction.
- **Volunteer to speak about national certification** at schools within your jurisdiction. Alternatively consider encouraging and supporting certified teachers or assessors within your jurisdiction to speak about national certification.
- **Write an article or media release about the impact of certification/quality teaching within your jurisdiction.** Share your article through local news outlets including print and radio, as well as professional associations. Check out the [article template on page 17](#) to get started.

How can I get involved?

For professional teacher and principal associations

- **Find out more** about the national certification process by contacting your local certifying authority. A list of the certifying authorities in each state/territory is at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/certifying-authorities>.
- **Encourage your members or those in your networks** to consider national teacher certification as a way to recognise and promote teacher expertise within their communities. Share the [*Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia*](#) and direct colleagues to the local certifying authority to find out more.
- **Identify one of your members** who is a nationally certified teacher, certification assessor or school leader who has supported the process in their school, and ask them to write a short article for publication on your association's website or in your journal. You can refer them to the [article template on page 17](#) to get started.

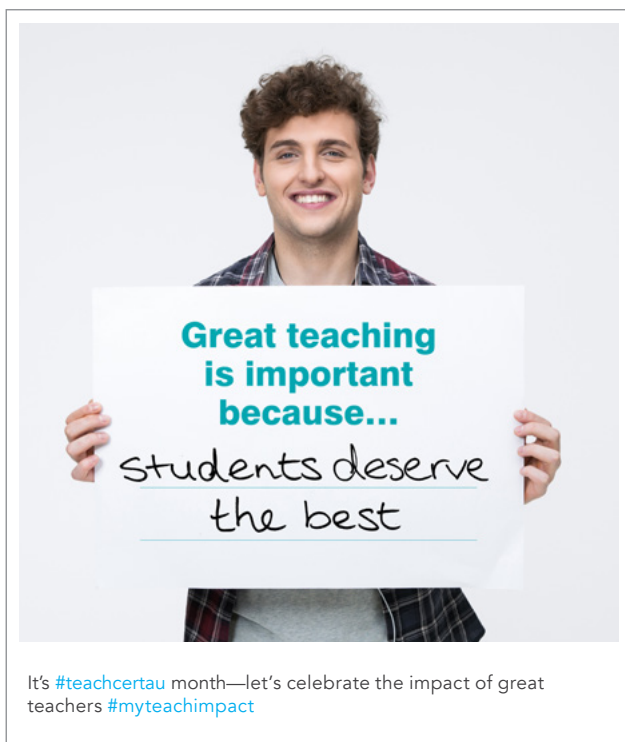


Tools and templates to get started

Sample social media messages

Below are some sample social media messages to get you started.

These are intended as a prompt only and we encourage you to be creative and to adapt them as needed.



It's #teachcertau month—
here's an example of
#myteachimpact

(add a photo example of your
teaching impact)

Teachers have the greatest
in-school impact on students—
let's celebrate their impact
#teachcertau

(insert one of the sharable graphics
from pages 13–14)

It's #teachcertau month—
let's celebrate the
impact of great teaching
#myteachimpact

(add a photo of yourself holding the
sign on page 12)

Build your teaching expertise
by becoming nationally
certified #teachcertau

Find out more at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/about-certification/certification-of-highly-accomplished-and-lead-teachers>

We've all benefited from the
impact of a great teacher—
let's recognise them
#teachcertau
#myteachimpact
(tag a great teacher)

Tools and templates to get started

Selfie signs

The two signs below are also available for download [here](#).

**Great teaching
is important
because...**

**I became
nationally certified
because...**

Tools and templates to get started

Online shareables

Download your social media kit [here](#).



Tools and templates to get started

Online shareables

Download your social media kit [here](#).



News article template

The text below is a starting point only and we encourage you to edit and add your own reflections to make it more personal.

March 2017 is dedicated to recognising the impact of great teaching through national certified teacher month. Across Australia there are many teachers who operate at advanced levels in their profession. Within the teaching profession there are Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers who not only impact students, they also impact the practice of their colleagues.

National certification is awarded to teachers at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. There are currently 307 nationally certified teachers across Australia.

There are often reports raising concern about the current status of education in Australia, often citing solutions to be found in the education systems of Singapore and Finland.

However as Professor John Hattie tells us, the answer to great teaching can be found right here in Australia. Fortunately we already have a nationally agreed process to identify expert teaching.

National teacher certification seeks to recognise quality practice through a rigorous process

requiring a teacher to demonstrate their impact on colleagues and students.

As a (nationally certified teacher/national certification assessor) I can attest to the value of this process. (Insert your personal reflections on how you see the national certification process impacting your work and the profession at large).

Further benefit of this process is the ongoing collaboration of expert teachers across the country, for example through the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network. This Network seeks to bring these expert practitioners together to share their practice and experience. This connected network then has great capacity to spread expertise more locally with their colleagues. (Insert an example of how professionally you have been enriched through the sharing of experienced colleagues. If possible include the impact on student outcomes).

Visit <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification> (or insert webpage of your local certifying authority) to learn more about national teacher certification or follow along with the celebration using **#teachcertau** and **#myteachimpact**.

Letter to the editor template

The text below is a starting point only and we encourage you to edit and add your own reflections to make it more personal.

Dear (Insert name)

We often hear concerns raised by the public about the current status of education in Australia. In these debates we often hear reference to solutions to quality education being found in countries such as Singapore or Finland.

However as Professor John Hattie will tell us, the answer to great teaching can be found right here in Australia.

Research would indicate that the greatest in-school impact on student achievement is quality teaching. As a nationally certified teacher, I can attest to the great teaching that is happening in schools across Australia.

This March is dedicated to celebrating the impact of great teaching through the national teacher certification process. (Insert an explanation of how you are involved in national teacher certification).

(Insert your own examples of the impact of great teaching within Australia. Examples could include the collaboration of the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network, lead initiatives within the national certification process, or the sharing of expertise of nationally certified teachers with other teachers, specifically those new to the profession.)

I would encourage you to support the building of expertise within Australia, and a recognition of the impact of great teachers currently evident because (Insert your personal reflection on the value of community members supporting the teaching profession).

For more information, please refer to <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification> (or insert webpage of your local certifying authority), or follow along with the celebration using **#teachcertau** and **#myteachimpact**.

Hosting an event checklist

We hope the checklist below will be useful in helping you plan your national certified teacher month event.

To do

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with your principal to plan the event and encourage colleagues to attend. | <input type="checkbox"/> Connect with other local nationally certified teachers and assessors who might be able to help support your event. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consider logistics such as venue, catering and technology. | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote your event through your school newsletter/ website, within your local networks and via social media using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Order your national certified teacher month champion pack by emailing haltnetwork@aitsl.edu.au . | <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare copies of the <i>Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia</i> and any other materials you wish to hand out. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notify your local certifying authority of your planned event. A list of certifying authorities is at http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/certifying-authorities . | <input type="checkbox"/> Share outcomes and photos from your event on social media using #teachcertau and #myteachimpact |

About the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network

The Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Network is the first of its kind in Australia, bringing together all teachers nationally certified as Highly Accomplished or Lead.

The Network was launched by the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Simon Birmingham at the inaugural HALT Summit in March 2016.

This is a new professional network to enable nationally certified teachers to develop expertise with like-minded professionals from across Australia and work together to share the collective expertise of the Network with the broader profession.

The Network is an initiative of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) as the Australian Government looks to further improve and promote quality teaching across the country.

Further information about the HALT Network is available at <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/certification/halt>.

Useful online resources

- [National teacher certification data infographic](#)
- [Videos of teachers, principals and assessors talking about national teacher certification](#)
- [Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher in Australia](#)
- [Examples of national teacher certification evidence](#)
- [List of certifying authorities](#)