

## 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 (see box 1 below), 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, providing direct evidence of candidates' planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting (construct validity – see below)
- be a valid assessment that clearly assesses the content of the Graduate Teacher Standards (content validity – see below)
- 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.

*Box 1 - 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)
- ✓ quantitative studies demonstrating content validity.

During the transition to the 2015 Standards and Procedures, quantitative studies may not have been evidenced at the point of accreditation. At a minimum face validity should be demonstrated (e.g. mapping and testing with experts). Prior to full implementation it is expected that content validity would be quantitatively established and a Teacher Regulatory Authority/accreditation panel is likely to request this as subsequent evidence.

### **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 ensuring that the TPA provides direct evidence of planning, teaching, reflecting and assessing student learning. Following the initial establishment of content validity, quantitative validity studies would provide further evidence of the validity of the assessment tool.

### **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 who meet the standard and those who do not.

As the TPA is a high stakes assessment, the tools and processes used to determine the criteria for meeting and not meeting the standard are crucial. For example, evidence could include reference to the use of a well regarded standard setting methodology to determine the passing threshold.

### **Reliable assessment**

Reliable and consistent assessment of the TPA is a critical element in ensuring robust initial teacher education programs that will provide 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 in 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, including quantitative data demonstrating the reliability of assessors.

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 Institution (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 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 or external experts
- ✓ evidence of moderation at the pass-fail point
- ✓ benchmarking with other programs or cross-marking within or between institutions
- ✓ the review of examples of previous performance, especially those representing performance at the pass-fail point.

### **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.

### **Assessing evidence against Program Standard 1.2 – the TPA National Expert Panel**

AITSL is establishing a TPA National Expert Panel (TPA Panel) to assist with the development and implementation of teaching performance assessments, including the design and successful performance of TPAs.

The expert panel's role is to:

- ✓ Assess TPAs developed through the AITSL TPA grant program against Program Standard 1.2 (visit the TPA grant program webpage for more information).
- ✓ Provide advice to AITSL and Teacher Regulatory Authorities (TRAs) in regard to TPAs developed through the TPA grant program.
- ✓ provide expert advice on the development, validation and/or implementation of TPAs, including those developed outside the TPA grant program.
- ✓ Provide advice, when appropriate, to initial teacher education providers when developing, implementing and maintaining TPAs.

The criteria for the selection of panellists when establishing this panel includes:

- ✓ experienced and expert knowledge in the design and delivery of initial teacher education, including in the context of program accreditation
- ✓ technical expertise in statistical data analysis/psychometrics including expertise on standard setting methodology and the development of scoring strategies
- ✓ assessment expertise and an understanding of how to establish reliability and validity
- ✓ expert knowledge in the implementation and monitoring of assessments to ensure ongoing fidelity

The advice provided by the TPA Panel will include considerations for implementation and the nature of evidence that could be expected for each TPA going forward. It will be crucial that conditions in relation to use of TPAs are understood and addressed in the accreditation process.

It is important to note that an accreditation panel will always need to assess evidence against Program Standard 1.2 to ensure a provider has implemented and will continue to implement the TPA with fidelity, that is, in the way it was designed to be used.

### **The nature of TPA evidence**

Through the development, trialling and ongoing implementation of a TPA, the nature of evidence provided and assessed as part of an accreditation process will evolve.

Demonstration that a TPA meets the requirements of validity and reliability does not occur only at the initial accreditation. Ensuring ongoing validity and reliability will be part of the process for demonstrating that a tool has been appropriately implemented (with fidelity).

As indicated in the Standards and Procedures (p. 8) consideration should be given as to how validity and reliability will be evidenced for subsequent accreditations. In some instances, it may be necessary for evidence to be provided throughout the accreditation period, for example, where a new TPA tool is being trialled and sufficient evidence confirming its validity and reliability has not been provided at the point of accreditation.

In some instances, a provider could be asked to provide additional information through the accreditation annual reporting process or have conditions applied to their program accreditation.

The type of evidence required for accreditation will be dependent on the maturity of a TPA, for example, initial implementation of a TPA as opposed to one that has been operating for a number of years. To give an indication on how the nature of the evidence might change over time the following high level stages could be expected (table 1).

Table 1

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Validity</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
Trialling or initial implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of face validity</li> <li>Plans to collect quantitative data, for example, calculation of the content validity ratio (CVR) for the TPA</li> <li>Quantitative data where available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes to establish reliability – standard setting, effective identification, recruitment and training for assessors, assembling examples of candidate performance</li> <li>Reliability data (where available) from trial/initial implementation</li> </ul>
First year of full implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative data and statistics demonstrating validity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inter-rater reliability, consistency of decisions against achievement criteria</li> </ul>
Ongoing implementation 1+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As above</li> <li>Additional validity studies could be considered at this point e.g. concurrent validity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inter-rater reliability, consistency of decisions against achievement criteria</li> <li>Outcomes of moderation activities including cross-institutional</li> </ul>
Mature 3+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As above</li> <li>Additional validity studies e.g. predictive validity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As above</li> </ul>
Long term	Additional evidence over time could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time series data on achievement on the TPA</li> <li>Analysis from longitudinal research</li> </ul>	

*\*Note these stages are not intended to represent all possible stages/approaches to developing, implementing and evidencing a TPA. They are provided to illustrate how the expectations around evidence for a TPA will evolve. It also does not represent all evidence expected in relation to Program Standard 1.2*

## 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.