

Enhancing professional capital and career progression

Professional capital refers to the collective skills, knowledge, and capabilities of teachers that contribute to their effectiveness and the overall quality of education. By investing in their professional growth, migrant teachers can ensure they build effectiveness as educators in Australian classrooms which is crucial for enhancing professional capital and career progression.

Achieving full teacher registration

Engaging in professional development and collaborative learning helps teachers stay current with educational research, new teaching strategies, and technological advancements. It also contributes towards maintaining Australian teacher registration. Achieving full teacher registration is a significant milestone for teachers in Australia. This process involves demonstrating teaching practice, professional knowledge, and professional engagement with the teaching community commensurate with the Proficient career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Full teacher registration not only enhances professional credibility but also opens further career opportunities including Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher national certification.

Seek opportunities to extend skills and experience

Once full registration is achieved there are numerous ways for migrant teachers to continue to extend their skills and experience. Mentoring graduate teachers or new migrant teachers provides them valuable support and assistance to help navigate their early career stages. Furthermore, mentoring deepens a mentors' skills preparing them for the broader responsibilities that comes with more senior roles in schools. Similarly, supervising pre-service teachers on practicum is an opportunity to share teaching expertise and provide guidance to future teachers thereby enhancing leadership skills.

Seeking out opportunities to participate in school committees enables migrant teachers to learn about and contribute to school governance and decision-making processes. Similarly, taking on leadership roles in whole of school activities such as sports events, staff meetings and celebratory events can showcase organisational and communication skills. Opportunities to temporarily step into leadership roles can provide the experience and visibility within the school community which is beneficial when planning your career path.

"You have to know where you want to be in terms of the school structure. Decide on the type of school you want to work at and direct your professional learning towards your interests."

Highly Accomplished Teacher – Preparatory

Planning career progression

Setting professional goals as part of the career planning process is essential for long-term success. Aligning career goals with your annual performance and development plan will ensure consistent professional growth is supported. Prioritising professional development activities that align with career goals by taking a focussed approach to continuing professional development. Staying updated with the latest educational technologies and incorporating them into your teaching will aid improving student engagement and learning outcomes.

Building strong professional networks is another essential strategy for migrant teachers. Strong social capital fosters a collaborative environment where teachers can share resources, support each other, and work together to solve problems. Joining professional organisations to access resources and stay informed about trends also increases the opportunities to engage in collegiate liaison and cooperation which is critical for migrant teachers to expand professional networks. These associations also often offer mentoring programs, professional development events and forums for sharing best practices. Migrant teachers can gain insights into the local education system, exchange ideas and collaborate on projects, all of which contribute to enhancing their professional capital.

“One of the main things I do is use social media platforms like X or Facebook. I’ve joined communities where there are like-minded individuals—subject-specific groups, groups for students with learning needs, English Literacy Development, and so on. They share resources or professional readings they’ve done, saying, ‘This is a really good read—you’ve got to give it a go.’ It’s one of the ways I find the latest research and teaching strategies.”

Highly Accomplished Teacher - Secondary

Promoting skills, experience, and knowledge

Effectively promoting your skills and experience is crucial for career advancement. Key to this is expressing your career vision in professional discussions with your school leadership team and seeking out opportunities that are aligned to broaden and deepen learning. Embracing the opportunities available to continually grow professionally is essential to building new career momentum toward progression.

Ensure your curriculum vitae (CV) and application letters highlight your achievements and strengths. Being interview-ready is also important, prepare thoroughly for interviews by considering the greater responsibilities and capacities expected of higher roles, practicing common questions, and showcasing your expertise.

“To advance your career progression you have to go through the processes and systems. So, it’s knowing the expectations and that yes, you are a fantastic educator, and it will be recognised here. But you do have to let people see what you can do. Acknowledging your career status and progressing is not a given in Australia, but it doesn’t take long.”

Highly Accomplished Teacher - Preparatory

In Practice

- **Reflect and adapt your teaching practices:** Continuously reflect on your teaching methods and adapt them to fit the local educational context. Integrating your previous experiences with new practices can enrich your teaching and demonstrate your adaptability and commitment to professional growth.
- **Integrate past and present experiences:** Leverage your previous teaching experiences and blend them with new practices and methodologies you encounter in your new environment. This integration can enrich your teaching approach and help you maintain a unique professional identity.
- **Build a strong professional network:** Connect with colleagues, join professional associations, and participate in educational events. Networking provides support, resources, and opportunities for collaboration, which are essential for maintaining and growing your professional capital.

Further reading

OECD ‘Topics’ series. <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/teacher-professional-learning-and-development.html>

Popova, A., Evans, D.K., Breeding, M.E. and Arancibia, V., 2022. Teacher Professional Development around the World: The Gap between Evidence and Practice. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 37(1), pp.107-136. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lkab006>

