

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Extract)

Proficient Career Stage



Domains of Teaching

The Standards are grouped into three domains of teaching: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. In practice, teaching draws on aspects of all three domains.

Professional Knowledge

Teachers draw on a body of professional knowledge and research to respond to the needs of their students within their educational contexts.

Teachers know their students well, including their diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds. They know how the experiences that students bring to their classroom affect their continued learning. They know how to structure their lessons to meet the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of their students.

Teachers know the content of their subjects and curriculum. They know and understand the fundamental concepts, structure and enquiry processes relevant to programs they teach. Teachers understand what constitutes effective, developmentally appropriate strategies in their learning and teaching programs and use this knowledge to make the content meaningful to students.

Through their teaching practice, teachers develop students' literacy and numeracy within their subject areas. They are also able to use Information and Communication Technology to contextualise and expand their students' modes and breadth of learning.

Professional Practice

Teachers are able to make learning engaging and valued. They are able to create and maintain safe, inclusive and challenging learning environments and implement fair and equitable behaviour management plans. They use sophisticated communication techniques.

Teachers have a repertoire of effective teaching strategies and use them to implement well-designed teaching programs and lessons. They regularly evaluate all aspects of their teaching practice to ensure they are meeting the learning needs of their students. They interpret and use student assessment data to diagnose barriers to learning and to challenge students to improve their performance.

They operate effectively at all stages of the teaching and learning cycle, including planning for learning and assessment, developing learning programs, teaching, assessing, providing feedback on student learning and reporting to parents/carers.

Professional Engagement

Teachers model effective learning. They identify their own learning needs and analyse, evaluate and expand their professional learning both collegially and individually.

Teachers demonstrate respect and professionalism in all their interactions with students, colleagues, parents/carers and the community. They are sensitive to the needs of parents/carers and can communicate effectively with them about their children's learning.

Teachers value opportunities to engage with their school communities within and beyond the classroom to enrich the educational context for students. They understand the links between school, home and community in the social and intellectual development of their students.

Proficient Teachers

Proficient teachers meet the requirements for full registration through demonstrating achievement of the seven Standards at this level.

These teachers create effective teaching and learning experiences for their students. They know the unique backgrounds of their students and adjust their teaching to meet their individual needs and diverse cultural, social and linguistic characteristics. They develop safe, positive and productive learning environments where all students are encouraged to participate.

They design and implement engaging teaching programs that meet curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements. They use feedback and assessment to analyse and support their students' knowledge and understanding. Proficient teachers use a range of sources, including student results, to evaluate their teaching and to adjust their programs to better meet student needs.

Proficient teachers are active participants in their profession and with advice from colleagues identify, plan and evaluate their own professional learning needs.

Proficient teachers are team members. They work collaboratively with colleagues; they seek out and are responsive to advice about educational issues affecting their teaching practice. They communicate effectively with their students, colleagues, parents/carers and community members. They behave professionally and ethically in all forums.

The Crucial Role of the Teacher

Teachers share a significant responsibility in preparing young people to lead successful and productive lives. The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (the Standards) reflect and build on national and international evidence that a teacher's effectiveness has a powerful impact on students, with broad consensus that teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor influencing student achievement. Effective teachers can be a source of inspiration and, equally importantly, provide a dependable and consistent influence on young people as they make choices about further education, work and life.

'The greatest resource in Australian schools is our teachers. They account for the vast majority of expenditure in school education and have the greatest impact on student learning, far outweighing the impact of any other education program or policy.'ⁱ

Internationally and locally, education systems are developing professional standards for teachers to attract, develop, recognise and retain quality teachers.

Professional Standards for Teachers

Developing professional standards for teachers that can guide professional learning, practice and engagement facilitates the improvement of teacher quality and contributes positively to the public standing of the profession. The key elements of quality teaching are described in the Standards. They articulate what teachers are expected to know and be able to do at four career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead.

The Standards and their descriptors represent an analysis of effective, contemporary practice by teachers throughout Australia.

The Standards support the Melbourne Declaration, which describes aspirations for all young Australians for the next decade. This commits Australian Education Ministers to the specific educational goals that Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence and that all young Australians will become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. 'All Australian governments, universities, school sectors and individual schools have a responsibility to work together to support high-quality teaching and school leadership, including by enhancing pre-service teacher education'.ⁱⁱ

Notes:

- i. B Jensen, *What teachers want: Better teacher management*, Melbourne, Grattan Institute, 2010, p. 5.
- ii. MCEETYA, *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*, Melbourne, 2008.

Purpose of the Standards

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* is a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. The Standards do this by providing a framework which makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. They present a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public.

Teacher standards also inform the development of professional learning goals, provide a framework by which teachers can judge the success of their learning and assist self-reflection and self-assessment. Teachers can use the Standards to recognise their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements.

The Standards could also be used as the basis for a professional accountability model, helping to ensure that teachers can demonstrate appropriate levels of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement.

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* are organised into four career stages and guide the preparation, support and development of teachers. The stages reflect the continuum of a teacher's developing professional expertise from undergraduate preparation through to being an exemplary classroom practitioner and a leader in the profession.

The Graduate Standards underpin the accreditation of initial teacher education programs. Graduates from accredited programs qualify for registration in each state and territory.

The Proficient Standards underpin processes for full registration as a teacher and support the requirements of nationally consistent teacher registration.

The Standards at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead will inform voluntary certification.

Focus Areas and Descriptors

The focus areas and descriptors identify the components of quality teaching at each career stage. They constitute agreed characteristics of the complex process of teaching. An effective teacher is able to integrate and apply knowledge, practice and professional engagement as outlined in the descriptors to create teaching environments in which learning is valued.



The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* were endorsed by Australia's Education Ministers in December 2010 and released by Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in February 2011.



Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Extract) Proficient Career Stage

Proficient

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



The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* were endorsed by Australia's Education Ministers in December 2010 and released by Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in February 2011.

