

# Provisional to (full) registration

THE WORKPLACE RECOMMENDATION PANEL

2021

## INTRODUCTION

Teachers and early childhood teachers who are provisionally registered by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) have two years to meet the Proficient Teacher level of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers \(APST\)](#).

Provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) do this through an inquiry into their practice, providing evidence of the APST. The elements of this inquiry are described on VIT's [website](#).

The process to evidence the APST intersects with the induction of PRTs as they begin their first years of teaching and includes mentoring by trained peers.

During the two-year period of their provisional registration, teachers need to

- complete at least 80 days teaching in Australian or New Zealand schools or early childhood services or education settings approved by VIT
- document evidence of their practice meeting the Proficient Teacher level of the APST and conforming with the VIT-described inquiry process
- obtain a recommendation from a workplace panel that identifies their practice meets all descriptors of the Proficient Teacher level of the APST.

The attainment of these makes a PRT eligible to apply for (full) teacher registration or (full) early childhood teacher registration.

## PURPOSE OF THE WORKPLACE PANEL

To assess whether a PRT is performing at the Proficient Teacher level of the APST, the context of their teaching needs to be understood. The best people to know this are the PRT's workplace leaders and teaching peers. Therefore it is appropriate for these people to make judgements about the professional practice of the PRT based on their documented evidence.

This process is managed through a workplace panel that generates the recommendation report PRTs use in their application for (full) registration or (full) early childhood teacher registration.

## THE WORKPLACE PANEL

PRTs present their documented evidence of professional practice to a panel of peers. The panel members assess whether the evidence meets the Proficient Teacher level of the APST.

The assessment of practice is recorded in a recommendation report. When a PRT has a report that indicates they meet all 37 descriptors and the 7 standards of the APST at the Proficient Teacher level, they can use this to apply for (full) teacher or (full) early childhood teacher registration.

## FORMATION OF THE PANEL

When a PRT is well advanced with documentation of their evidence of professional practice and can anticipate when they will be ready to apply for (full) registration, they should approach their school principal or relevant early childhood leader(s) to discuss the formation of a workplace panel.

In some circumstances, a PRT may be assisted in this process by their mentor. In other circumstances, where there are a large number of PRTs seeking panel assessments, when and how the panel meetings happen may need to be negotiated to support efficient use of time and resources.

## COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL

It is expected that at least one member of the panel has completed the Effective Mentoring Program delivered by VIT in partnership with the Department of Education & Training and with the support of the Catholic Education Offices and the independent schools' sector or other VIT mentor training program. Involvement provides an understanding of the inquiry process for PRTs and specific training in the assessment of evidence against the Proficient Teacher level of the APST.

### IN A SCHOOL SETTING

It is expected in a school setting the panel comprises

- your principal\* (or their delegate) who assumes the role of panel chair
- a registered teacher who has participated in the VIT (EMP or other) mentor training program
- a registered teaching colleague you nominate and who knows your work.

\*To be part of a panel, a principal must be a registered teacher

### IN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTING

It is expected in an early childhood setting the panel comprises

- a registered early childhood teacher;
- a registered early childhood teacher or registered teacher who has participated in the VIT (EMP or other) mentor training program
- another registered early childhood teacher or teacher colleague who you nominate and who knows your work.

In an early childhood setting any panel member can assume the role of panel chair.

PRTs may need to seek assistance of registered teachers in other services and workplaces, including schools, to convene a panel to assess evidence.

In some circumstances, workplaces may have difficulty in convening a panel (for example, due to the size and or remoteness of the workplace). Where this is an issue, VIT should be contacted in order to discuss how to proceed.

## PANEL MEETING

The panel meeting is an opportunity for a PRT to present their evidence of practice to their workplace panel. The panel is provided with the evidence prior to the meeting, giving them sufficient time to read and assess the evidence. This means that panel members will have familiarity with the evidence and have identified any aspects requiring further exploration or explanation before the meeting.

The meeting usually takes about 30-45 minutes.

During the meeting, PRTs provide a brief overview of their evidence, showing where they have demonstrated the APST. They should be encouraged to discuss the selection of their inquiry focus, the improvements in learning they were seeking and what they managed to achieve. It is also valuable for PRTs to articulate what they have learned during the inquiry process and how they have developed as a teacher during this time.

Panel members are encouraged to ask clarifying questions where appropriate.

Where further undocumented evidence is presented or discussed at the meeting and is required to verify a descriptor of standard, then the panel needs to request that the PRT documents this and adds it to their evidence. This ensures there is full documentation of the evidence on which a panel decision is made. This is particularly important for PRTs who are selected to provide their evidence to VIT.

The panel needs time after the PRT has presented their evidence to consider whether it meets the standards. Using the [short guide to referencing the standards](#), the panel should verify each descriptor through examination of the evidence presented.

The panel uses an objective process to determine whether the evidence meets the Proficient Teacher level of the APST. The standard descriptors describe the aspects of practice and the level of expectation to be proficient. It is important that panels use these descriptors to ensure state-wide (and indeed national) consistency of judgement.

It is also important to remember the judgements are being made about teachers at the beginning of their career. Evidence that a PRT can reflect on their practice and continue to develop as practitioners should also be considered when assessing whether they are practicing at the proficient teacher level. Sometimes this is as important as practice that consistently meets the standard.

VIT is cognisant that teacher practice is complex and interrelated. Therefore, panel judgements should be 'on balance' and consider the entire documented evidence a PRT presents rather than just that related to individual descriptors.

## WHEN A PRT HASN'T ACHIEVED THE STANDARD

The inquiry process established by VIT for PRTs to evidence the APST is predicated on success. It is assumed that the vast majority of teachers who enter the profession having recently graduated from an initial teacher education program will be well equipped to achieve the proficient teacher level of the APST within their first two years of teaching.

The expectation that PRTs will be supported by trained mentors during their period of provisional registration ensures there is on-going monitoring of progress and feedback and guidance can be given for aspects of practice that need further development. This collegiate support is usually formative and builds the skills of professional collaboration that will sustain good practice in the future.

Where there is the continued inability of a PRT to reach the expected standard in one or more area(s) of practice, it is suggested that mentor teachers raise this at a higher level with appropriate leaders. This provides further support for a PRT to develop their practice and meet the standards. It also means the discussion about their practice is continued.

In such circumstances, it is unlikely a PRT will seek a panel meeting as they will know they cannot meet all of the APST. However, if they do seek a meeting then it is best to have a conversation about their practice and to advise that they wait until all APST can be met.

If a PRT persists in requesting a meeting, then the panel should follow normal process and, at the conclusion of the meeting, provide feedback about the descriptors and standards that are not at the Proficient Teacher level. The PRT will not be able to satisfy the requirements for (full) registration at this point but will have information to develop practice areas that are not up to standard.

## FEEDBACK TO PRTS

The panel chair acts on behalf of all panel members to provide feedback to a PRT after the meeting. The feedback should be about

- whether the panel has determined that the Proficient Teacher level of the APST has been met
- strongly positive aspects of practice
- aspects of practice providing a focus for future professional learning.

The panel chair should liaise with the PRT to complete the online Recommendation Report that can be used to apply for (full) registration if all standards are achieved.

## THE RECOMMENDATION REPORT

VIT recommendation report. This is an online form initiated by a PRT through their MyVIT portal and received by a panel chair through their VIT employer portal.

The panel chair (or their delegate) completes the online recommendation report. It is a simple process of verifying information, ticking boxes to identify where the evidence correlates to the standard descriptors and verifying the decision of the panel. Panel chairs also provide contact details and their VIT registration number.

Once completed, the recommendation report is submitted online to the PRT who requested it.

A recommendation report is not submitted directly from the panel chair to VIT. This is because a PRT making an application to VIT for (full) registration must be in control of the documentation required to apply.

Once the recommendation report is submitted online, it is not accessible again. Many panel chairs copy and keep the recommendation report in their teacher files.

## AUDIT

PRTs do not have to provide their evidence of professional practice directly to VIT as part of their application for full registration. Instead, VIT undertakes an audit of the process.

PRTs may be selected to provide VIT with their evidence of professional practice. This is used to assure that across workplaces:

- the process is undertaken consistently; and
- judgements about the standards are made consistently.

Most teachers are randomly selected in this audit process but where a workplace is not a school or early childhood service, teachers will always be required to submit their evidence of professional practice.

Should VIT determine there is insufficient evidence to meet the APST, the PRT will be given an opportunity to provide explanation and information that will satisfy the requirements.

During the audit process the panel chair may be contacted by VIT. Discussion may focus on the evidence presented by a PRT and / or the process undertaken by the panel to reach conclusions about achievement of the APST. This will only occur when a PRT does not provide complete evidence that they meet the APST.

The audit also provides VIT with an opportunity to use selected PRT evidence documents to educate new PRTs about the inquiry process and level of practice needed to achieve the Proficient Teacher level of the APST.

## DISSATISFACTION WITH JUDGEMENTS

In a very small number of cases, a PRT may not agree with the judgement of their workplace panel. Inevitably this is a situation where the panel does not find adequate evidence for a standard descriptor to be achieved.

If a PRT initiates action to have the decision reviewed or changed, this should be managed by the panel chair in discussion with the other panel members. It is important to remember that the panel is simply making a recommendation based on evidence presented by a PRT about their practice at that time.

VIT cannot intervene in these circumstances. However, the panel chair or members are encouraged to clarify with VIT any aspects of the panel process that will assist them to resolve the issue.

A PRT is not eligible to apply for (full) teacher or (full) early childhood teacher registration until they have a recommendation report indicating they have provided evidence of professional practice that achieves the Proficient Teacher level of the APST.

## PERIOD OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

PRTs can only hold provisional registration for a period of two years.

Where they cannot meet the Proficient Teacher level of the APST in this time, they can submit a new application for provisional registration. This provides a further two years to achieve the APST. It is hoped that this flexibility accommodates circumstances where PRTs have limited opportunities to practice and evidence their practice.

Turn overleaf for visual representation of the Workplace Recommendation Panel process.

