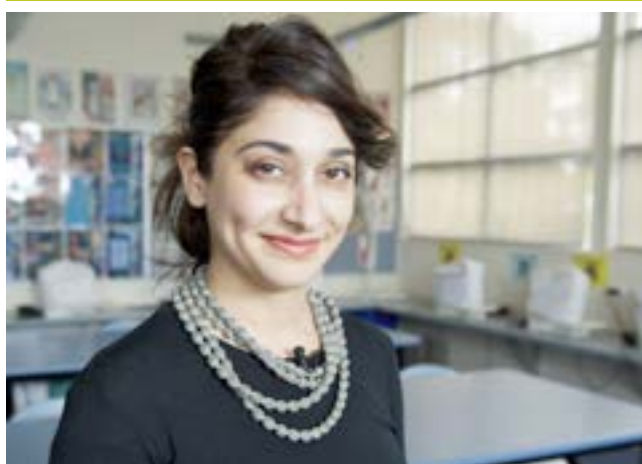# Learning from practice

- **Working with the Standards**
- **Developing a professional mindset**
- **Demonstrating impact**
- **Recogising exemplary teachers**

Working with the
Standards

Developing a
professional mindset

Demonstrating
impact

Recognising
exemplary teachers

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Working with the Standards

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for Teaching and
School Leadership
Limited

How to use this workbook

This workbook is part of a series designed to encourage teachers to continually reflect on their practice by developing a deliberate inquiry mindset. The focus is on improvement of practice and student outcomes through both informal and formal situations. For example, it may guide self-reflection, self-inquiry and discussion with colleagues, as well as support local performance and development processes and external processes such as certification.

Workbooks in this series are:

- ◆ Working with the Standards
- ◆ Developing a professional mindset
- ◆ Demonstrating impact
- ◆ Recognising exemplary teachers

This workbook, 'Working with the Standards', enables you to engage at a deeper level with all career stages of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards). It allows you to further understand how the Standards can help you grow and develop as a professional, and encourages you to make connections with different aspects of your work. Learn why the Standards were developed, how they are organised, what they are really saying and how they can make a difference to you as a professional and the outcomes of your students.

Supporting your colleagues is an integral component to your role as an education professional. Using this workbook in a variety of situations including mentoring, supervising and leading others will enable you to help both yourself and your colleagues grow as professionals. After working through 'Working with the Standards' you may find new ways of identifying your current and developing capabilities, your future professional aspirations and your achievements.

This series of workbooks can be used individually, or as stimulus for discussion with colleagues. Each PDF is editable and responses can be typed directly into the document when prompted. To use this feature you must save the document to your computer and have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. A free download is available from: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat.html. Please note, direct editing may be unavailable on some mobile devices.

Working with the Standards

Developing a professional mindset

Demonstrating impact

Recognising exemplary teachers

Acknowledgment

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards)

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards), which can be viewed at http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/, are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They describe elements of high-quality, effective teaching by making explicit the knowledge, practice and engagement required across different stages in a teacher's career (AITSL 2011b). The Standards provide a shared understanding and language for discourse within the teaching profession, enabling the profession to articulate what it knows, what it does, what it believes and what it values.

The language of teaching standards can describe how professional knowledge is enacted, yet it can also be used to further explore and elaborate components of the profession. When standards are used in this way they become "a means to development and empowerment" of a profession (Yinger & Hendricks-Lee 2000, p. 95). Therefore, understanding and exploring the Standards will help you to grow and develop as a professional.

I feel really strongly and excited by the fact that the Standards reflect what I, and teachers I work with, do. There is scope within gathering evidence to drill down to what it is that I do and show how we are not perpetuating a special or different process but that everything we do is about quality teaching and we can describe it in the same language which stops people having silos of practice that makes us feel different to others. So the Standards are a really great notion that really dictates the core of what it is that we do in the classroom.

Sue, Deputy Principal
Cranleigh School, Australian Capital Territory

The development of national standards in Australia reflects a recognition of the connection between effective teaching and effective learning (Hattie 2009). It also reflects broader developments in education across the country. In 2009, all Education Ministers agreed to work with all school sectors and systems (Government, Catholic and Independent) 'to attract, develop, support and retain a high-quality teaching and school leadership workforce in Australian schools' (MCEETYA 2008, p. 11).

The Standards support the [Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians](#) (MCEETYA 2008) which acknowledges the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, and provides two simple, but powerful goals to guide Australian education:

Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence.

Goal 2: All young Australians will become:

- ◆ successful learners
- ◆ confident and creative individuals
- ◆ active and informed citizens.

In 2010 the Standards were validated by over 6,000 teachers and principals from across Australia in a range of school systems and locations. The procedures put in place mean the Standards truly capture the voice of the profession to provide a clear framework for how the profession:

- ◆ expresses its capacity to self-reflect
- ◆ engages in ongoing professional learning
- ◆ provides high-quality teaching and learning experiences
- ◆ builds a positive public profile of the profession.

Regardless of where you teach, you can be confident that the Standards are appropriately contextualised by the real work of Australian teachers. The Standards were endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in December 2010.

The Standards make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st-century schools. They provide a continuum of capabilities and expectations, and a nationally consistent basis for valid, fair and reliable identification and recognition of teachers who demonstrate competence in quality professional knowledge, practice and engagement. The Standards enhance the professionalism of teachers by raising the status and contributing positively to the public standing of the profession (AITSL 2011b). They have two main purposes:

- ◆ to improve the quality of teaching
- ◆ to support the career progression of Australian teachers.

The Standards articulate the knowledge and skills required by teachers and provide a common language for reaching a shared understanding of what effective teaching looks like, which in turn will be shaped by schools' individual contexts and priorities.

The Standards are used by schools, education systems and sectors in a variety of ways to provide direction and structure in the preparation, support and development of high-quality teachers.

Over to you

1. The implementation of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (AITSL 2011b) creates a 'common language' around enhancing teacher quality for educators across Australia. What are the benefits and challenges associated with having a 'common language'?

2. How are the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL 2011b) currently used in your school/system/sector? What other uses can you envisage?

How are the Standards structured?

The **Graduate** career stage underpins the *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and procedures* (AITSL 2011a). All initial teacher education courses across Australia must ensure that graduates meet the Graduate career stage of the Standards. Graduates from nationally accredited programs qualify for provisional registration in each state and territory. If you are working in the space of supervising preservice teachers and want some more hands-on help with how to improve the experience for them, have a look at Supervising Preservice Teachers on the AITSL website.

The **Proficient** career stage underpins Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers in Australia. In order to obtain full registration as a teacher in your state/territory you must demonstrate practice at the level of the Proficient career stage. Many teachers will also use the Standards at the Proficient career stage to reflect on their progress when undertaking annual performance reviews.

The **Highly Accomplished** and **Lead** Standards provide the basis for *Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers in Australia* (AITSL 2012) which recognises and promotes demonstration of a high level of quality teaching, provides an opportunity for teachers to critically reflect on their practice, and provides a reliable indication of quality teaching that can be used to identify, recognise and reward. Certification enables teachers to receive feedback on their practice from trained assessors who are external to their school.

How do the Standards really make a difference to me as a teacher?

Over to you

You can use the Standards to identify your current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements. In order to grow and develop as a professional, the Standards enable you to critically reflect on your own practice and the impact you have on students in your classroom, and on your colleagues' practice.

The Standards can assist you to:

- self-reflect on the impact of your learning and practice on student outcomes
- self-assess your current practice
- conduct professional discussions with colleagues
- develop performance and development goals
- formulate professional learning plans.

(i) The Departments of Education, Catholic education offices and Independent schools associations in each of the states and territories are also a great source of information and resources regarding the Standards.

What do the Standards look like in practice?

AITSL has filmed a large number of teachers at work across Australia. To see specific Descriptors of the Standards in practice and what that might look like in someone else's classroom these films have been developed into Illustrations of Practice on the AITSL website.

You might be interested in seeing how different schools focus on performance and development in their context. A range of videos and support resources can be found here.

Remember that we can learn from each other, including from practice in other countries. The OECD has undertaken considerable research on the education profession across the world, a short snapshot of which can be found here.

If you are interested in finding further resources aligned to the Standards for use by you, your colleagues, or your school, please refer to the Teacher Toolkit. You may also like to look at different sharing spaces on the internet including various communities of practice, Twitter and individual school websites.

How are the Standards organised?

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers'* (AITSL 2011b) framework comprises three *Domains of Teaching* that are sub-divided into seven *Standards*, as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Domains of teaching	Standards
Standard 1:	1. Know students and how they learn
Standard 2:	2. Know the content and how to teach it
Standard 3:	3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
Standard 4:	4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
Standard 5:	5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
Standard 6:	6. Engage in professional learning
Standard 7:	7. Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Table 1: Overview of the Domains of Teaching and Standards in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

Each of the seven *Standards* is further sub-divided into *Focus Areas*, which specify particular aspects of professional knowledge, practice and engagement in *Descriptors* that collectively construct a differentiated four-stage career continuum for teachers. Table 2 below outlines the Focus Areas and the Descriptors stipulated for Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers in Standard 6.

Standard 6 – Engage in professional learning				
Focus area	**Graduate**	**Proficient**	**Highly Accomplished**	**Lead**
6.1 **Identify and plan professional learning needs**	Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.	Use the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and advice from colleagues to identify and plan professional learning needs.	Analyse the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to plan personal professional development goals, support colleagues to identify and achieve personal development goals and pre-service teachers to improve classroom practice.	Use comprehensive knowledge of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to plan and lead the development of professional learning policies and programs that address the professional learning needs of colleagues and pre-service teachers.
6.2 **Engage in professional learning and improve practice**	Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.	Participate in learning to update knowledge and practice, targeted to professional needs and school and/or system priorities.	Plan for professional learning by accessing and critiquing relevant research, engage in high quality targeted opportunities to improve practice and offer quality placements for pre-service teachers where applicable.	Initiate collaborative relationships to expand professional learning opportunities, engage in research, and provide quality opportunities and placements for pre-service teachers.
6.3 **Engage with colleagues and improve practice**	Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.	Contribute to collegial discussions and apply constructive feedback from colleagues to improve professional knowledge and practice.	Initiate and engage in professional discussions with colleagues in a range of forums to evaluate practice directed at improving professional knowledge and practice, and the educational outcomes of students.	Implement professional dialogue within the school or professional learning network(s) that is informed by feedback, analysis of current research and practice to improve the educational outcomes of students.
6.4 **Apply professional learning and improve student learning**	Demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.	Undertake professional learning programs designed to address identified student learning needs.	Engage with colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher professional learning activities to address student learning needs.	Advocate, participate in and lead strategies to support high-quality professional learning opportunities for colleagues that focus on improved student learning.

Table 2: Overview of the Focus Areas and differentiated Descriptors across the career continuum for Standard 6
(AITSL 2011b, p. 18)

Further explanation on unpacking the Standards is available. There is a wealth of information on the Teacher Standards section of the AITSL website, and also information available through your employer and teacher regulatory authority.

Why should I examine the terminology used in the Standards?

Examining the terminology of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL 2011b) will reveal the common language presented in the framework, which is referred to as the lexical fingerprint. The lexical fingerprint refers to the distinctive qualitative and quantitative patterns within the Descriptors for career stages, or more simply the different patterns of the words that appear across the career stages. Becoming familiar with the lexical fingerprint will enable you to interrogate your current level of practice and identify areas for growth and development, and provide school leaders and teacher educators with the terminology required to provide effective feedback to colleagues.

What are the lexical patterns that I am looking for?

To closely examine the terminology (lexicon) of the Standards you need to look at the patterns within the Descriptors and across the career stages. An exploration of the brief career stage overview in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL 2011b, pp. 6-7) provides preliminary insight into the distinctive career stage related terminology that is developed further in the Standards.

Certain terms may be associated exclusively or predominantly with particular career stages, for example:

- ◆ 'qualification' is used exclusively in the Graduate career stage
- ◆ 'specialist' is used exclusively in the Highly Accomplished career stage
- ◆ 'inspire' and 'exemplary' are used exclusively in the Lead career stage.

The terms 'effectively' and 'understand/ing' (by teachers) are used across all career stages, although their distribution is uneven:

- ◆ 'effective/ly' is used increasingly across the career stage trajectory
- ◆ in contrast, 'understanding' is used predominately in relation to the Graduate career stage.

This information relates specifically to the *very* brief overview of the career stages, and so you are encouraged to look in more detail at the specific Descriptors of each career stage to find patterns in the lexical fingerprints.

Over to you

To begin looking at the lexical patterns and identifying quantitative and qualitative patterns you will need to use the four documents found in appendix 1 which contain the Descriptors for each career stage organised by Standard and Focus Area. Use the search function (Ctrl F or Command F) to find the words that are listed in the table below. Take note of the number of times each word appears within each career stage. You may, of course, choose to search for additional words.

For example, searching for the word 'demonstrate', reveals career stage related differences in lexical frequency. It is used:

- ◆ 21 times in the Graduate Descriptors
- ◆ not at all in the Proficient Descriptors
- ◆ once in the Highly Accomplished Descriptors
- ◆ 4 times in the Lead Descriptors.

	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
Support				
Colleagues				
Demonstrate				
Initiate				

It is about more than just the word frequency though. How do I delve deeper?

When looking at lexical patterns (frequency of words) the collocations (word combinations) must also be considered. Firth once stated that "You shall know a word by the company it keeps" (Firth 1957, p. 11). The crucial insight here is that words keep different company in the Descriptor sets that configure particular versions of the career stages, as demonstrated in Table 3 below.

- ◆ At the Graduate career stage 'demonstrating' refers to the teacher having a (broad) *knowledge* and/or *understanding* and/or capacity
- ◆ At the Lead career stage 'demonstrating' refers to the teacher demonstrating *exemplary* practice / teaching and 'demonstrating' through *leading*.

Indeed, the terms 'exemplary', 'lead' and 'leadership' are exclusively associated with Lead Descriptors.

Graduate	
1.1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of…	1.4. Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of…
1.2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of…	2.4. Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect…
1.5. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of…	5.1. Demonstrate understanding of…
2.1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of…	5.3. Demonstrate understanding of…
1.3. Demonstrate knowledge of….	5.5. Demonstrate understanding of…
3.4. Demonstrate knowledge of…	4.5. Demonstrate an understanding of…
4.3. Demonstrate knowledge of…	5.2. Demonstrate an understanding of…
1.6. Demonstrate broad knowledge of…	6.1. Demonstrate an understanding of…
3.6. Demonstrate broad knowledge of…	6.4. Demonstrate an understanding of…
	4.2. Demonstrate the capacity to…
	5.4. Demonstrate the capacity to…
	3.5. Demonstrate a range of…

Proficient	Lead
None	2.1 demonstrate exemplary teaching of…
Highly Accomplished	3.1 Demonstrate exemplary practice and…
7.3. Demonstrate responsiveness in all…	4.1 Demonstrate and lead by example…
	3.5 Demonstrate and lead by example…

Table 3: Collocations of the term 'demonstrate' across the career stages (compiled from AITSL 2011b)

Looking at the lexical patterns alone will not give you a full picture. For example, the word 'support' can be found in all four career stages, however it is *how* the word is used that is important (that is, the collocations – the accompanying words).

Over to you

In the previous 'Over to you', you began investigating the lexical patterns by searching for particular words within Descriptors across all career stages. You can now further investigate the lexical patterns by searching for the collocations involving these words. Begin with the collocations for the word 'colleagues', which are outlined in the table below, and record the number of times they occur for each career stage. You may also choose to investigate other collocations across the career stages.

	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
lead colleagues				
support colleagues				
assist colleagues				
work with colleagues				
advice from colleagues				
feedback from colleagues				

Over to you

The linguistic insights gained through delving into the lexical patterns of the Standards are useful in having constructive conversations with colleagues and when writing appropriately targeted reports, etc. When you are reflecting on your practice, using lexical patterns, including collocations, to frame your thinking will enable you to view your practice in a different light. By doing this it will allow you to match your current practice with the relevant career stage within the Standards.

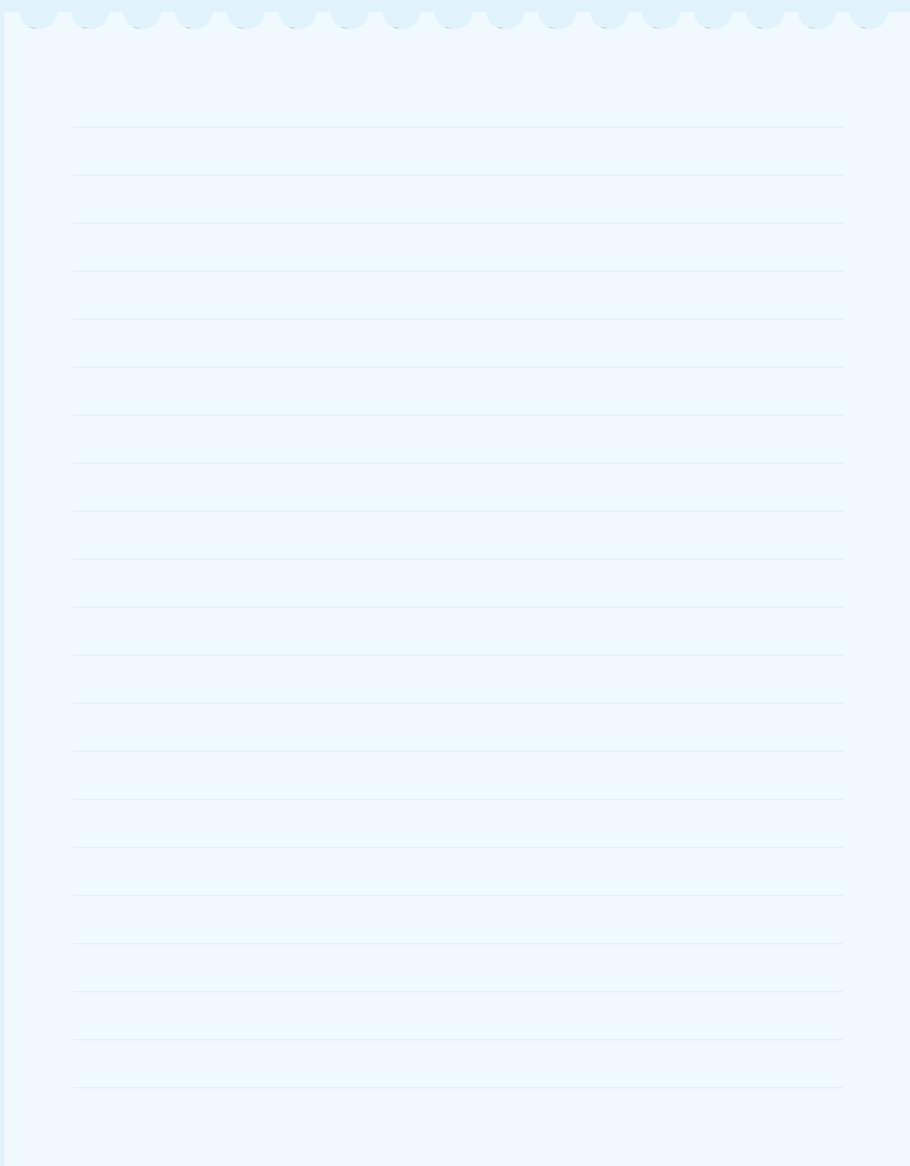What are some other ways that you might be able to use lexical patterns in your teaching practice?

How do the Standards apply to me and my school?

Some questions that you might like to explore either by yourself, as part of a team, or with a critical friend/mentor include:

- What is your teaching philosophy? How do you believe that children learn? How do you express who you are as a teacher?

- How are the Standards being used in your school or context for performance and development processes?

- With a greater understanding of the Standards now, how could you help improve these processes to focus on continual improvement for all teachers?

- Is professional learning in your school selected based on identified areas in the Standards where improvement is needed?

- How can teachers effectively collaborate with colleagues to share their professional learning?

- Does your school have a shared understanding of effective teaching? How could you help to shape/build/develop this?

- How do the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers assist in defining effective teaching?

- If there was/was not a shared understanding of effective teaching, what effect would this have on the culture at the school?

- What is the process of knowledge sharing in your context? Could this process be improved? If yes, how? If not, what makes it so effective?

Over to you

You might like to share your thoughts with others by having a discussion with colleagues both within and beyond your school. You can also visit Teacher Feature (http://www.teacherfeature.aitsl.edu.au/) and Great Teaching Ideas (http://www.greatteachingideas.aitsl.edu.au/) on the AITSL website to watch short videos of teachers across Australia talking about their practice and teaching ideas. Remember that continual sharing of fantastic ideas beyond
classroom walls and across schools will further encourage a culture of sharing in our profession.

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Appendix 1

Graduate Descriptors

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5	STANDARD 6	STANDARD 7
1.1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.	2.1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.	3.1. Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.	4.1. Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.	5.1. Demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.	6.1. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.	7.1. Understand and apply the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.
1.2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.	2.2. Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.	3.2. Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.	4.2. Demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.	5.2. Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.	6.2. Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.	7.2. Understand the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.
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.	2.3. Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.	3.3. Include a range of teaching strategies.	4.3. Demonstrate knowledge of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.	5.3. Demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.	6.3. Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.	7.3. Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.
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.	2.4. Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.	3.4. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.	4.4. Describe strategies that support students' well-being and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.	5.4. Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.	6.4. Demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.	7.4. Understand the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers' professional knowledge and practice.
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.	2.5. Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.	3.5. Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.	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.	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.		
1.6. Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.	2.6. Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum learning opportunities for students.	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.				

Proficient Descriptors

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5	STANDARD 6	STANDARD 7
1.1. Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.	2.1. Apply knowledge of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area to develop engaging teaching activities.	3.1. Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.	4.1. Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.	5.1. Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.	6.1. Use the National Professional Standards for Teachers and advice from colleagues to identify and plan professional learning needs.	7.1. Meet codes of ethics and conduct established by regulatory authorities, systems and schools.
1.2. Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn.	2.2. Organise content into coherent, well-sequenced learning and teaching programs.	3.2. Plan and implement well-structured learning and teaching programs or lesson sequences that engage students and promote learning.	4.2. Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.	5.2. Provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals.	6.2. Participate in learning to update knowledge and practice, targeted to professional needs and school and/or system priorities.	7.2. Understand the implications of and comply with relevant legislative, administrative, organisational and professional requirements, policies and processes.
1.3. Design and implement teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.	2.3. Design and implement learning and teaching programs using knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.	3.3. Select and use relevant teaching strategies to develop knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.	4.3. Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully.	5.3. Understand and participate in assessment moderation activities to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.	6.3. Contribute to collegial discussions and apply constructive feedback from colleagues to improve professional knowledge and practice.	7.3. Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children's learning and well-being.
1.4. Design and implement effective teaching strategies that are responsive to the local community and cultural setting, linguistic background and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	2.4. Provide opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.	3.4. Select and/or create and use a range of resources, including ICT, to engage students in their learning.	4.4. Ensure students' well-being and safety within school by implementing school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.	5.4. Use student assessment data to analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice.	6.4. Undertake professional learning programs designed to address identified student learning needs.	7.4. Participate in professional and community networks and forums to broaden knowledge and improve practice.
1.5. Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.	2.5. Apply knowledge and understanding of effective teaching strategies to support students' literacy and numeracy achievement.	3.5. Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student understanding, participation, engagement and achievement.	4.5. Incorporate strategies to promote the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.	5.5. Report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records.		
1.6. Design and implement teaching activities that support the participation and learning of students with disability and address relevant policy and legislative requirements.	2.6. Use effective teaching strategies to integrate ICT into learning and teaching programs to make selected content relevant and meaningful.	3.6. Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.				
		3.7. Plan for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning.				

Highly Accomplished Descriptors

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5	STANDARD 6	STANDARD 7
1.1. Select from a flexible and effective repertoire of teaching strategies to suit the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students.	2.1. Support colleagues using current and comprehensive knowledge of content and teaching strategies to develop and implement engaging learning and teaching programs.	3.1. Develop a culture of high expectations for all students by modeling and setting challenging learning goals.	4.1. Model effective practice and support colleagues to implement inclusive strategies that engage and support all students.	5.1. Develop and apply a comprehensive range of assessment strategies to diagnose learning needs, comply with curriculum requirements and support colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of their approaches to assessment.	6.1. Analyse the National Professional Standards for Teachers to plan personal professional development goals, support colleagues to identify and achieve personal development goals and pre service teachers to improve classroom practice.	7.1. Maintain high ethical standards and support colleagues to interpret codes of ethics and exercise sound judgment in all school and community contexts.
1.2. Expand understanding of how students learn using research and workplace knowledge.	2.2. Exhibit innovative practice in the selection and organisation of content and delivery of learning and teaching programs.	3.2. Work with colleagues to plan, evaluate and modify learning and teaching programs to create productive learning environments that engage all students.	4.2. Model and share with colleagues a flexible repertoire of strategies for classroom management to ensure all students are engaged in purposeful activities.	5.2. Select from an effective range of strategies to provide targeted feedback based on informed and timely judgements of each student's current needs in order to progress learning.	6.2. Plan for professional learning by accessing and critiquing relevant research, engage in high quality targeted opportunities to improve practice and offer quality placements for preservice teachers where applicable.	7.2. Support colleagues to review and interpret legislative, administrative, and organisational requirements, policies and processes.
1.3. Support colleagues to develop effective teaching strategies that address the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.	2.3. Support colleagues to plan and implement learning and teaching programs using contemporary knowledge and understanding of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.	3.3. Support colleagues to select and apply effective teaching strategies to develop knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.	4.3. Develop and share with colleagues a flexible repertoire of behaviour management strategies using expert knowledge and workplace experience.	5.3. Organise assessment moderation activities that support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.	6.3. Initiate and engage in professional discussions with colleagues in a range of forums to evaluate practice directed at improving professional knowledge and practice, and the educational outcomes of students.	7.3. Demonstrate responsiveness in all communications with parents/carers about their children's learning and well-being.
1.4. Provide advice and support colleagues in the implementation of effective teaching strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students using knowledge of and support from community representatives.	2.4. Support colleagues with providing opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.	3.4. Assist colleagues to create, select and use a wide range of resources, including ICT, to engage students in their learning.	4.4. Initiate and take responsibility for implementing current school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements to ensure student wellbeing and safety.	5.4. Work with colleagues to use data from internal and external student assessments for evaluating learning and teaching, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice.	6.4. Engage with colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher professional learning activities to address student learning needs.	7.4. Contribute to professional networks and associations and build productive links with the wider community to improve teaching and learning.
1.5. Evaluate learning and teaching programs, using student assessment data that are differentiated for the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.	2.5. Support colleagues to implement effective teaching strategies to improve students' literacy and numeracy achievement.	3.5. Assist colleagues to select a wide range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support students' understanding, engagement and achievement.	4.5. Model, and support colleagues to develop, strategies to promote the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.	5.5. Work with colleagues to construct accurate, informative and timely reports to students and parents/ carers about student learning and achievement.		
1.6. Work with colleagues to access specialist knowledge, and relevant policy and legislation, to develop teaching programs that support the participation and learning of students with disability.	2.6. Model high-level teaching knowledge and skills and work with colleagues to use current ICT to improve their teaching practice and make content relevant and meaningful.	3.6. Work with colleagues to review current teaching and learning programs using student feedback, student assessment data, knowledge of curriculum and workplace practices.				
		3.7. Work with colleagues to provide appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning.				

Lead Descriptors

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5	STANDARD 6	STANDARD 7
1.1 Lead colleagues to select and develop teaching strategies to improve student learning using knowledge of the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students.	2.1 Lead initiatives within the school to evaluate and improve knowledge of content and teaching strategies and demonstrate exemplary teaching of subjects using effective, research based learning and teaching programs.	3.1 Demonstrate exemplary practice and high expectations and lead colleagues to encourage students to pursue challenging goals in all aspects of their education.	4.1 Demonstrate and lead by example the development of productive and inclusive learning environments across the school by reviewing inclusive strategies and exploring new approaches to engage and support all students.	5.1 Evaluate school assessment policies and strategies to support colleagues with: using assessment data to diagnose learning needs, complying with curriculum, system and/or school assessment requirements and using a range of assessment strategies.	6.1 Use comprehensive knowledge of the National Professional Standards for Teachers to plan and lead the development of professional learning policies and programs that address the professional learning needs of colleagues and preservice teachers.	7.1 Model exemplary ethical behaviour and exercise informed judgements in all professional dealings with students, colleagues and the community.
1.2 Lead processes to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programs using research and workplace knowledge about how students learn.	2.2 Lead initiatives that utilise comprehensive content knowledge to improve the selection and sequencing of content into coherently organised learning and teaching programs.	3.2 Exhibit exemplary practice and lead colleagues to plan, implement and review the effectiveness of their learning and teaching programs to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills.	4.2 Initiate strategies and lead colleagues to implement effective classroom management and promote student responsibility for learning.	5.2 Model exemplary practice and initiate programs to support colleagues in applying a range of timely, effective and appropriate feedback strategies.	6.2 Initiate collaborative relationships to expand professional learning opportunities, engage in research, and provide quality opportunities and placements for preservice teachers.	7.2 Initiate, develop and implement relevant policies and processes to support colleagues' compliance with and understanding of existing and new legislative, administrative, organisational and professional responsibilities.
1.3 Evaluate and revise school learning and teaching programs, using expert and community knowledge and experience, to meet the needs of students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.	2.3 Lead colleagues to develop learning and teaching programs using comprehensive knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.	3.3 Work with colleagues to review, modify and expand their repertoire of teaching strategies to enable students to use knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.	4.3 Lead and implement behaviour management initiatives to assist colleagues to broaden their range of strategies.	5.3 Lead and evaluate moderation activities that ensure consistent and comparable judgements of student learning to meet curriculum and school or system requirements.	6.3 Implement professional dialogue within the school or professional learning network(s) that is informed by feedback, analysis of current research and practice to improve the educational outcomes of students.	7.3 Identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage parents/carers in both the progress of their children's learning and in the educational priorities of the school.
1.4 Develop teaching programs that support equitable and ongoing participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by engaging in collaborative relationships with community representatives and parents/carers.	2.4 Lead initiatives to assist colleagues with opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.	3.4 Model exemplary skills and lead colleagues in selecting, creating and evaluating resources, including ICT, for application by teachers within or beyond the school.	4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of student well-being policies and safe working practices using current school and/ or system, curriculum and legislative requirements and assist colleagues to update their practices.	5.4 Co-ordinate student performance and program evaluation using internal and external student assessment data to improve teaching practice.	6.4 Advocate, participate in and lead strategies to support high-quality professional learning opportunities for colleagues that focus on improved student learning.	7.4 Take a leadership role in professional and community networks and support the involvement of colleagues in external learning opportunities.
1.5 Lead colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching programs differentiated for the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.	2.5 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of teaching strategies within the school to improve students' achievement in literacy and numeracy using research based knowledge and student data.	3.5 Demonstrate and lead by example inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication using collaborative strategies and contextual knowledge to support students' understanding, engagement and achievement.	4.5 Review or implement new policies and strategies to ensure the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.	5.5 Evaluate and revise reporting and accountability mechanisms in the school to meet the needs of students, parents/carers and colleagues.		
1.6 Initiate and lead the review of school policies to support the engagement and full participation of students with disability and ensure compliance with legislative and/or system policies.	2.6 Lead and support colleagues within the school to select and use ICT with effective teaching strategies to expand learning opportunities and content knowledge for all students.	3.6 Conduct regular reviews of teaching and learning programs using multiple sources of evidence including: student assessment data, curriculum documents, teaching practices and feedback from parents/ carers, students and colleagues.				
		3.7 Initiate contextually relevant processes to establish programs that involve parents/ carers in the education of their children and broader school priorities and activities.				

Developing a professional mindset

How to use this workbook

This workbook is part of a series designed to encourage teachers to continually reflect on their practice by developing a deliberate inquiry mindset. The focus is on improvement of practice and student outcomes through both informal and formal situations. For example, it may guide self-reflection, self-inquiry and discussion with colleagues, as well as support local performance and development processes and external processes such as certification.

Workbooks in this series are:

- Working with the Standards
- Developing a professional mindset
- Demonstrating impact
- Recognising exemplary teachers

This workbook, 'Developing a professional mindset', encourages you to continue to grow as a professional in order to improve the outcomes for your students. To effectively reflect on your practice is a learned skill and the key to continual improvement. You can establish a mindset of reflection through exploration of your teaching philosophy, your roles within and outside the classroom and developing trusted relationships with colleagues. The journey through this workbook will assist you to receive feedback on your practice and improve and develop effective relationships with colleagues.

This series of workbooks can be used individually, or as stimulus for discussion with colleagues. Each PDF is editable and responses can be typed directly into the document when prompted. To use this feature you must save the document to your computer and have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. A free download is available from: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat.html. Please note, direct editing may be unavailable on some mobile devices.

Acknowledgment

The ability to articulate what it is that you actually do as a teacher on a daily basis, and the capacity to reflect on your practice are learned skills. Effective teachers are able to do this objectively which allows them to continually improve their practice, continue to develop and grow as professionals and continually improve outcomes for students.

> *Effective teachers possess a variety of skill sets that just seem to appear magically. I'm willing to bet that at the core of each developed skill lays a chamber that holds remnants of reflection. Most likely, the effective teachers that we know and admire are those who learned how to be extremely reflective somewhere along the way. They're the kind of teacher who repeatedly self-questions. The cycle of planning, teaching, and reflecting runs continuously through their veins, grounding their practice. They value the reflective phase of the cycle and see it as a means of growth that leads to effective teaching and student success. They repeat this cycle again and again until objectives are met.*
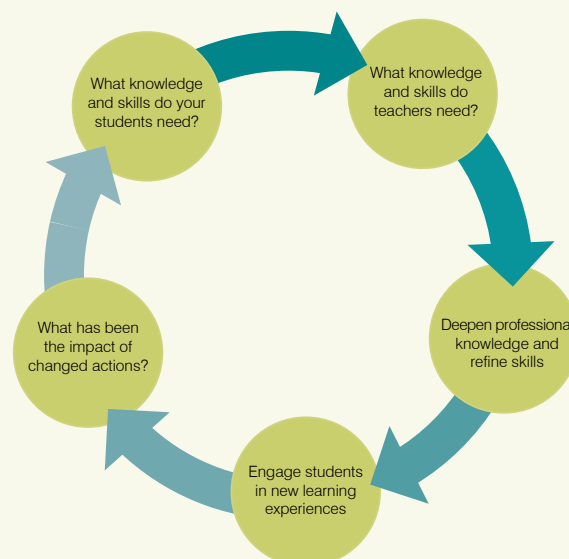>
> *The whole truth of the matter is that effective teachers aren't born with "it." The "it" of an effective teacher is developed through the reflection process over a period of time (Monteiro 2013, para 5).*

There are a variety of ways to reflect on your practice and many questions you can ask yourself about your practice.

To reflect on your practice, it is necessary to use an effective process, and have the correct mindset and guidance. According to Timperley et al. (2008), teachers must use a process of inquiry and systematic knowledge building to learn more effective teaching practices. Hattie and Timperley (2007) outline the following three questions that a learner must be able to answer to undertake effective formative assessment:

- ◆ Where am I going? ◆ How am I doing? ◆ Where to next?

A cycle of teacher inquiry and knowledge building to promote valued student outcomes is represented in the following diagram. You can use this to reflect on your practice, and as a framework for working through the content of this section.

What knowledge and skills do your students need?

What knowledge and skills do teachers need?

Deepen professional knowledge and refine skills

Engage students in new learning experiences

What has been the impact of changed actions?

Adapted from: Teacher professional learning and development by Helen Timperley (2008)

What does it mean to be a professional?

As a teacher you are a professional, just like doctors, lawyers, architects and so on, and you are also a member of a profession. So what does this actually mean?

According to Shulman (2004), professionals are those who are educated with and utilise bodies of knowledge to serve others. He describes professions as having "practice rooted in bodies of knowledge that are created, tested, elaborated, refuted, transformed, and reconstituted in colleges, universities, laboratories, libraries, and museums." (Shulman 2004, p. 14). Importantly, Shulman recognises one of the challenges for members of a profession is "*learning from experience*…[and] from contemplation of their own practice" (p. 15).
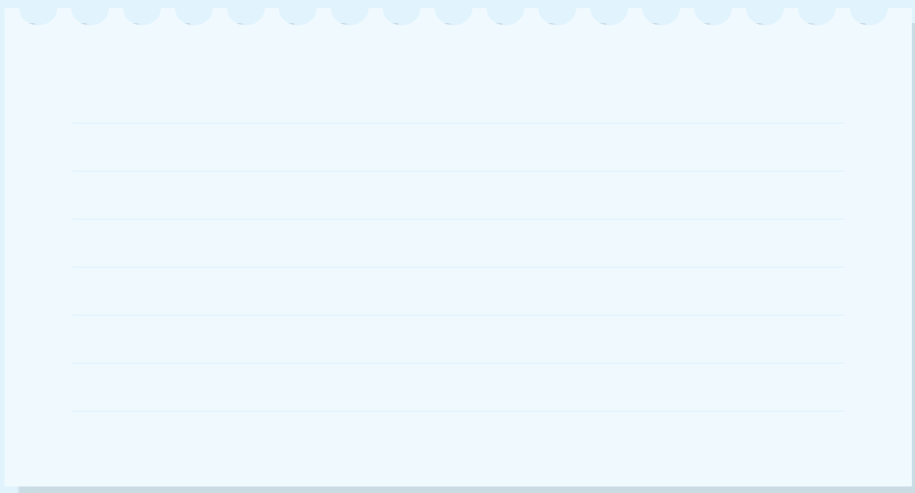
What this means for you, as a member of the teaching profession, is that it is your responsibility to share with colleagues, to learn from others, and to embrace lifelong learning. To increase your professional knowledge and enable yourself to grow as a professional, you must be able to continually reflect on your practice. Reflection is the key to growth, development and improving outcomes for your students. Developing a mindset around this should be a focus for you as a professional.

Over to you

Consider the following quotation:

We know from experience that there is not a widely shared view of what constitutes quality instruction – not among teachers, principals, or school district leaders. We think this poses a fundamental and challenging issue for educational leaders and policy makers. Without a shared understanding of what we mean by quality instruction, we have no basis from which to mount an improvement effort (Fink & Markholt 2011, p. 5).

- ◆ Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not?
- ◆ How do you define quality instruction?
- ◆ What evidence would you put forward to support your point of view?

What do I believe about learning?

The questions below are aimed at prompting your thinking about yourself as an educator, and what you believe about the ways young people learn. They encourage you to think about your teaching philosophy, teaching approach or teaching style, depending on which terminology you prefer, and what makes you the teacher that you are. The role of learning theories and how you structure the learning for your students are key elements within this process.

- Do you have a theory about how students learn?
- What is the relationship between learning theories and practice?
- What knowledge and skills do you need in order to impact upon student learning?
- What is the importance of prior knowledge in the learning process?
- What does your management of resources and design of the learning space reveal about how you think students learn best?

It is easy to fall into the same patterns and neglect to look at things from different perspectives. Your answers to the above questions may have you thinking and questioning what you do each day in your role as a teacher. These are just a few questions you may want to ask yourself and you will be able to think of many more.

What is my teaching philosophy?

Your teaching philosophy is possibly something you have not thought about since you trained to be a teacher. You might like to talk to your colleagues both in your school and beyond about what their teaching philosophies are, and you might also like to search the internet to see some examples. Remember that your teaching philosophy will grow and develop as you evolve as a practitioner and it should be grounded in pedagogical theory.

In thinking about and documenting your teaching philosophy you might like to use the following questions to frame your thinking:

- Why did you become a teacher?
- What makes you teach the way you do?
- How do the Standards influence your development as a teacher?
- What is the role of the teacher in the learning process?
- What is the role of the students in the learning process?
- What have been the most significant influences on your practice as a teacher?

Over to you

Review your teaching philosophy and the pedagogical theories in which it is grounded. What is the value in sharing and discussing your teaching philosophy and practice with colleagues?

Once documented you can use your teaching philosophy to help you reflect on your practice, develop applications for a new position or promotion, or as the basis for performance and development discussions. In what other ways might you draw on your teaching philosophy?

How do I reflect on my teaching?

You can also reflect on a particular lesson rather than focus on your whole role as a teacher. You can do this by yourself, or to enrich the reflection you may like to have a coaching conversation with a colleague. Some questions you might like to use for the reflection include:
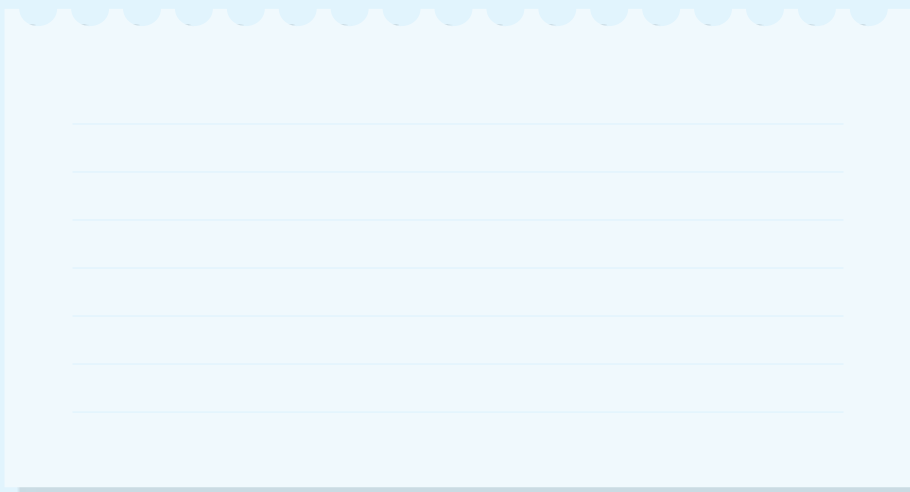
- ◆ How did you feel about this lesson?
- ◆ What were the strengths of this lesson?
- ◆ What strategies worked well with your students?
- ◆ How did your lesson meet the learning objectives?
- ◆ What did you observe about your students during this lesson?
- ◆ When were your students most engaged?

- How did your students react to the lesson and is it what you expected from them?
- What evidence do you have to show that the students learned?
- How did your method of assessment provide information about the level of student understanding?
- Which part of the lesson felt most challenging? For you? For the students?
- Did you do anything differently to what you had initially planned?
- What aspects of the lesson might you do differently next time?
- What could you do to enhance the lesson and maximise the learning of students?
- Is there anything specific about your teaching that you want to improve?
- Do you have a mentor/critical friend to support you as you continue with planning for instruction?
- Did you use student data to inform the lesson development?
- Do you gather feedback from your students during this lesson to inform future practice?

(adapted from Marzano Research Laboratory 2012)

Over to you

You may also think about how reflecting in this way enables you to learn about your teaching practice. What conclusions can you draw and how may this impact on your practice?

How do I reflect on other aspects of my role as a teacher?

A teacher's role involves much more than just spending time in a classroom. It also includes conversations with parents/guardians, taking on positions of responsibility, providing extra help for students, mentoring a colleague, and going to school camp, to name just a few. Think about the following questions in relation to your own practice:

- How often do you speak with parents/guardians? Would you like to speak with them more often? If so, how could you facilitate this?
- What is the focus of your conversations with parents/guardians? Is this a two-way conversation?
- How do you ensure that students receive the extra help that they need?
- What extracurricular activities are you involved in?
- How do you help to professionally develop your colleagues?
- Why do you help to professionally develop colleagues?

Undertaking a self-assessment can be very powerful. A free online self-assessment tool (SAT) based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers is available and this enables teachers at all career stages to reflect upon their practice.

All of the questions and suggestions so far are to encourage you to dig deeper about who you are as a teacher, critically reflect on your practice and make a conscious decision to be an active learner and really think about what it is that you do each and every day.

Why would you want to do this? Because the only way to improve is to make a concerted effort to do so. Reflection is the key to improvement, and your ongoing growth and development as a professional will depend on your ability to reflect on your practice. To assist you there are tools available, including through your employer and the Teacher Toolkit.

Self-Assessment Tool
www.selfassessment.aitsl.edu.au

Who can help me improve and reflect on my practice?

Having reflected on your own teaching philosophy and practice in a variety of ways, establishing a critical friend and developing this relationship will enable you to gain further insight into your practice from a different perspective. A critical friend is someone who can be with you on the journey to help you develop and grow and continually improve your professional practice.

A critical friend is:

> *a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work*
> *(Costa & Kallick 1993 p. 50).*

Put some thought into who could be a critical friend for you, remembering that you have access to a variety of networks, both within and external to your school. You may have multiple critical friends who can help you to improve different aspects of your practice. Some examples include: curriculum leader, principal, network member and colleague from another school. What is important is that you develop a mindset of reflection and you work to further yourself as a professional to improve your individual practice, the practice of others and that of the teaching profession.

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Demonstrating impact

How to use this workbook

This workbook is part of a series designed to encourage teachers to continually reflect on their practice by developing a deliberate inquiry mindset. The focus is on improvement of practice and student outcomes through both informal and formal situations. For example, it may guide self-reflection, self-inquiry and discussion with colleagues, as well as support local performance and development processes and external processes such as certification.

Workbooks in this series are:

- ◆ Working with the Standards
- ◆ Developing a professional mindset
- ◆ Demonstrating impact
- ◆ Recognising exemplary teachers

This workbook, 'Demonstrating impact', provides guidance around evidencing your practice by exploring characteristics of quality evidence and types of evidence you could draw upon.

Collecting evidence provides stimulus for reflecting on your practice, analysing your impact on student outcomes and colleagues' practice and identifying professional learning needs in order to improve your practice. This is relevant to teachers who are working towards full registration, applying for certification, and for performance and development processes. The information may also be useful to you if you are in a role which supports, supervises and/or mentors colleagues.

This series of workbooks can be used individually, or as stimulus for discussion with colleagues. Each PDF is editable and responses can be typed directly into the document when prompted. To use this feature you must save the document to your computer and have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. A free download is available from: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat.html. Please note, direct editing may be unavailable on some mobile devices.

Working with the Standards	Developing a professional mindset	Demonstrating impact	Recognising exemplary teachers

Acknowledgment

This workbook series stems from the development of the national Certification Assessor Training Program. The content for this Program was developed in partnership with the National Research Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia (SiMERR) based at the University of New England and Certifying Authorities in Australian States and Territories. The content selected for this workbook series has been modified and elaborated in order to provide a set of comprehensive resources that are tailored to the needs of all teachers and school leaders.

Collecting evidence that provides insight into your practice enables ongoing reflection, feedback, growth and development.

Keeping a record of your practice by collecting evidence is one step allowing you to continually reflect and gain feedback on your practice, whilst identifying your strengths and areas for growth and development. This will provide the opportunity for you to improve both yourself as a professional and the outcomes for your students, and can be useful for a number of processes, in particular:

◆ working towards achieving full registration, which involves collecting evidence to demonstrate your achievement against the Proficient career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards)

◆ your school's performance and development process, which involves setting goals and collecting evidence of your practice in order to demonstrate achievement of these goals, reflect on your practice and identify areas for development

◆ applying for certification, which involves submitting evidence that is mapped and annotated to either the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stages.

Broadly speaking, evidence is authentic, reliable and valid information that can be used to support a particular idea or conclusion (AITSL 2011). It can be contained within artefacts, observable actions and products (Sim, Freiberg, White, Allard, Le Cornu & Carter 2012).

Collecting evidence of your practice means you are making a deliberate and active effort to document how your knowledge base about how students learn informs how you work. Evidence must therefore be drawn directly from your own practice and demonstrate how you impact positively on and improve outcomes for your students, and how you collaborate with colleagues. In doing so, it should clearly show:

◆ what you want your students to learn

◆ how you will facilitate this learning

◆ how you will know they have achieved this learning (NBPTS 2005).

Evidence you collect will vary depending on contextual issues including level of schooling, position within a school, type of school, jurisdiction and sector. Understanding your teaching environment and how that context influences your teaching choices and what you do will enable you to utilise evidence that is specific to your context.

What evidence could I draw upon from my practice?

Evidence may vary according to your teaching context. However, regardless of context, evidence you collect should come from multiple sources and include as a minimum: data showing impact on student outcomes; information based on direct observation of teaching; and evidence of collaboration with colleagues (AITSL 2012).

It may be helpful to take note of the following categories of evidence:

- *Teaching and learning programs* – for example, learning tasks and activities, evaluation of teaching and learning programs, and individual student learning plans.
- *Classroom observations* – for example, lesson observation notes, video clips of practice, peer observation notes.
- *Reflection and feedback* – for example, reflections on practice, student conference notes, student, parent/guardian or peer feedback, student survey data, performance review feedback.
- *Student assessment and learning* – for example, assessment plans, assessment strategies, student self/peer assessment feedback, samples of student work, feedback and outcomes.
- *Collaboration and communication* – for example, records of professional conversations, resources co-constructed with colleagues, team meeting notes, records of engaging with parents/guardians and the community.
- *Professional learning* – for example, professional learning plan, professional learning journal, action research project, professional learning provided for colleagues. (AITSL 2013, p. 3)

Further examples of evidence have been outlined for each Descriptor at the Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages. Exploring these may provide you with additional guidance around the types of evidence you could utilise to demonstrate your practice.

These categories and examples were developed as support resources for teachers applying for full registration or certification; however, they may be helpful for any teacher wishing to reflect on their practice and identify areas for growth and development.

As you work towards the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages of the Standards, you will also undertake roles that guide, support, advise and lead others. At these levels your influence reaches beyond the classroom and you not only work to improve your own practice but also to build the capacity of others. Evidence you collect should therefore also demonstrate the positive impact on and improvement in the practice of your colleagues.

Over to you

Now that you have an understanding of what evidence is and how it can assist with your growth and development, it is time to begin exploring your own practice. Think about your current practice and your collaboration with colleagues in relation to the categories above.

What evidence could you draw upon to reflect on your practice?

Consider the following questions to assess the *validity*, *reliability* and *authenticity* of this evidence:

- Why have you selected this evidence?
- How does this evidence demonstrate what you know about effective student learning?
- How does this evidence align with the Standards?
- How does this evidence demonstrate impact on student outcomes?
- How does this evidence demonstrate your growth as a professional?
- What additional evidence could you use to demonstrate your practice?
- How does this evidence demonstrate leadership of and collaboration with colleagues and/or impact on colleagues' practice (if applicable).

Evidencing your practice through classroom observation

You may consider asking a colleague to observe your classroom practice and use this as a source of evidence for your professional growth and development. Ho and Kane (2013) identify this as a form of evidence which provides an opportunity for you to receive direct feedback on your practice. Gates (2013) also recognises it as a useful diagnostic tool, allowing teachers to focus on specific things on which they can improve. Observing classroom practice is therefore a powerful vehicle for you to reflect on and improve your practice. This form of feedback, along with feedback from students, 'can allow teachers to take control of their own development' (Phillips, as cited in Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation 2013, para 2).

Over to you

- What do you believe are the benefits of establishing a culture of classroom observation within a school? What are the challenges?
- To what extent is this already occurring within your school?
- What questions might you ask your students if you were seeking feedback from them about your teaching practice?

The Classroom Practice Continuum is a great instrument, aligned to the Standards, that will assist you and your colleague to have a conversation about where you current practice is situated.

The prospect of having a colleague come into your classroom may seem daunting, and this may or may not be part of the culture at your school. Yet, inviting someone into your classroom is an opportunity for you to gain valuable insights into your own practice by drawing on the expertise of colleagues. Conversely, observing your colleagues teaching will allow you to reciprocate this opportunity for them. It will enable you to critically reflect on the practice of others and may prompt thoughts for your own teaching such as what you might continue doing and what you might do differently.

Trust is an important component of an effective relationship. A good way to build trust with your critical friend is to scaffold the classroom observations with a conversation prior to the lesson to establish what the specific focus might be. Following the lesson, you might like to structure a conversation with your critical friend based around some or all of the key questions which are used as a basis for self-reflection in the 'Developing a professional mindset' workbook.

You might also find it helpful to utilise these coaching resources which have been developed to assist in building a coaching relationship with a colleague and guiding discussions with your critical friend.

An important thing to remember for observing classroom practice is that evidence must be directly observable. Human beings can provide four types of directly observable evidence of abstract learning. We can do, say, make or write things. It is from the things people do, say, make or write that we infer learning, emotions, knowledge, understanding and learning in general (Griffin 2013, pers. comm.). When you visit a colleague's classroom or are observed yourself it is useful to remember the focus is:

◆ What is the teacher doing, saying, making and writing?
◆ What are the students doing, saying, making and writing?
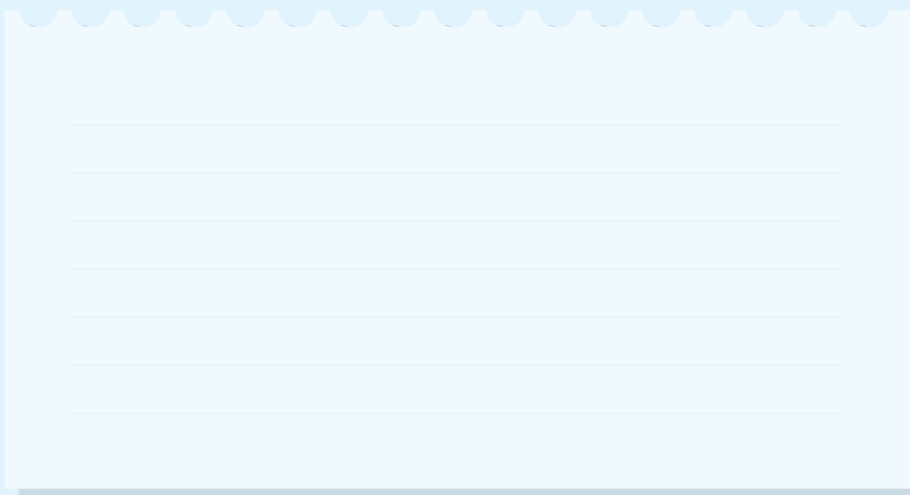◆ What is the nature of the task?

Over to you

A focus for the classroom observation which you have agreed with your critical friend may align with a number of the Standards. Look at the Standards and identify the Focus Areas you believe are directly observable in the classroom.

- ◆ Is this Focus Area (capability) learnable?
- ◆ Is it possible to identify behaviours that would constitute evidence of a teacher having this capability?

Choose one of the Focus Areas you have identified and try to specify some of the things you might see a teacher doing, saying, making or writing that relate to this Focus Area.

Before someone else observes your class, you might like to watch yourself in action – for one idea on how to do this, watch this video - http://on.ted.com/auMa.

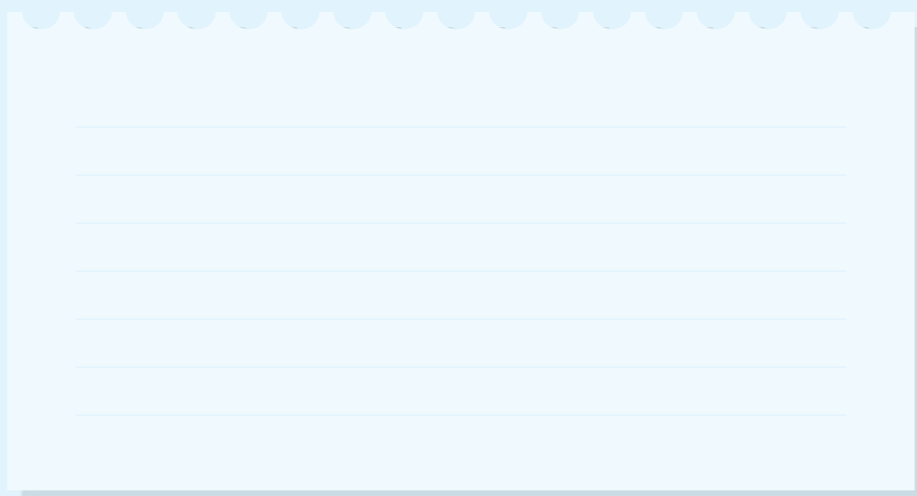# How to receive effective feedback during classroom observations?

There are a range of pedagogical frameworks within Australia and internationally that describe teacher practice and provide shared understandings of quality teaching. At an individual level, these also provide guidance for teachers to assist with reflection on their practice in order to improve the learning experience and outcomes for students. The following are examples of pedagogical frameworks:

- Productive Pedagogies Queensland
- Quality Teaching, NSW
- e5 Instructional Model, Victoria
- The Teaching for Effective Learning Framework, South Australia
- PLATO (Stanford University), CLASS (University of Virginia), and Danielson's Framework for Teaching (New Jersey), which, among others, were used within The Measures of Effective Teaching project
- Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching.

The Classroom Practice Continuum is not a pedagogical framework but supports teachers and school leaders to understand what teacher development looks like on a continuum of increasing proficiency.

Over to you

Do you use a pedagogical model in your school? If so, what is it?
What is the common language used in your school for talking about teaching and learning?

References

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Gates, B 2013, Bill Gates: Teachers need real feedback 2013, online video, viewed 19 March 2014, video recording, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81Ub0SMxZQo>.

Ho, A & Kane, T 2013, The Reliability of Classroom Observations by School Personnel, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, viewed 19 March 2014, <http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Reliability%20of%20Classroom%20Observations_Research%20Paper.pdf>.

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Sim, C, Freiberg, J, White, S, Allard, A, Le Cornu, R & Carter, B 2012, Using Professional Standards: Assessing work integrated learning in initial teacher education [online resource], Australian Teaching and Learning Council, Melbourne, viewed 26 November 2013, <http://www.teacherevidence.net>.

Recognising exemplary teachers

How to use this workbook

This workbook is part of a series designed to encourage teachers to continually reflect on their practice by developing a deliberate inquiry mindset. The focus is on improvement of practice and student outcomes through both informal and formal situations. For example, it may guide self-reflection, self-inquiry and discussion with colleagues, as well as support local performance and development processes and external processes such as certification.

Workbooks in this series are:

- ◆ Working with the Standards
- ◆ Developing a professional mindset
- ◆ Demonstrating impact
- ◆ Recognising exemplary teachers

This workbook, 'Recognising exemplary teachers', provides information about Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia, a process recognising achievement against these two levels of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards).

Working in conjunction with the Guide to Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia (Guide to Certification), the workbook explains how undertaking certification can benefit you and provides information about what the process involves. Guiding questions are included to assist you in formulating an application for certification.

This series of workbooks can be used individually, or as stimulus for discussion with colleagues. Each PDF is editable and responses can be typed directly into the document when prompted. To use this feature you must save the document to your computer and have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. A free download is available from: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat.html. Please note, direct editing may be unavailable on some mobile devices.

Acknowledgment

This workbook series stems from the development of the national Certification Assessor Training Program. The content for this Program was developed in partnership with the National Research Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia (SiMERR) based at the University of New England and Certifying Authorities in Australian States and Territories. The content selected for this workbook series has been modified and elaborated in order to provide a set of comprehensive resources that are tailored to the needs of all teachers and school leaders.

Do you consider yourself a highly effective teacher?

Do you really want to grow and develop as a professional?

Do you want to be recognised across the country for your high level of performance?

Do you want to be the best teacher that you can be?

If you answered yes to the above questions, you should consider applying for certification. Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia is a nationally recognised achievement against the two voluntary levels of the Standards.

Recognition through certification is not new to many systems and sectors across Australia, but what is new is that there are now Standards and a process for certification that is consistent for all teachers in participating jurisdictions across Australia. Now you can be confident that if you achieve certification at either the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, you will be recognised as a highly effective teacher across the nation, not just within your school or system. A list of participating jurisdictions and the associated certifying authorities can be found on the AITSL website.

> The benefits of certification for my own teaching have been incredibly important. The focus on the Standards has helped me to be quite intentional about what I'm doing in the classroom, to be incredibly reflective about my own practice, to look at where there might be gaps and to fill those gaps. As a Deputy Principal, I have found the Standards useful in supporting teachers, not just to achieve a particular kind of certification but to actually become better teachers to improve the teacher quality and the learning in our school.
>
> Melanie, Deputy Principal
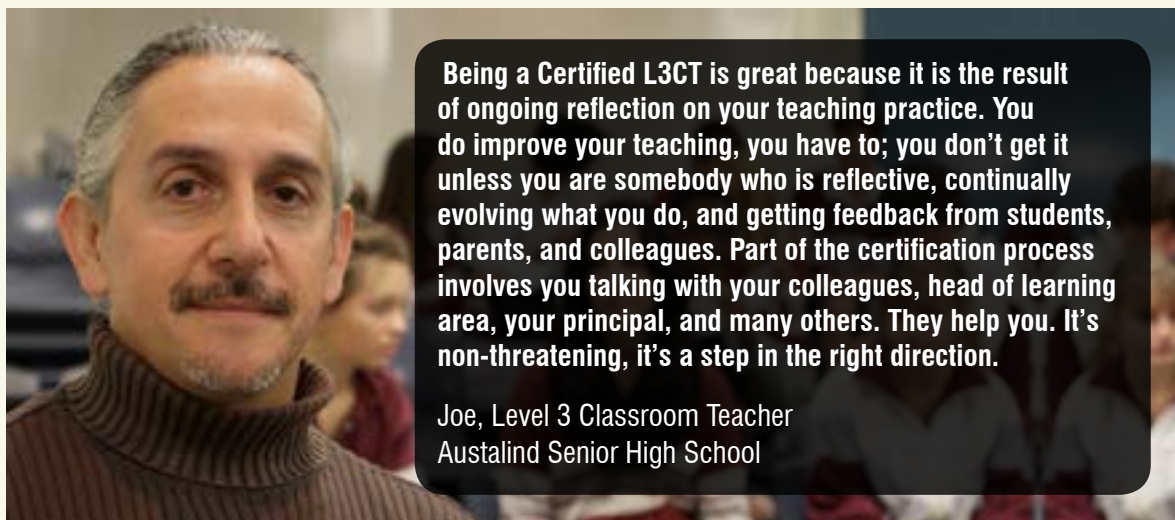> Brindabella Christian College, Australian Capital Territory

What's in it for me?

Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia is a rigorous and transparent process enabling you to receive feedback on your practice and have your practice evaluated by nationally trained assessors who are external to your school. It will expose you to networks across the country and communities of practice enabling you to further develop and grow as a professional whilst improving outcomes for your students.

Certification of exemplary teachers in Australia recognises and promotes the development of collaborative learning professionals who strive to continually reflect upon and improve their practice. Reflection is the central focus of certification as it is a vehicle to improve your practice and make an impact. Reflection on practice assists in identifying learning opportunities with which you could engage, and supports and enhances your ability to:

- choose more effective professional development experiences
- develop better curriculum and learning experiences for your students
- improve your ability to evaluate student learning
- enhance your relationships and interactions with key stakeholders (Ingvarson & Rowe 2007, p. 16).

Use the Self-Assessment Tool to see where you would locate your practice within the Standards.

> Being a Certified L3CT is great because it is the result of ongoing reflection on your teaching practice. You do improve your teaching, you have to; you don't get it unless you are somebody who is reflective, continually evolving what you do, and getting feedback from students, parents, and colleagues. Part of the certification process involves you talking with your colleagues, head of learning area, your principal, and many others. They help you. It's non-threatening, it's a step in the right direction.
>
> Joe, Level 3 Classroom Teacher
> Austalind Senior High School

Self-Assessment Tool
www.selfassessment.aitsl.edu.au

Benefits of Certification

Given that national certification of exemplary teachers is in its infancy in Australia, it is necessary to look at the international research to gain insights into the reported benefits of certification. This section draws on the certification process of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This process operates in the USA and determines whether aspiring teachers meet the requirements specified for National Board-Certified Teacher (NBCT) status. The NBPTS has been chosen for inclusion here because it:

◆ has been in operation since 1987 and has, consequently, produced a large research base

◆ "has made a major contribution to international understanding about…reliable methods for assessing and esteeming teacher performance" (Ingvarson & Hattie 2008, p. 2)

◆ has approximately 106,000 National Board-Certified Teachers by 2013 (NBPTS, 2013)

◆ is a standards-based certification process similar to the Australian process.

In 2001 the NBPTS commissioned a large study that sampled the perceptions of 10,000 National Board-Certified Teachers. According to the findings, teachers reported that the certification process:

◆ made them better teachers (92 per cent)

◆ was an effective professional development experience (96 per cent)

◆ enabled them to create better curricula (89 per cent)

◆ improved their ability to evaluate student learning (89 per cent)

◆ enhanced their interaction with students (82 percent), parents (82 per cent) and colleagues (80 per cent) (Ingvarson & Rowe 2007, p. 16).

> The certification process was very exciting for me and was probably the best professional development I've ever participated in. I felt that I reflected so much on my own practice and really looked closely at what I actually do as a practitioner in the classroom, as well as outside the classroom to support and lead my colleagues. To have national standards is very important for consistency across the nation. Being trained as an assessor will allow me to help others improve their professional practice.
>
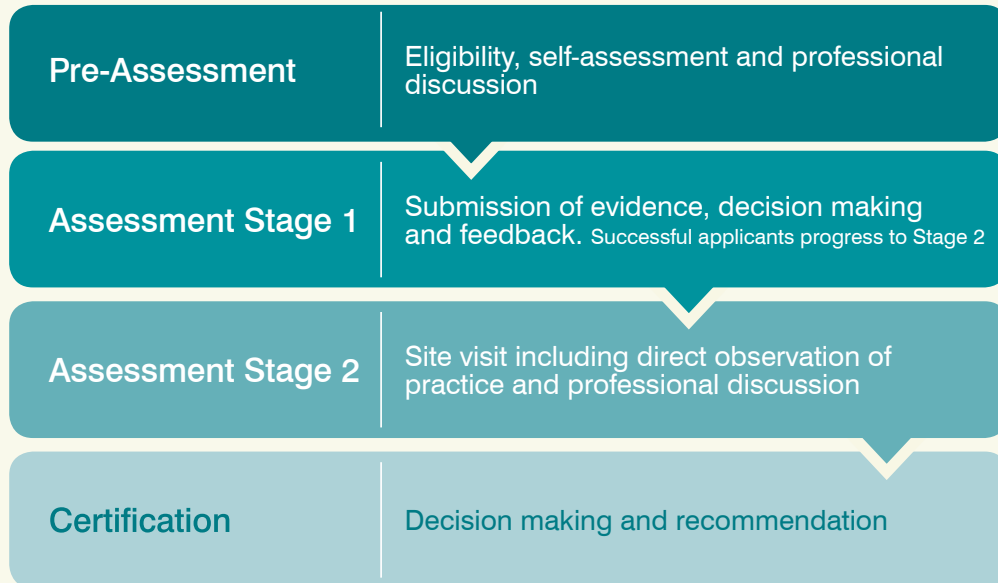> Sharon, Highly Accomplished Teacher
> Northern Territory

If you're interested in reading more about standards and other processes of certification you might like to look at the following research pieces:

◆ The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (http://www.nbpts.org/)

◆ Ingvarson, L & Rowe, K 2007, Conceptualising and evaluating teacher quality: Substantive and methodological issues, ACER.

◆ Kleinhenz E & Ingvarson, L 2007, Standards for teaching: Theoretical underpinnings and applications, New Zealand Teachers Council, Wellington pp. 67-75.

What does the process involve?

The national certification process in Australia has three main elements – a pre-assessment phase and two stages of assessment. There are some differences in the process for the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages. It is your decision, as the applicant, to apply for certification at the Highly Accomplished or the Lead career stage of the Standards.

The following diagram provides an overview of all stages of the certification process.

Pre-Assessment	Eligibility, self-assessment and professional discussion
Assessment Stage 1	Submission of evidence, decision making and feedback. Successful applicants progress to Stage 2
Assessment Stage 2	Site visit including direct observation of practice and professional discussion
Certification	Decision making and recommendation

To find out what is involved at each stage, and to work your way through the pre-assessment stage, read the Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia (AITSL 2013b).

Certifying authorities are responsible for implementing the certification process and will have specific information for you. A list of these are available on the AITSL website at http://www. certification.aitsl.edu.au/certifying-authorities.

What do I need to include in my submission for assessment Stage 1?

Assessment Stage 1 involves submitting a collection of evidence which will be assessed by two independent assessors who are external to your school. Their assessment is based on the Standards.

There are a number of elements which you must include in your collection of evidence. These are listed below, along with page references directing you to relevant sections in the Guide to Certification where you will find detailed information about these aspects of your collection.

- Direct evidence (pp. 11-14)
  - » annotated evidence of your practice
  - » observation reports
- Teacher reflection on the direct evidence (pp. 14-15)
  - » written statement addressing the Standards
  - » written description of a Lead initiative (at the Lead career stage only)
- Referee statements (p. 15).

How do I select and collate evidence of practice?

Working your way through the 'Demonstrating impact' workbook may help you decide on the types of evidence you might use to demonstrate your practice and draw your attention to key checks you must consider to ensure it is authentic, reliable and valid.

Your decision to apply for certification means you are ready to engage in this formal reflective process by putting forward evidence that demonstrates a *holistic* picture of your teaching practice. Certification provides you with the opportunity to have your evidence of practice assessed by trained assessors.

To help you decide on the types of evidence you might choose to submit for your certification application and how you might structure your evidence (e.g. in evidence sets and stand-alone artefacts), have a look at the following resources:

- Certification documentary evidence supplements for the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages. These provide examples of evidence for each Descriptor at these career stages and mapping templates which may assist in mapping your evidence against the Standards.
- The visual representation of a collection of evidence. This provides you with an example of how you might group individual artefacts together to form evidence sets.
- Examples of annotated evidence. These provide you with examples of evidence and annotation to provide context and draw links with the Standards.

Over to you

Consider your own evidence and how you may group artefacts together to form evidence sets or whether you have artefacts that could effectively stand alone. Remember that for evidence to be able to tell the story it must include:

♦ what you want your students to learn

♦ how you will facilitate this learning

♦ how you will know they have achieved this learning (NBPTS 2005).

To assist you with organising your evidence you may download the mapping document for the relevant career stage (Highly Accomplished or Lead) and align your evidence sets/artefacts to the Descriptors. Ensure that you provide at least two pieces of evidence for each of the seven Standards and account for every Descriptor at least once.

Have a discussion with a colleague/critical friend about your evidence mapping and the evidence you are considering putting forward.
You might discuss:

♦ the alignment of your evidence to the Descriptors

♦ the clarity of your evidence in terms of the way you have grouped artefacts together

♦ any additional evidence which may strengthen your whole collection, or evidence which may not be necessary to include.

How do I annotate my evidence?

Annotations should set the context of and tell the story about your evidence. This is information which cannot be gleaned from simply looking at artefacts alone. They draw connections between your evidence and the Descriptors and it is your responsibility to make these connections explicit for the assessor (Figure 1).
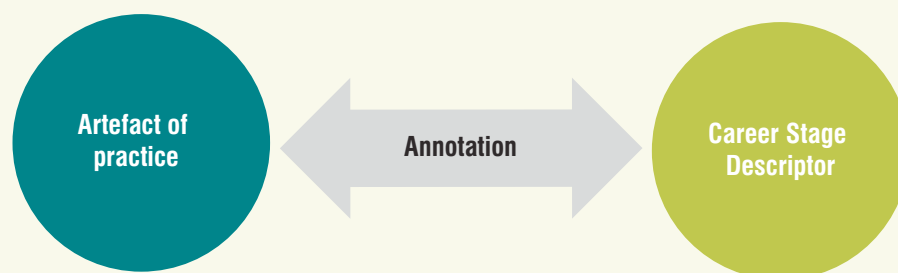
Figure 1: The annotation is essential in order to link the artefact of practice and career stage Descriptors

When an assessor looks at your evidence and annotations they will be making judgements about whether the evidence you submit demonstrates your achievement of the Standards at the relevant career stage. This is why it is important to present your evidence and annotations in a user friendly format and annotate effectively to ensure the assessor will be able to easily follow and understand the various components of your collection and all of the connections that you have drawn.

Read the annotations that accompany the examples of evidence and note the different styles of annotations demonstrated. For instance, both the Cooperative Reading Program and Jump Start New Student Induction Program are evidence sets containing four artefacts. However, each of the annotations accompanying the Cooperative Reading Program relate to one Descriptor, whilst the annotation accompanying the Jump Start Program relates to the whole evidence set and therefore covers multiple Descriptors.

Over to you

Choose one of the evidence sets/stand-alone artefacts that you identified in the mapping document for the previous activity. Consider what form of annotations might be appropriate for this evidence and have a go at writing an annotation. Refer to the following checklist to ensure you include all of the necessary information in your annotation:

- ◆ Have you identified the relevant Standard(s)/Descriptor(s) and used language that demonstrates your understanding of these?
- ◆ Have you described and made explicit links to explain how your evidence demonstrates achievement of the Standards/Descriptors?
- ◆ Have you included analysis and reflection on the practice demonstrated?

- Have you identified your impact on student outcomes?
- Have you identified your impact on the practice of your colleagues, if applicable?
- Have you identified your individual contribution?
- Have you identified the leading/supporting/sharing/modelling role you undertook, if applicable?

Observation reports

The evidence you submit must include at least two observation reports, at least one of which must be from your principal/supervisor or their delegate.

Remember that the observation reports form part of your direct evidence so think about how they may add value to your annotated artefacts and/or evidence sets within your collection. How can they add to the picture you are creating about your teaching practice and help to demonstrate the Standards?

An important element to consider prior to a colleague observing your practice, is the discussion before and after the observation. For further information about how you might ask a colleague to undertake an observation of your practice and what you might discuss with them, see the 'Demonstrating impact' workbook.

Over to you

- Is an observation framework, tool or template being used in your school/system? If so, which one?
- Which of your colleagues might you consider asking to observe your practice? Why?
- How will the classroom observations link with your evidence?

Teacher reflection on the direct evidence – written statement addressing the Standards

You will need to submit a written statement with your collection of evidence. Just as the annotations provide the context and tell the story behind your evidence, your written statement provides an overall picture of your context, your achievement of the Standards and the evidence you are putting forward for assessment.

Over to you

1. What does the assessor need to know about your specific context?

2. What additional information does the assessor require to make sense of your whole collection of evidence?

◆ How will you avoid simply repeating what is already contained within your annotated evidence?

◆ Plan your written statement based on the requirements outlined on page 14 of the *Guide to Certification*.

Teacher reflection on the direct evidence – Lead initiative (for Lead applicants only)

If you are applying for certification as a Lead teacher you will also need to include a description of an initiative you have led within your school or across schools. There are a number of mandatory requirements for the Lead initiative (outlined on page 15 of the *Guide to Certification*). It is important to remember that your Lead initiative must be grounded in the Standards and it is your responsibility to provide valid and explicit links between your initiative and the Descriptors. Therefore when considering what Lead initiative you could describe it may be useful to investigate the Descriptors which link specifically to elements within the mandatory requirements.

Over to you

Read Lead Descriptors 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 and 4.3 of the Standards which all relate to the teacher leading an initiative.

- For each one, identify what an initiative related to this Descriptor might look like in practice.

- Which other Lead Descriptors could refer to the teacher leading an initiative? (e.g. you might look for Descriptors where the term 'leading colleagues' is used.)

- To find descriptors that relate to the remaining mandatory requirements of the Lead initiative you might like to explore the Lead Descriptors and find those that mention the following words:

  - » Design/develop
  - » Review
  - » Engagement
  - » Implementation
  - » Knowledge
  - » Evaluation
  - » Practice

- Identify initiatives you have led which satisfy the mandatory requirements and which were designed to build the capacity of your colleagues.
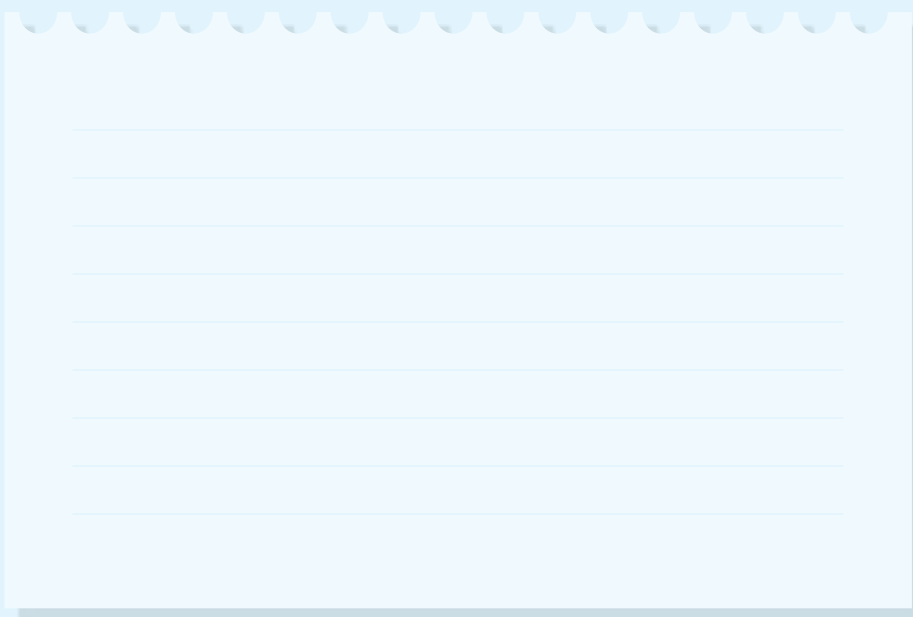
Referee statements

Your annotated evidence and written reflection must be supported by referees' written and/or verbal evaluative statements. You will need to nominate three to five referees, one of which must be your current principal/supervisor or delegate (AITSL 2013a, p. 15).

It is your responsibility to ensure that referees are aware of which annotated evidence within your collection and which Standards/Descriptors they will be asked to comment on so completing the following activity may assist you.

Over to you

- ◆ To ensure you select appropriate referees think about the following:
    - » Which of your colleagues (e.g. teachers, school leaders, teacher educators, specialist staff) have knowledge of the Standards?
    - » Which of your colleagues have a direct knowledge of your practice?
    - » Which of your colleagues may be best placed to comment on your practice, considering the annotated evidence and Lead initiative (if applicable) you have included in your collection?
- ◆ This may be a good time to have a discussion with the colleagues you have identified and share your annotated evidence with them.

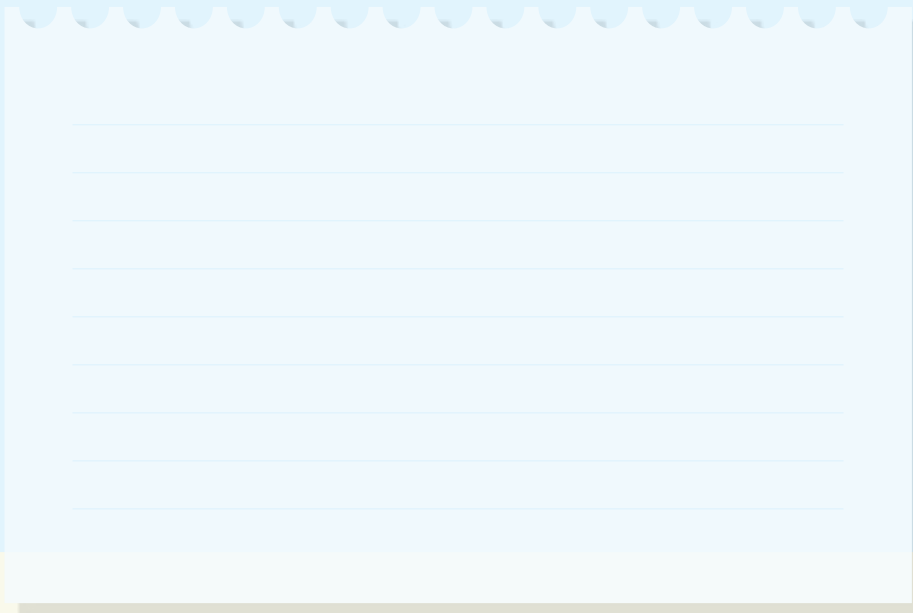# How do I prepare for the site visit for assessment Stage 2?

If you are successful at Stage 1 one of the independent assessors who appraised your application will contact you to arrange a site visit, the purpose of which is to provide additional evidence against a number of the Standards (for further detail on the site visit please refer to pages 17-19 of the *Guide to Certification*).

You will receive a written report in which the assessors may identify suggested areas of focus during the Stage 2 site visit. You are responsible for planning the site visit so it is a good idea to keep these suggestions in mind and to structure the site visit to ensure they are evidenced.

Over to you

- ◆ The classroom observation is a large component of the site visit. What type of lesson will demonstrate your range of teaching capabilities?
- ◆ Other than the classroom observation, what activities might you plan for the assessor to observe in your context? How will these demonstrate the alignment of your practice with the Standards?
- ◆ What other things do you need to consider when planning the site visit (e.g. schedule of the colleagues with whom the assessor will need to have a discussion)?
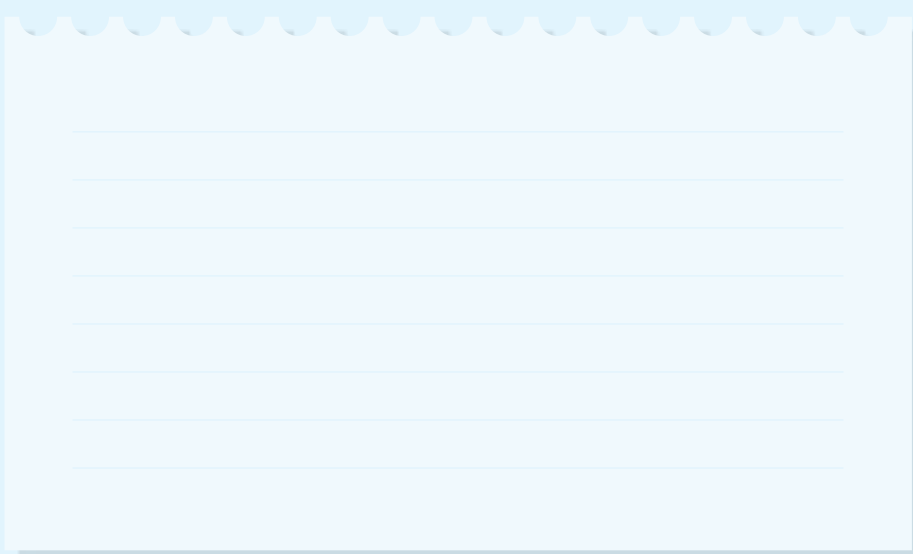
Professional discussions

The areas of focus for each of the professional discussions which take place during the site visit are outlined below. This table represents a summary of information in the *Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia* (AITSL 2013b, pp 17-18).

Interviewee	Content
Applicant (pre-observation discussion)	Lesson context and focus Lesson objective(s) Planning documentation Resources Catering for students with additional learning needs Standards/Descriptors to be demonstrated
Principal discussion	Evaluative comments Demonstrated performance against specific Standards/Descriptors, including evidence
Colleague(s) discussion	Verification of evidence Evaluative comments
Applicant (post-observation discussion)	Observation reflection Reflection on evidence from Stage 1 Questions from assessor, e.g., aspects of professional practice, collaboration with others, specific Standards, impact.

Over to you

Whilst you are responsible for structuring the site visit, the assessor may want to ask you, your principal and/or colleagues particular questions. These may include questions relating to specific Standards and/or Descriptors.

What questions do you think might be asked of you in the pre-observation and post-observation discussions with the assessor and what questions do you think the assessor might ask your principal/colleagues?
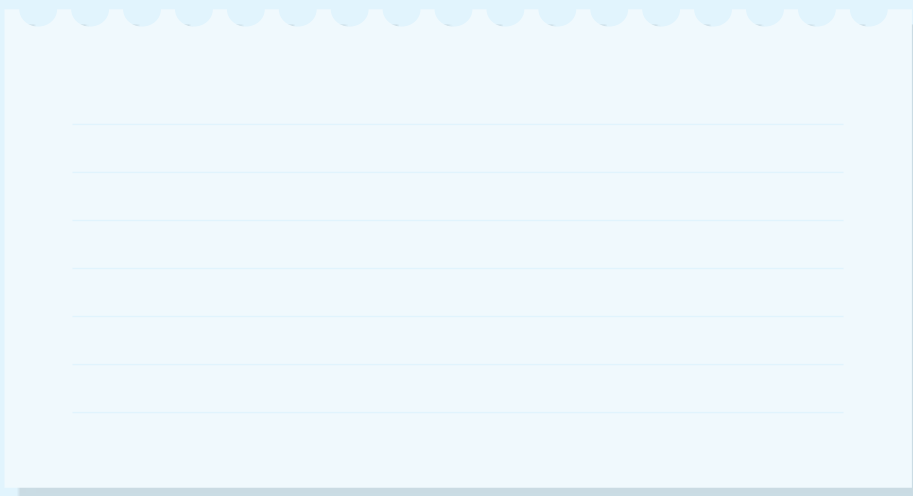
Observation of practice

During the site visit the assessor will observe your classroom practice. Classroom observation is a key component of quality teaching and a major source of evidence for studying how teachers teach, determining what highly effective teachers do in the classroom that distinguishes their practice from less effective teachers and identifying what instructional practices correlate most highly to achievement. As such it is integral to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia, Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education courses, the Australian Professional Learning Charter, the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework and the Australian Principal Standard.

The assessor will use the Classroom Practice Continuum based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to gather evidence to assist in determining whether your practice meets the relevant Standards.

Over to you

◆ Read 'A Model of Teaching Expertise' by David Berliner. How does this description of expertise resonate with your own understanding?

Where to now?

If you are interested in undertaking certification please contact your local certifying authority.

As outlined here there are numerous resources that have been developed to provide you with more detail and guidance on the process, and many certifying authorities run information sessions for prospective applicants and their principals.

References

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2013a, *Certification documentary evidence supplement: Highly Accomplished teachers*, Education Services Australia, Carlton South.

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