

Implementation of standards for graduate teachers in Australia: A work in progress

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My view on professional standards

- Without its own standards the teaching profession is defenceless against de-professionalizing policies and work conditions.
- The essential credential of a profession is a demonstrated capacity to define what effective practitioners know and do and reliably identify who meet those standards.
- But teachers must prove their professional credentials to claim that right. It needs to be earned.
- Writing their own standards gives teachers a means of claiming more responsibility for quality in their profession, such as who enters teacher education, who can provide teacher education, who enters the profession and advanced certification.
- Writing standards creates a bridge that connects research and practice, creating a knowledge base for the profession.
- **An essential feature of teachers' expertise lies in their subject matter knowledge and how to help students learn it. What teachers need to know and be able to do differs according to subject matter and levels of teaching. Therefore professional standards need to recognise that the teaching profession includes a number of specialist fields.**
- **Need to distinguish content standards from performance standards. Teaching standards are not fully developed until it is clear how they are to be used to judge teachers' knowledge and practice.**
- Standards are essential to creating more rewarding career pathways based on increasing expertise.

What does it mean to implement standards for initial teacher education?

Three types of standards:

1. *Standards for entry* – on what basis should entrants be selected?
2. *Standards for program accreditation* – what counts as evidence of program quality?
3. *Standards for graduation* – what counts as meeting the teaching standards?

I will focus mainly on 3. : How do we apply standards for graduation?

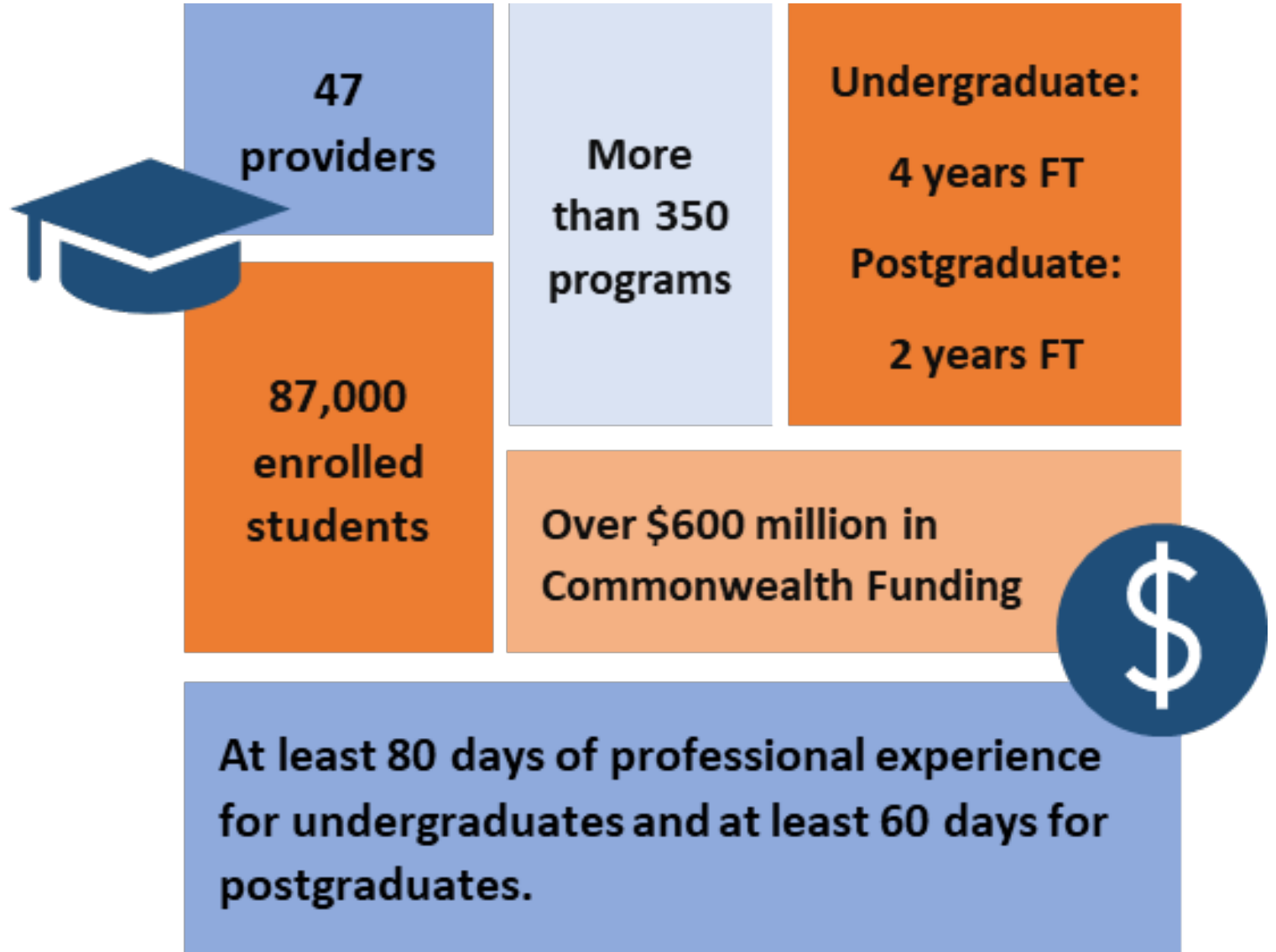
- How can we capture *valid evidence* about whether teacher education graduates are meeting the standards?
- How much evidence is needed to provide a *reliable basis* for judging whether graduates have attained all the standards (sampling)?
- *How should graduation standards be set*: what level of performance is required to meet the graduation standards? (Benchmarking)
- How do we ensure that the standards for graduation are *comparable across different universities*? How can the standards be used to judge the quality of teacher education programs?

Related questions for discussion

- Is standards-based teacher education improving the quality of graduate teachers?
- Is standards-based teacher education *deprofessionalising* teaching?

Ingvarson, L., Reid, K., Buckley, S., Kleinhenz, E., Masters, G., Rowley, G. (Sept 2014). *Best Practice Teacher Education Programs and Australia's Own Programs*. Canberra: Department of Education. https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=teacher_education

Initial teacher education in Australia



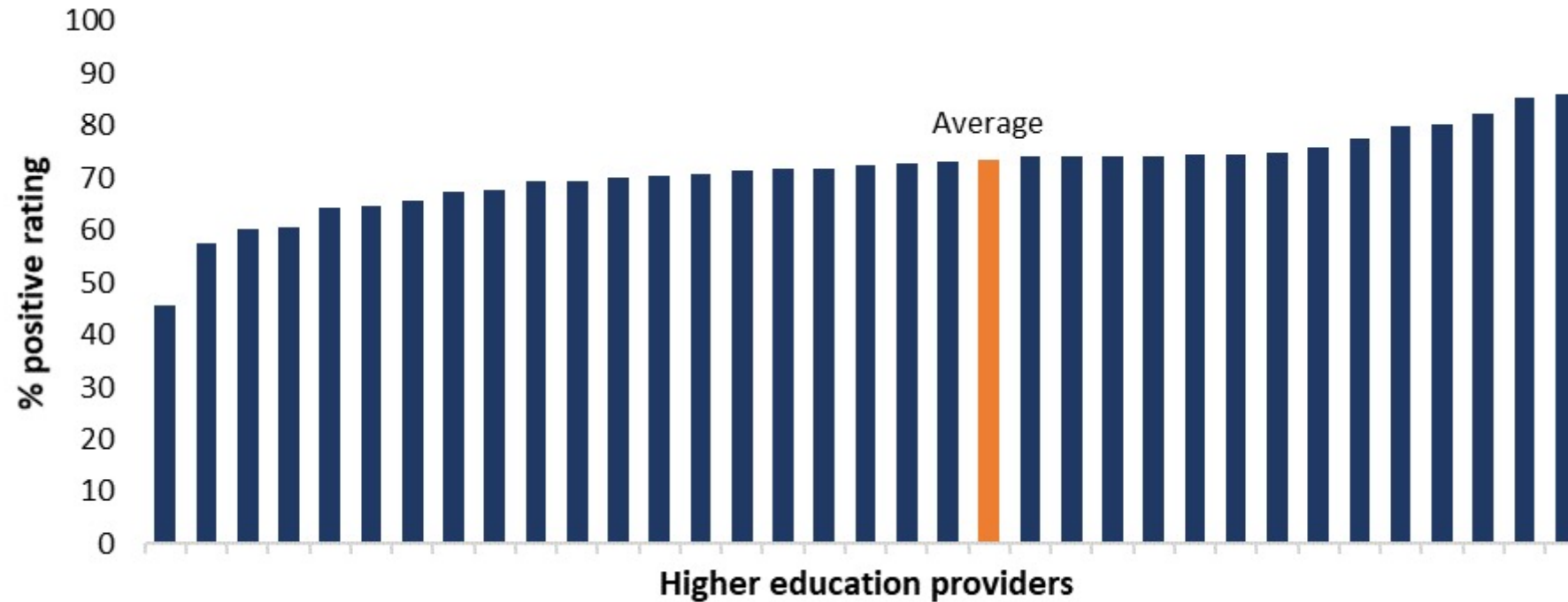
Programs vary considerably on measures of quality

- *Student perceptions* of the ITE Course (teaching quality and overall quality),
- *Graduate employment outcomes* (percentage of graduates working full-time or part-time in schools),
- *Year 12 academic rank* (percentage of those with an ATAR greater than 70 (from those admitted with ATARs),
- Undergraduate completion after six years, and
- *Graduate satisfaction* (from the course experience questionnaire) (see previous slide).

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2019). *ITE data report 2019*. www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/ite-data-report-2019

But we do not know how well they enable graduates to meet the standards

Student ratings of the quality of their teacher education program (undergraduate students) by higher education provider, % positive rating, 2020



Source: Student Experience Survey, www.qilt.edu.au, 2020.

Notes: Every bar represents a HEP. Bars are sorted from lowest to highest quality of educational experience in 2020.

The national accreditation system: Three integrated elements.



Australian Institute
for Teaching and
School Leadership
Limited



Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

February 2011
Forming the National Professional Standards for Teachers



Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia

Standards and Procedures





Established in 2010 by a Labor Government to provide national leadership in promoting excellence in the profession
Funding provided by the Australian Government.

Roles: *Oversee*

1. the development of national professional standards for teachers and principals.
2. National regulation of teacher education accreditation, teacher registration, and national professional development for teachers and school leaders.
3. **Accreditation and teacher registration are the responsibility of state teacher registration authorities**

Australian Professional Standards for Teaching: Domains of Teaching

Professional Knowledge

1. Know students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it

Professional Practice

3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning

Professional Engagement

6. Engage in professional learning
7. Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

The standards include descriptors of four professional career stages –

- *Graduate,*
- *Proficient,*
- *Highly Accomplished and*
- *Lead Teacher.*



Standard 1. Graduate level: Know students and how they learn

1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.

1.2 Understand how students learn

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.

1.3 Students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds

- Demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.

1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

- 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.

1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability

- Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

Standard 2. Graduate level Know the content and how to teach it

Note: standards
are only at the
generic level

2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.

2.2 Content selection and organisation

- Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.

2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting

- Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.

2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

- Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.

2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies

- Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.

2014 Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report.

Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers

Revised standards for accreditation – focus on outcomes and more rigour

- Programs must ensure new teachers are *classroom ready* with the skills they need to make a positive impact on school student learning.
- *Evidence of impact* required for accreditation: Introduction of **Teaching Performance Assessments** as measures of impact: (TPAs)
- Entrants to initial teacher education will possess levels of personal literacy and numeracy broadly equivalent to the top 30 per cent of the population. **Compulsory Literacy and Numeracy Test** for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE)
- Introduction of **non-academic selection criteria** for applicants
- Stronger requirements for **subject matter knowledge** and how to teach it.

TEMAG (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group) (2014) *Action Now, Classroom Ready Teachers*, Canberra.

Background Report: Ingvarson, L., Reid, K., Buckley, S., Kleinhenz, E., Masters, G., Rowley, G. (Sept 2014). *Best Practice Teacher Education Programs and Australia's Own Programs*. Canberra: Department of Education. https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=teacher_education
<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/national-policy-framework/accreditation-of-initial-teacher-education-programs-in-australia.pdf>

Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs)

The introduction of TPAs represents a major shift in how pre-service teachers are prepared for the classroom. The TPA is a means for providers to show that their graduates meet the standards.

- ITE providers must develop a valid assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness (TPAs).
- TPAs must assess the practical skills and knowledge of pre-service teachers against the Graduate Teacher Standards.
- A TPA is an authentic measure of teaching ability; it is based on planning and teaching a unit of work to one class across a sequence of lessons over several weeks (i.e., a portfolio task).
- ITE students collect evidence of practice to complete a TPA in their final year in a school.
- Evidence of impact on student learning essential; includes teaching artefacts, students' work samples, examples of feedback to students, evidence of students' enhanced learning through these artefacts, and commentaries on videos of classroom teaching.
- Successfully completing a TPA is a requirement for graduation.

https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/initial-teacher-education-resources/tpa/tpa-fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=1410cb3c_6

Moderation: Achieving National Consistency

Moderation is process for ensuring consistent application of the TPA standards across different universities in a consortia.

In 2017 AITSL, encouraged universities to collaborate and form groups or “consortia” in designing TPAs. Approval of TPAs required the inclusion of a **moderation process** to give assurance of the consistency of assessment decisions across different providers in a consortia.

Designing TPAs involved developing authentic teaching tasks, trialling them preparing rubrics, setting standards and training assessors to make consistent judgements.

Teacher educators come together annually to review samples of TPAs from other universities representing different performance levels. scoring of de-identified samples provided by the universities to show the full range of achievement.

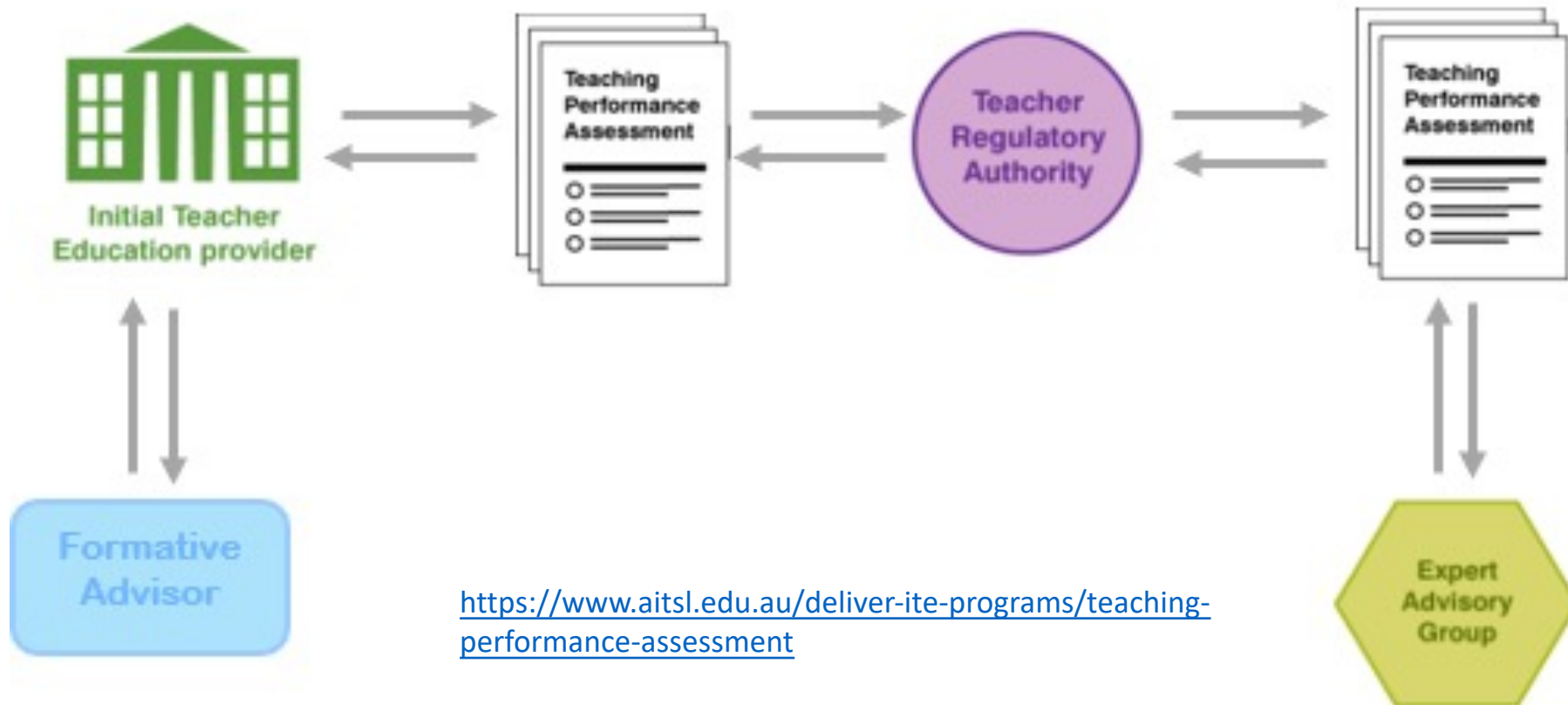
Moderation means that the profession is implicitly involved in setting its standards for graduation

Four different consortia have developed TPAs. Eight providers have developed their own TPA.

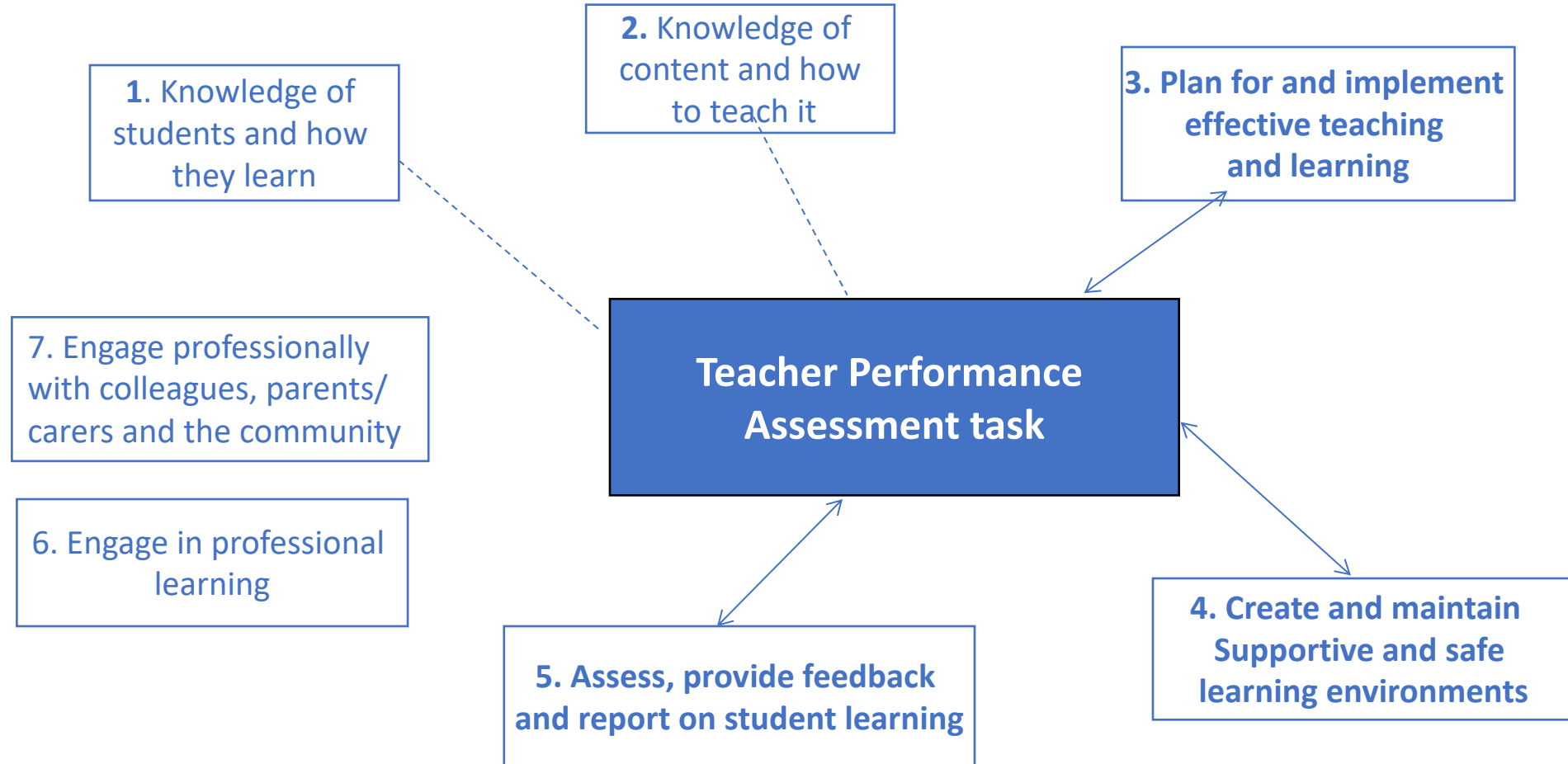
Consortia			
TPA Name	Lead Provider	Members	
Assessment for Graduate Teaching (AfGT)	University of Melbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Canberra Excelsia College University of Sydney University of Technology Sydney Charles Darwin University Victoria University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curtin University Montessori World Educational Institute University of Western Australia Federation University The University of Adelaide Melbourne Polytechnic
Graduate Teacher Performance Assessment (GTPA)	Australian Catholic University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Tasmania Holmesglen TAFE La Trobe University RMIT Swinburne University of Technology Federation University University of New England The University of South Australia University of Southern Queensland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Cross University The University of New England The University of New South Wales The University of Notre Dame Australia Charles Sturt University Central Queensland University Christian Heritage College Griffith University James Cook University University of Queensland
Quality Teaching Performance Assessment (QTPA)	Queensland University of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of the Sunshine Coast Edith Cowan University Murdoch University 	
A3TPA	Australian College of Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avondale University Alphacrucis College Eastern College 	
Individual TPAs (No consortia)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macquarie University Teaching Performance Assessment (MQTPA) Deakin Teaching Performance Assessment (DTPA) Western Sydney University Teaching Performance Assessment (WSU_TPA) Newcastle Teaching Performance Assessment (NTPA) University of Wollongong (UOW TPA) Flinders University Teaching Performance Assessment (FU_TPA) Tabor Adelaide Teaching Performance Assessment (TTPA) Monash University Teaching Performance Assessment (Monash TPA) 	

TPAs must be evaluated and approved by an independent Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on whether the TPA meets the requirements of the Accreditation Standards.

AITSL's teaching performance assessment (TPA) services



Links between teaching standards and Teacher Performance Assessment tasks



Assessment Framework for graduation standards

Australian Professional Standards for teachers		Common Methods of Assessment		
Professional knowledge	1: Know students and how they learn		Not Yet	
	2: Know the content and how to teach it			
Professional practice	3: Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning	TPA		
	4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments			
	5: Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning			
Professional engagement	6: Engage in Professional Learning			X
	7: Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community			X

Lessons learned and advice on the development of TPAs

- Ensure that a TPA is not just a 'bolt on' to an ITE program, but **an integral part of the ITE program** for which students are carefully prepared.
- 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.
- In future, it should be **mandatory for providers to participate in consortia** and moderation to ensure TPA performance standards are high and consistent.
- It is **essential to develop strong and continuing partnerships with schools** and supervising teachers so that there is common understanding of the TPA and the conditions needed for student teachers to undertake it. However, this has been a problem for many ITE providers.

https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/initial-teacher-education-resources/tpa/tpa-fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=1410cb3c_6

Issues in implementing TPAs

12 different TPAs – Difficult to ensure consistency in the performance standard

- Not every ITE provider wanted to join a consortia. Need enough members for moderation to work. Should have laid down clearer rules and expectations/conditions early on – like how many need for group – moderation,
- **However**, management of TPAs is in the hands of teacher educators – unlike the EdTPA in the USA (run by a private company)

Development of a TPA is complex work and demanding of lead institution staff time and costly

A major challenge has been the lack of expertise in assessment in faculties of education and understanding the assessment requirements of a valid TPA, and reliable assessment and moderation.

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.

Benefits of TPAs

TPAs generally seen as an *authentic and fair* way to assess readiness for teaching

- It is reasonable to expect graduating teachers to show that they can plan and teach a unit of work, assess student learning and reflect on their practice.

ITE graduates report that:

- completing the TPA made a valuable contribution to their *professional learning*.
- the TPA task provided a valuable *structure* in which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and practices
- The TPA did not force them to use one style of teaching; i.e. *it did not standardise teaching*
- completing a TPA was having a *positive impact on their supervising teachers* and schools.

When TPAs fully implemented, teacher educators and teachers will play a central role in determining graduation standards.

- Involvement with TPAs has resulted in a stronger collaborative and an openness among teacher educators.

More public confidence about the quality of teacher education.

Future work in implementing the standards for graduate teachers and accrediting programs

More work is needed on ensuring successful implementation of high-quality TPAs in all ITE programs

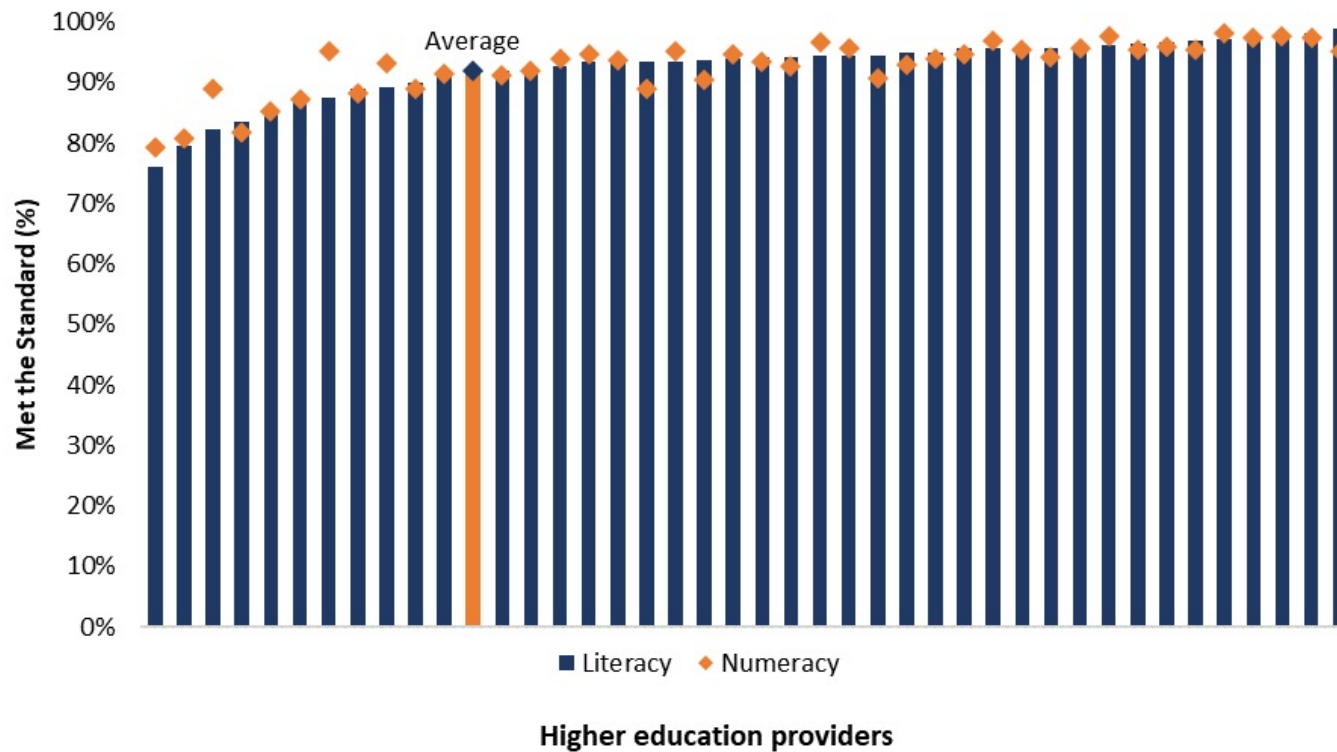
- Need to reduce the number of consortia and ensure all providers are part of a consortia so that moderation leads to consistent and high standards for graduation.
- TPAs need to be less cumbersome – more streamlined like a structured portfolio task.

TPAs only one source of evidence – they focus mainly on implementing Standards 3, 4 and 5.

Future work needed on implementing the Professional Knowledge Standards (1 and 2)

- Common outcome measures needed to to compare how well graduates from different programs meet Standards 1 and 2. (*Know students and how they learn; Know content and how to teach it.*)
- HOWEVER, it is difficult to develop common outcome measures because the current standards are generic; e.g., they do not describe what graduates should know about the content and how to teach it (PCK).
- Teacher educators need to work together in developing a common understanding about what Standards 1 and 2 mean in their specialist field – Australia needs a *National Curriculum for Teacher Education*.

Percentage of candidates meeting the standards of the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) by higher education provider, 2020



- Students usually take the test toward the end of their training.
- Most pass the test. Three attempts allowed.
- Cost is \$180
- **Not a test of the Knowledge Standards**

A Standards- based Teacher Education System is a system for:

Setting high and rigorous standards for what beginning teachers should know and be able to do,

Developing valid and reliable methods for certifying teachers who meet those standards, and

Accrediting teacher education programs whose graduates meet those standards.

A SBTE system is not “fixed” as some claim. Standards change with new research.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SBTE and TPAs

Myths

- teacher standards imply that there is one 'right way' to teach.
- Standards are fixed and unproblematic
- Not incompatible with being a “reflective practitioner” In fact standards provide a basis for reflection. A TPA matches the action research cycle of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting.
- Not incompatible with the notion of teacher as researcher. In fact, it encourages teachers to develop different ways of implementing the standards
- Not incompatible with transformative teacher – with working for social justice and equity. In fact. it's essential for ensuring equality of opportunity.

MAIN CONDITIONS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERMINING THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN AUSTRALIA

- Recruitment is the problem, not selection.
 - Failure of governments to ensure that salaries and working conditions are attractive enough to enable teaching to compete effectively for ablest graduates with other professions.
- Selection practices by several universities.
 - Enrolling too many academically weak students to boost funds. Denying evidence that strong academic background is fundamental to effective teaching.
- Resistance by some teacher educators to the need to codify good practice – to embrace accreditation.
- Inadequate funding of teacher education, especially school experience
- Working conditions and workloads that intensify teachers' work.
- Funding policies that do not ensure equal opportunities for all students to a high-quality education

Further information

- <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/classroom-ready-demonstrating-the-impact-on-student-learning-of-initial-teacher-education-programs---position-paper>
- <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/evidence-of-impact-of-teacher-education-programs-a-focus-on-classroom-observation>

In 2021 the Australian Government Minister for Education and Youth announced a review Quality Initial Teacher Education Review

Review Questions

- Are the **Australian Professional Standards for Teachers** fit for purpose in identifying the key skills and knowledge pre-service teachers need to be ready for the classroom?
- Are ITE programs preparing graduates for teaching diverse student cohorts, including through cultural competency and inclusive education?
- What are the benefits and costs of the number of TPAs in operation?
- How could the TPA endorsement process be improved? Are the current arrangements leading to quality outcomes?
- Do the current professional experience arrangements support the preparation of ITE students for the classroom and school environment? How could these be improved?
- How can professional experience be delivered in a more efficient way for school systems and higher education providers?
- Do the current course accreditation arrangements support ITE students being taught evidence-based high-impact teaching strategies? How could this be improved?

<https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-initial-teacher-education-review/resources/quality-initial-teacher-education-review-2021-discussion-paper>