

# Internship Initial Teacher Education Programs Policy



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## Purpose and context

Under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* (the Act), the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) has the power to accredit initial teacher education (ITE) programs.

The VIT has accredited a number of ITE programs that are fast-tracked, employment-based or innovative (referred to as ‘internship programs’ for the purposes of this policy). These internship programs allow pre-service teachers (PSTs) to undertake all or part of their supervised teaching practice (STP) days employed (paid or unpaid) by a school under VIT’s Permission to Teach [PTT (Internship)] category.

In 2021, an amendment to the Act mandated that VIT must have regard to raising the quality of teaching, and provide for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, when developing, establishing and maintaining

- standards of professional practice for entry into, and remaining in, the teaching profession
- standards for the recognition of higher levels of professional practice attained by teachers and early childhood teachers in Victorian schools and early childhood services
- a Professional Learning Framework to support and promote the continuing education and professional development of teachers and early childhood teachers.

This policy is designed to support VIT’s overarching obligation to raise the quality of teaching in relation to internship programs.

## Scope

The policy applies to all Victorian ITE providers who currently deliver, or intend to deliver, an accredited internship program which is inclusive of

- employment-based programs
- programs that are part of the Victorian Government’s Innovative ITE initiative
- programs that deliver a fast-tracked model
- any other programs where a PST may be granted PTT (Internship).

## Relevant legislation and policy

- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)
- [VIT’s Provisional to full registration policy](#)
- [VIT’s Permission to Teach policy](#)

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Accredited initial teacher education (ITE) program	A program or course of study <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• leading to qualifications for entry to teaching as teacher; and</li><li>• that is approved by VIT under Division 2A as an initial teacher education program.</li></ul>
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)	Commonwealth government agency ‘providing national leadership for the Australian States and Territories in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership’

Term	Definition
Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)	<p>Approved as the professional practice standards used by VIT to regulate Victorian teachers and early childhood teachers.</p> <p>Nationally consistent standards published in February 2011 by AITSL.</p> <p>The APST comprise seven standards, which outline what teachers should know and be able to do. The standards are grouped into three domains of teaching: professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement.</p>
Full registration	A category of registration granted to a person who has demonstrated proficiency against the APST in the manner required by VIT.
Internship initial teacher education (ITE) program	<p>An accredited ITE program that has been designed to allow for PSTs to undertake the duties of a teacher as part of ITE program using PTT (Internship).</p> <p>This may include, but is not limited to, the following types of ITE programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment-based programs</li> <li>• programs part of the Victorian Government's Innovative ITE initiative</li> <li>• programs that deliver a fast-tracked model</li> <li>• any other programs where a PST may be granted PTT (Internship).</li> </ul>
PTT (Internship)	This category of permission to teach (PTT) applies to PSTs undertaking an accredited internship program.
Pre-service teacher (PST)	A student enrolled in an accredited ITE program.
Provisional registration	<p>A category of registration granted to a person who has met the graduate teacher level of the APST through the required qualification and meets the requirements to be a fit and suitable person to teach.</p> <p>Provisional registration is granted with the condition that a teacher undertakes professional practice to meet the requirements for the proficient teacher level of the APST and becomes fully registered as a teacher or early childhood teacher within a period of two years.</p>
Teacher	An individual who has been registered by VIT to undertake the duties of a teacher or early childhood teacher in a Victorian school or early childhood service in accordance with their qualification(s).

# 1. Principles

## Principle 1

The VIT is guided by nationally-consistent approaches to the accreditation of ITE programs.

## Principle 2

ITE providers utilising PTT (Internship) must provide adequate supervision and support to PSTs to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

## Principle 3

The APST establish the competency requirements for teachers.

## Principle 4

The VIT considers a graduate of an accredited ITE program to have demonstrated the APST at the graduate teacher level and will meet the qualification requirements for provisional registration.

# 2. National consistency in the accreditation of ITE programs

The VIT adheres to a nationally-agreed approach to accreditation. This ensures all ITE programs meet the Australian standards outlined in the [Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standard and Procedures \(AITSL\)](#).

These standards are designed to ensure all graduates of ITE programs have the knowledge, skills and experience to make a positive impact on student learning. The VIT recognises the structure and design of an employment-based ITE program may reduce the amount of time a PST has to observe, and be directly supervised by, an experienced teacher.

ITE providers delivering or intending to deliver employment-based ITE programs must ensure that

- professional experience meets the requirements of Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) Program Standard 5, including that there is opportunity for diversity of placements consistent with the expectations of Program Standard 5.2c\*
- the requirements of the endorsed TPA Program Standard 1.2 are met – a provider must ensure the TPA is delivered as endorsed
- the PST has sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the graduate teacher level of the APST
- the PST is supervised by a teacher who has a strong working knowledge of the APST
- the major teaching area(s) for secondary ITE programs are directly linked to an approved curriculum<sup>1</sup>.

\*The VIT recognises there are numerous ways in which diversity may be obtained in an internship program and providers must explicitly address how this is achieved within their submission.

PTT (Internship) practice can contribute towards professional experience within an accredited ITE program.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved curriculum as defined under the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education programs in Australia: *The approved content to be covered in a classroom or educational setting, including: the Foundation to Year 12 Australian Curriculum; alternative curriculum frameworks that have been assessed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) as meeting the requirements of the Australian Curriculum: any curriculum authorised by jurisdictional authorities: the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLFA).*

### 3. Supervision and mentoring

Host schools must be aware that grants of PTT (Internship) are integrated within an ITE program, and holders of PTT (Internship) are not qualified teachers.

The PTT (Internship) holder must be provided with adequate supervision, support and mentoring reflective of their level of experience by both the ITE provider and the host school.

ITE providers are responsible for providing a host school with all information regarding the requirements for hosting a PTT (Internship) holder, including the requirements for the school-based mentor to complete professional experience reports / assessments.

It is expected that schools provide PTT holders with [supervision, support and mentoring](#). This does not mean a school needs to supervise one-on-one, rather it includes oversight of the planning and implementation of class programs, and professional support with regard to teaching methods, student wellbeing, assessment procedures and related matters. Supervision requirements are outlined in [VIT's Permission to teach \(PTT\) Policy](#).

### 4. Completion of an accredited ITE program

The VIT recognises the structure and design of an internship program may be more intensive and completed in a condensed timeframe.

All accredited ITE programs must continue to ensure PSTs meet the requirements for successful completion, including but not limited to

- demonstrating all 37 descriptors of the APST at the graduate teacher level
- successfully completing a Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) in the final year of study
- successfully meeting the required standard in the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) / First Nations language proficiency.

### 5. Providing for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

ITE providers must comply with [VIT's Permission to teach \(PTT\) policy](#).

The structure and design of the internship program must ensure the following prior to a PST's commencement of their employment under PTT (Internship)

- support is provided to the PST to ensure they have access to, and an understanding of, all relevant workplace policies in relation to child safety and wellbeing
- the PST engages with the following elements of teaching and learning in relation to child safety and wellbeing
  - mandatory reporting
  - working with learners with special needs
  - Child Safe Standards
  - The Victorian Teaching Profession's Codes of Conduct and Ethics.

### 6. Timing of internship component within an ITE program

The timing of the use of PTT (Internship) within an ITE program should have regard to the following

- the need for PSTs to build their understanding of pedagogical practices and child safety requirements
- the specific needs of the cohort and their ability to undertake practice without direct supervision

- the process for gradual release of responsibilities to the PST
- adequate induction into the school / profession.

In a postgraduate ITE program, PTT (Internship) may be incorporated early within the program, provided the requirements and considerations within this policy have been addressed within the accredited program.

In an undergraduate program, PTT (Internship) may be incorporated into the later part of the program, commencing no earlier than the third year (or equivalent).

In a secondary program, the program structure must ensure that a PST has completed a minor (or equivalent in combination with previous work / life experience) in discipline studies in their teaching area(s) prior to commencing work under PTT (Internship).

In a primary program, the program structure must ensure the PST has exposure to the key learning areas of the primary curriculum prior to commencing work under PTT (Internship).

## 7. PTT (Internship) grants

An application for PTT (Internship) is initiated by the ITE provider directly with VIT, before going to the PST for further details, payment and submission.

PTT is granted to teach specific subjects, subject areas or generalist primary at a particular school, and PTT holders cannot undertake casual relief teaching.

PTT (Internship) can only be granted for curriculum areas in secondary schools or as generalist primary in primary schools.

ITE providers supporting an application for PTT (Internship) are responsible for ensuring that applicants meet the minimum required standard to teach a subject discipline / generalist primary.

By endorsing an applicant to teach a specific subject(s) or subject areas, ITE providers acknowledge that they have undertaken an assessment of an applicant's academic and work history and confirm that they have the required content knowledge to teach the endorsed subject.

The VIT accepts the ITE provider's assessment that the applicant has met the requisite skills and experience for the subject(s) or subject areas. The VIT may request further information as required to assess an application for PTT (Internship).

A PTT holder should not be undertaking additional duties of a teacher beyond teaching the subjects approved under their PTT grant. This includes, but is not limited to, leading pastoral care / wellbeing classes, leading excursions / school camps and / or undertaking casual or relief teaching.

The VIT supports the delivery of internship programs accredited in other Australian states / territories. An interstate ITE provider should contact VIT directly for details in relation to PTT (Internship) grants for their PSTs residing in Victoria. Interstate providers are expected to meet all requirements within this policy, including in providing support to the host school and PST.

## 8. Eligibility for registration on completion of an ITE program

The VIT considers a graduate of an accredited ITE program to have demonstrated the APST at the graduate teacher level, and therefore meets the [qualification requirements](#) for provisional registration.

The requirements for a person who holds provisional registration to move to full registration are detailed in [VIT's Provisional to full registration policy](#).

## 9. Special needs and / or alternative school settings

Where an ITE provider intends to support a PST to undertake employment under PTT (Internship) in a special needs school, there are additional considerations that VIT will review on a case-by-case basis.

Given the vulnerability and diversity of learners in a special needs setting, VIT will discuss with providers the specific requirements around these employment arrangements, including but not limited to, the following considerations

- adequate opportunity for the PST to undertake a diversity of placements – specifically in a mainstream school
- special education is not a curriculum area – consequently, consideration will need to be given to
  - whether the PST's teaching areas are appropriate and applicable to a special school setting
  - whether the PST has adequate opportunities to undertake professional experience with their teaching area(s) / across the primary key learning areas
- whether the PST has any relevant background / experience in the field of special needs or working with vulnerable people
- additional measures will need to be in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learners, such as additional supervision and support for the PST and / or targeted professional learning.

Where an ITE provider intends to support a PST to undertake employment under PTT (Internship) in an alternative school setting, there are additional considerations that VIT will discuss with the provider on a case-by-case basis.

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