

Teaching performance assessment: Program Standard 1.2

This fact sheet provides further information on the requirements of the teaching performance assessment as outlined in Program Standard 1.2, along with some of the lessons learned by providers in relation to the development of TPAs.

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

The [*Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate career stage*](#) (Graduate Teacher Standards) form the basis for accreditation of initial teacher education programs. It is a fundamental principle that programs are accredited on the basis that they produce graduates who meet the Graduate Teacher Standards. In a teaching performance assessment (TPA) a pre-service teacher illustrates their skills, knowledge and practices through evidence of their performance aligned to the Graduate Teacher Standards. In line with concepts of authentic assessment (see box 1 below), evidence is drawn directly from their own practices to demonstrate:

- what they want students to learn
- how they will facilitate this learning
- how they will know if students have achieved this learning.

The TPA is a key mechanism by which programs can demonstrate pre-service teachers' impact on student learning (Program Standard 1.3).

Key features of the teaching performance assessment in Program Standard 1.2

Program Standard 1.2 requires that a TPA be situated in a classroom¹ environment, in order to demonstrate a range of authentic teaching practices. The TPA must be a requirement of successful completion of the program and must be completed during the final year.

Where possible it should be included in the final professional experience placement or internship, prior to graduation. The TPA, as articulated in Program Standard 1.2 of the Standards and Procedures, must have the following features:

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

The [Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia](#) include elements requiring professional judgement

Alignment to the practices of teaching

This refers to the degree to which the TPA measures the actual practices of teaching, including but not limited to planning, teaching, reflecting and assessing student learning.

It is expected that evidence would include details of how the TPA has been designed to require and assess pre-service teachers' demonstration of their teaching practices. Evidence of teaching practices could include classroom observation of pre-service teachers along with artefacts such as lesson plans, assessment strategies and feedback, samples of student work, observation notes and reflections. Following initial establishment, quantitative validity studies would provide further evidence of the validity of the assessment tool.

Assessment against the Graduate Teacher Standards

This refers to the degree to which the TPA represents the content it is designed to measure.

In this case, this is the degree to which it is aligned with and assesses the content of the [Graduate Teacher Standards](#), and assesses a pre-service teacher's practice against these Standards.

A TPA with assessment validity provides opportunities to demonstrate a wide range of the Graduate Teacher Standards.

While a pre-service teacher is required to be assessed against the Graduate Teacher Standards during their professional experience placement, the TPA will not necessarily cover all of these Standards. The Graduate Teacher Standards that are not assessed by the TPA, must be assessed elsewhere in the program.

It is up to each initial teacher education (ITE) provider to provide guidelines as to which Graduate Teacher Standards will be the focus for the TPA, noting the elements of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting are required under Program Standard 1.2

¹ The term 'classroom' and 'school' may include where appropriate other educational settings where accredited programs of learning occur.

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

- mapping of the assessment tasks to the skills and knowledge required in the Graduate Teacher Standards the TPA is designed to assess
- testing this alignment with a group of external experts (e.g. external teacher educators, teachers and school leaders)
- quantitative studies demonstrating assessment validity (noting that these studies produce data that require time to collect).

At a minimum, face validity should be demonstrated (e.g. mapping and testing with experts). Prior to full implementation it is expected that assessment validity would be quantitatively established and the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) may request this as subsequent evidence.

Achievement criteria

Program Standard 1.2 requires that the TPA includes clear, measurable and justifiable achievement criteria that discriminate between meeting and not meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards. ITE providers are required to provide:

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

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

Reliable assessment

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

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

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

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

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

A moderated assessment is an assessment for which there are:

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

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

- detailing the specific procedures to be implemented to improve the reliability of judgements, including feedback loops to ensure ongoing consistency
- details of those involved in the moderation process, for example involvement of supervising teachers or external experts
- evidence of moderation at the pass-fail point
- benchmarking with other programs or cross-marking within or between institutions- the review of examples of previous performance, especially those representing performance at the pass-fail point.

Who assesses the pre-service teacher's TPA?

Depending upon the design of the TPA a mix of individuals may be involved in making the assessment of a pre-service teacher's performance on the TPA. However, it is envisaged this will be ITE provider staff and/or external assessors in most cases.

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

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

What data from the TPA has to be reported?

A TPA must contribute to the suite of evidence that an ITE provider will collect to demonstrate the impact of their program, including impact on pre-service teacher learning and impact of pre-service teachers on school student learning (Program Standard 6.2 and 6.3).

Advice on teaching performance assessments

AITSL TPA Formative Advisors

This advice service is optional and free to all ITE providers and/or TPA developers seeking advice and support on the development, validation and implementation of a TPA.

A list of formative advisors, as well as information about how to access them is available on the [TPA website](#).

Review of a TPA by the Expert Advisory Group (EAG)

As agreed by all Education Ministers in 2018, TPAs are required to be reviewed by the EAG. This will occur by ITE providers, or consortia lead, submitting their TPA to the EAG through their respective teacher regulatory authority (Authority).

The EAG, which is comprised of six members who have expertise in standard setting, assessment design and ITE, provide advice to Authorities on TPAs submitted, to assist in the program accreditation process. The EAG assessment is based on the requirements of Program Standard 1.2 and use the elements of professional judgements as listed in the [Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia](#). Specific assessment criteria has been developed to guide their assessment and is available [here](#).

Their advice includes individual program level implementation considerations to help an accreditation

panel assess how a TPA will demonstrate its ongoing implementation fidelity.

Before a TPA is forwarded from the Authority to AITSL for the EAG's assessment of whether it meets the requirements of Program Standard 1.2, consideration should be given to whether the TPA application includes comprehensive documentation and evidence to support the EAG to make an assessment.

Please see AITSL's [Teaching performance Assessment Services: Principles of operation](#) for further details.

Ongoing evidence requirements

The EAG will consider whether further evidence is required to ensure confidence in the validity and reliability of the TPA and should provide advice as to the nature, timing and frequency of additional evidence.

In some instances, it may be necessary for evidence to be provided throughout the accreditation period, for example, where a new TPA is being trialled and sufficient evidence confirming its validity and reliability has not been provided at the point of accreditation.

The type of evidence required for accreditation will be dependent on the maturity of a TPA, for example, initial implementation of a TPA as opposed to one that has been operating for a number of years.

To give an indication on how the nature of the evidence might change over time the following high-level stages could be expected:

Stages	Validity	Reliability
Trialling or initial implementation	Evidence of face validity Plans to collect quantitative data, for example, calculation of the validity ratio for the TPA Quantitative data, where available	Processes to establish reliability – standard setting, effective identification, recruitment and training for assessors, assembling examples of candidate performance Reliability data (where available) from trial/initial implementation
First year of full implementation	Quantitative data and statistics demonstrating validity	Inter-rater reliability, consistency of decisions against achievement criteria
Ongoing implementation 1+ years	As above Additional validity studies could be considered at this point e.g. concurrent validity	Inter-rater reliability, consistency of decisions against achievement criteria Outcomes of moderation activities including cross-institutional
Mature 3+ years	As above Additional validity studies e.g. predictive validity	As above
Long term	Additional evidence over time could include: Time series data on achievement on the TPA Analysis from longitudinal research	

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

Lessons learned and advice on the development of TPAs

This information has been supplied by the Assessment for Graduate Teaching and the Quality Teacher Performance Assessment lead providers and is intended to provide practical insights in developing a teaching performance assessment tool.

Development and implementation of a TPA

To ensure that a TPA is not just a 'bolt on' to an ITE program, but an integrated assessment for which students were appropriately prepared, it is integral programs are designed to cater for this type of assessment.

Considerable attention is required to ensure the TPA task requirements and instructions are made clear and understood by ITE students. In support of this, significant staff resourcing should be provided in supporting students to complete the assessment tasks.

To successfully implement a TPA, it is critical that assessors are comprehensively prepared and understand the fundamental application of the tool's assessment tasks. To support reliable and consistent assessment, moderation processes are not only essential within a program and across providers, but also across programs within a single provider.

Collaborating to develop a TPA

Developing a TPA in partnership with other providers requires commitment to the process and a shared preparedness to work together. It has been identified that a major benefit of having universities collaborate in the development of a TPA was a chance to share the immense workload and resources.

It is important to form close and valuable relationships between institutions that will enable important further research around TPAs. ITE providers with an endorsed TPA have reported that it has been incredibly rewarding work for educators to be able to work with each other and to contribute their existing expertise.

Benefits of TPAs

Feedback from recent ITE graduates who have completed an EAG endorsed TPA have noted it has been valuable in enabling them to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and practices, across the spectrum of teaching practices.

Pre-service teachers have also provided feedback that completing a TPA is having a positive impact on some experienced teachers, where aspects of the instrument are being used in school-based professional learning activities.

Providers of endorsed TPAs found that there have been vast amounts of goodwill and commitment to the task of designing, trialling and moderating a TPA, which provided a real sense of giving back to the profession via the ongoing commitment from members of the Consortium.

Cost and resource implications

The development of a TPA requires ITE providers to commit a large investment of internal resources and staffing levels. Providers have reported that there are considerable costs in designing, trialling and implementing a psychometrically valid and rigorous TPA.

It is important that ITE providers understand and appreciate that it is a 5 to 10 year process and commitment to test, validate and refine a TPA. It's not 'simply' designing one!