

Fact sheet

Inquiry process stage 1: Establish content and context for learning

How does your workplace and the needs of your learners affect your Inquiry?

As a cycle of reflective practice, the Inquiry process is best undertaken once you have familiarised yourself with your workplace and learners. Understanding the context of your workplace and the needs of your learners, will inform your Inquiry focus and be reflected in the evidence you collect.

You should consider your workplace, and how this affects how and what you will teach. This section could include

- geographic, demographic or socio-economic information about the area the education setting is in or the wider community associated with your workplace
- any location specific information that affects teaching and learning (e.g. physical layout of the school or centre, accessibility for learners, play and outdoor education areas, resourcing)
- whether you work in early childhood (long day care, sessional kindergarten), primary school, secondary school, non-school setting (e.g. museum, hospital, zoo, TAFE), government, independent, Catholic sector
- information about a particular focus at your education setting (e.g. a focus on a curriculum area, a pedagogy, or an educational philosophy that the setting follows – this could affect your Inquiry, resource selection, professional learning).

The cohort of learners

Although you will be teaching your whole class or group of learners, you are only required to gather evidence from your smaller group of focus learners. You'll need to provide the following information

- broadly describe your class or group (e.g. range of learning levels, linguistic, socioeconomic, religious or cultural backgrounds)
- identify if you have any [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners](#)
- identify if you have any [learners with disability](#)
- identify if there are any modifications you need to make to ensure the learning accessible to all learners.



Elise Meehan (registered teacher) with learners
Saint Ignatius College

The focus learners

From the cohort of learners, you will need to provide a more detailed description of the 3–4 focus learners (two may be sufficient in a special needs setting due to the higher degree of planning and individual teaching for learners in these settings).

These learners may be a representative sample of the diversity of the learning needs of the group in the area of focus, or they may be part of a target group that you plan to focus on.

- describe their learning levels and factors affecting their learning
- briefly explain any data you have relied on for these judgements (e.g. observations, discussion with other teachers, formal assessments)
- what is the link between these learners and your Inquiry question?

Note: you will need to be able to describe how you meet the needs of all learners but be mindful particularly of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, and learners with disability.

VIT audit data reveals that teachers' failure to reference the needs of these learners are among the top reasons for further requests for additional evidence.

These learners may be part of the focus group, but they don't have to be. If you don't include them here, you will need to reference how you will cater for their needs elsewhere in the documentation, usually through the action plan.

Program of learning – content

This section should include detail about the skills and knowledge to be taught, how it links to the curriculum and how it relates to educational outcomes.

Where relevant, show how the content you are teaching meets the following cross-curriculum priorities as outlined in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)

- addresses development of the literacy and / or numeracy of your learners (APST 2.5)
- provides opportunities for learners to develop understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages (APST 2.4)
- uses information and communication technologies (ICT) safely, responsibly and ethically (APST 4.5).

Targeted learning outcomes

Using the content of your program of learning and the prior knowledge of your learners, establish the learning outcomes. These should be achievable but also challenging for your focus learners. The learning outcomes may vary depending upon the learning characteristics and needs of your learners, and will demonstrate how you are differentiating to meet those needs.

In meeting the standards, it is vital you make clear links between your learners' needs, the learning outcomes you have planned, the data those outcomes are based on, any workplace priorities that have informed your planning and the aspect of your practice that you are differentiating to meet all of these.



Ebony Bowes (registered teacher) with learner
Iris Ramsay Kindergarten

Other contexts

Where your teaching context means you teach multiple groups of learners and are unable to identify a specific group of learners for your Inquiry, the focus of the Inquiry will shift to an aspect of your practice that can be developed to improve the learning outcomes for all learners you teach. This is still meeting the needs of the learners, but will be based upon your observational data across learning contexts.

This could help you develop learning for a particular type of learner (such as learners who lack confidence or learners who disrupt the learning of others). Alternatively, you can focus on a level of learning such as managing the behaviour of Year 9 learners, giving effective feedback to high achievers in a Year 5 or nurturing numeracy skills in five-year-olds. This will help determine a suitable focus for your Inquiry and assist you to make it manageable.

Regardless of your Inquiry focus, you will still need to annotate artefacts of learning and analyse the effectiveness of your teaching to support and develop learning. Where the artefacts of learning are not static or reproducible, then rubrics for learning and teacher observational notes can be used. You may also use videos and audio recordings (ensuring the appropriate permissions are sought).

For more information and resources visit vit.vic.edu.au/prt#resources or contact prt@vit.vic.edu.au.



Peta Gleeson (registered teacher) with learner
Caledonian Primary School