

Teaching performance assessment (Program Standard 1.2)

Robust assessment of pre-service teachers is vital in giving students, families and schools confidence that graduates from Australian initial teacher education programs are effectively prepared for entry into the profession. *The accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* requires that all pre-service teachers successfully complete a rigorous assessment (teaching performance assessment) that covers the breadth of teaching practices to ensure that they are classroom ready by the time they graduate.

This fact sheet provides further information on the requirements of the teaching performance assessment as outlined in Program Standard 1.2. The fact sheet has been designed to assist members of accreditation panels to understand and assess the requirements of Program Standard 1.2 and to support providers in the development of their accreditation applications.

How does the requirement for a TPA fit within the accreditation program standards?

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* at the Graduate career stage form the basis for accreditation of initial teacher education programs. It is a fundamental principle that programs are accredited on the basis that they produce graduates who meet the Graduate Teacher Standards. In a teaching performance assessment (TPA) a pre-service teacher illustrates their skills, knowledge and practices through evidence of their performance aligned to the Graduate Teacher Standards. In line with concepts of authentic assessment, evidence is drawn directly from their own practices to demonstrate:

- ✓ what they want students to learn
- ✓ how they will facilitate this learning
- ✓ how they will know if students have achieved this learning (NBPTS 2005).

The TPA is a key mechanism by which programs can demonstrate pre-service teachers' impact on student learning (Program Standard 1.3). Initial teacher education providers may choose to develop their own TPA, work with other providers to develop a common assessment or use/adapt an existing assessment.

What are the requirements for a TPA in Program Standard 1.2?

Program Standard 1.2 requires that a TPA be situated in a classroom environment, in order to demonstrate a range of authentic teaching practices. The TPA must be a requirement of successful completion of the program, and must be completed during the final year. Where possible it should be included in the final professional experience placement or internship, prior to graduation. The TPA, as articulated in Program Standard 1.2, must have the following features:

- ✓ be a reflection of classroom teaching practice including the elements of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting (construct validity)
- ✓ be a valid assessment that clearly assesses the content of the Graduate Teacher Standards (content validity)
- ✓ have clear, measurable and justifiable achievement criteria that discriminate between meeting and not meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards
- ✓ be a reliable assessment in which there are appropriate processes in place for ensuring consistent scoring between assessors
- ✓ include moderation processes that support consistent decision making against the achievement criteria.

Construct validity – alignment to the practices of teaching

For the purposes of Program Standard 1.2 the term construct validity refers to the degree to which the TPA measures the actual practices of teaching, including but not limited to planning, teaching, reflecting and assessing student learning.

It is expected that evidence provided in an accreditation application would include details of how the TPA has been designed to require and assess pre-service teachers' demonstration of their teaching practices. Evidence of teaching practices could include classroom observation of pre-service teachers along with artefacts such as lesson plans, assessment strategies and feedback, samples of student work, observation notes and reflections.

In assessing the construct validity consideration could be given to whether the TPA assesses any irrelevant factors or misrepresents the importance of any one factor.

Authentic assessment

Darling-Hammond and Snyder (2000, p.526-528) identify five aspects of authentic assessment to judge teaching:

- ✓ The assessments sample the actual knowledge, skills and dispositions desired of teachers as they are used in teaching and learning contexts.
- ✓ The assessments require the integration of multiple kinds of knowledge and skill as they are used in practice.
- ✓ Multiple sources of evidence are collected over time and in diverse contexts.
- ✓ Assessment evidence is evaluated by individuals with relevant expertise against criteria that matter for performance in the field.
- ✓ The assessment practice includes multiple opportunities for learning and practising the desired outcomes and for feedback and reflection, in order to develop as well as monitor teaching judgement and skill.

Content validity – assessment against the Graduate Teacher Standards

For the purposes of Program Standard 1.2 content validity refers to the degree to which the TPA represents the content it is designed to measure. In this case, this is the degree to which it is aligned with and assesses the content of the Graduate Teacher Standards, and assesses a pre-service teacher's practice against these Standards. A TPA with construct validity as described above provides opportunities to demonstrate a wide range of the Graduate Teacher Standards.

While a pre-service teacher is required to be assessed against the Graduate Teacher Standards during their professional experience placement, the TPA will not necessarily cover all of these Standards. It is up to each ITE provider to provide guidelines as to which Graduate Teacher Standards will be the focus for the TPA noting that the elements of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting are required under Program Standard 1.2.

Content validity could be evidenced through a description of the procedures followed to develop and test the assessment including:

- ✓ mapping of the assessment tasks to the skills and knowledge required in the Graduate Teacher Standards the TPA is designed to assess
- ✓ testing this alignment with a group of external experts (e.g. external teacher educators, teachers and school leaders).

Achievement criteria

Program Standard 1.2 requires that the TPA includes clear, measurable and justifiable achievement criteria that discriminate between meeting and not meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards.

Providers are required to provide:

- ✓ evidence that the standard for successfully completing the TPA is set at a level that reflects the Graduate Teacher Standards
- ✓ a credible process for differentiating those that meet the standard and those that do not.

Reliable assessment

Reliable and consistent assessment of the TPA is a critical element of ensuring robust initial teacher education programs that will give confidence in the readiness of their graduates. The TPA will be required to include a reliable assessment in which there are appropriate processes in place for ensuring consistent scoring between assessors (inter-rater reliability).

To ensure reliability, a provider should have processes and guidance in place that:

- ✓ provide appropriate knowledge and skills for external assessors, institutional staff and/or supervising teachers is understanding and assessing the TPA
- ✓ provide clear guidance on what evidence is required to demonstrate that a pre-service teacher's assessment meets the passing standard
- ✓ confirm accurate and consistent judgements against the TPA's rating scales/rubrics are occurring

Depending upon the TPA used an ITE provider may also have access to local and refereed research analysis of inter-rater reliability for their TPA, or plans to develop this. This could be used to provide additional evidence of the reliability of the assessment.

Who assesses the TPA?

Depending upon the design of the TPA the following individuals (or mix of individuals) may be involved in making the assessment of a pre-service teacher's performance on the TPA:

- ✓ external assessors
- ✓ Higher Education Institute (HEI) staff
- ✓ supervising teachers

Regardless of who is undertaking the assessment, an ITE provider needs to demonstrate that assessor training, assessment procedures and assurance processes put in place ensure consistent and reliable assessment between assessors. For example, if a professional experience report is a component of a TPA a provider needs to demonstrate how each individual supervising teacher will be skilled in making consistent assessments.

Ensuring that the assessor training and assessment procedures are being applied consistently will be an important element of a provider's evidence for this element of the Program Standard. A panel that can see clear mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the TPA assessment would have confidence that pre-service teachers will be consistently assessed.

Moderation

Moderation processes that support consistent decision-making against the achievement criteria are required to be in place to support the reliability of the TPA.

A moderated assessment is an assessment for which there are:

- ✓ processes in place to ensure consistent scoring between assessors
- ✓ consistent decision-making against the achievement criteria.

As part of their evidence for the TPA a provider should describe the moderation process they will employ to ensure consistent assessment of the TPA. This could include:

- ✓ detailing the specific procedures to be implemented to improve the reliability of judgements, including feedback loops to ensure ongoing consistency
- ✓ details of those involved in the moderation process, for example involvement of supervising teachers
- ✓ benchmarking with other programs or cross-marking within or between institutions.

What data from the TPA has to be reported?

- ✓ Program Standards 6.2 and 6.3 outline the data that needs to be collected, reported and used to support a program's next accreditation application.
- ✓ As such, it may contribute to the suite of evidence that a provider will collect to demonstrate the impact of their program, including impact on pre-service teacher learning and impact of pre-service teachers on school student. learning (Program Standard 6.2 and 6.3).

Are there transition arrangements for meeting Program Standard 1.2?

Transition arrangements have been agreed for Program Standard 1.2. Under these arrangements applications against Program Standard 1.2 will be required to provide a description of the strategy for meeting the TPA requirements, and evidence of any work undertaken to date. Full implementation will be required for cohorts completing their program in 2018.

The description of the strategy to implement the TPA should include:

- ✓ where the TPA will be placed within the program structure
- ✓ evidence regarding properties of the assessment tool in line with the requirements of the standard (or plans to demonstrate this in the future), including processes for assessor training and moderation
- ✓ timeframes for implementation.

The strategy should give confidence to the accreditation panel that when implemented the TPA will meet all requirements of the Program Standard and within the required time frames.

References

Darling-Hammond, L., & Snyder, J. (2000). Authentic assessment of teaching in context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(5-6), 523-545.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and Educational Testing Service (ETS) 2005, The take one activity book: An evidence-centered approach to accomplished teaching, NBPTS & ETS, USA.