

PRT guide for casual relief and non-school setting teachers

A companion guide to gaining full registration



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Overview

This is a companion guide to the [PRT Guide](#) and is intended to provide additional support to casual relief teachers (CRTs) and teachers working in non-school settings.

The PRT Guide details the [Inquiry process](#), including the compulsory elements which must be met in order to be granted full registration. This companion guide is designed to provide information for those working as CRTs or in non-school settings, and does not replace the information in the PRT Guide.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) recognises the important role of CRTs in enabling Victorian schools and early childhood services to provide continuity of quality learning opportunities. The VIT also recognises the important role of teachers in non-school settings in providing specialist and unique learning opportunities for Victorian learners.

Teaching in non-school settings might include work as an education officer in a specialised area across schools/services. It could also include working as a teacher at education settings such as museums, zoos, TAFE colleges, juvenile correction facilities, hospitals or early intervention service. It might also include teachers who are employed in outdoor settings at school camps or by local Councils.

You will need to ensure you meet the following criteria for your work in a non-school setting to be considered teaching practice

- delivers an approved curriculum
- individually assesses student learning against the approved curriculum
- plans for learning against the approved curriculum
- provides feedback on learning to students both formally and informally
- reports this progress (informally and formally) to parents/carers
- demonstrates clear understanding of the legal obligations pertaining to registered teachers and strategies to ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment
- is able to demonstrate all 37 descriptors of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST) at the Proficient teacher level.

What is registration?

It is a legal requirement for all teachers to be [registered](#) with VIT in order to undertake the duties of a teacher in a Victorian school or early childhood service. Teacher registration helps maintain professional status, standing and public confidence in the teaching profession, particularly in the suitability of teachers to work with children.

Registration recognises the expertise of teachers, and protects the profession's high standards of practice and conduct. Registered teachers are expected to take responsibility for their professional behaviour and their professional practice, including the maintenance of their teacher registration.

Provisional registration

Provisional registration is crucial to the development of your practice as a teacher, and provides the opportunity for you to be properly inducted into the teaching profession by working closely with more experienced colleagues.

For teachers returning to the profession after a period of extended leave, provisional registration provides the opportunity to demonstrate classroom proficiency, particularly the ability to understand individual learners' needs and being able to adapt your teaching practice to accommodate for those needs.

Teachers who hold [provisional registration](#) have two years to move their practice from the Graduate to the Proficient teacher level of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (APST). Regardless of the education setting or employment type, all provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) follow the same process to [apply for full registration](#).

This work is undertaken in collaboration with experienced teachers who hold full registration and can provide the PRT with feedback and support in the development of their practice.

To meet your responsibilities as a registered teacher, before the end of your second year of provisional registration you should apply for full registration.

Depending on individual circumstances and the availability of employment, moving to full registration within the two-year grant of provisional registration may not always be possible for a teacher.

If you are unable to apply for full registration or if you are not in a position to demonstrate you have achieved the [Proficient teacher standards](#) before your registration expires, you may need to apply for a [further grant of provisional registration](#).



This will only become available in your MyVIT account three months prior to your registration expiry date.

Legislation provides that teachers can only remain provisionally registered for a maximum of six years. However, VIT will maintain the discretion to determine whether there are special circumstances for applications beyond the legislated limit.

Louise Johnson (registered teacher) with learners Featherbrook College

Full registration

Those who hold full registration have achieved the Proficient teacher level of the APST and have demonstrated their suitability to teach through [professional practice](#) and [professional learning](#).

There are two types of full registration

1. Teachers with full registration

Full or provisional teacher registration allows you to teach in any Victorian primary or secondary school or specialist education provider.

2. Early childhood teachers with full registration

Full or provisional teacher registration allows you to teach in Victorian early childhood education and care setting (e.g. preschool, long daycare or kindergarten).

If you hold dual registration (both teacher and early childhood teacher) then you only need to complete the Inquiry once, in the setting of your choice, and when the application for full registration is approved then you will be granted full registration in both categories (the APST are the same regardless of the context someone teaches in).

Once your full registration has been approved, you will enter into the [annual registration](#) cycle where you must complete 20 days of teaching and 20 hours of professional learning each year.

If your full registration lapses for five years or more, and you wish to return to teaching, you will need to apply for provisional registration and must complete all requirements to gain to full registration.

Why do I need to move to full registration?

The provisional to full registration process is designed to ensure that all teachers can demonstrate proficiency against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). This is a national requirement that ensures they can practically apply the standards within the classroom context to a level that is considered practically skilful, capable and competent.

Provisional registration is not intended to be an ongoing form of registration. The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides that teachers can only remain provisionally registered for a maximum of six years. However, VIT will maintain the discretion to determine whether there are special circumstances for applications beyond the legislated limit.

If you are unable to apply for full registration or if you are not in a position to demonstrate you have achieved the [Proficient teacher standards](#) before your registration expires, you may need to apply for a [further grant of provisional registration](#).

The provisional to full process provides the VIT and the community with the assurance that all Victorian teachers are meeting expected standards, including having a clear understanding of the important role that they play in providing for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

CRTs and those teaching in non-school settings undertake the full duties of a teacher, both VIT and the broader community expect these teachers to meet the same standards required of all teachers.



Sarah Lennox (registered teacher) with learner
Carey Baptist Grammar School

Moving to full registration as a CRT or in a non-school setting

In order to move to full registration, you will undertake a cycle of inquiry and gather evidence that your practice demonstrates all 37 descriptors of the APST at the Proficient teacher level. You must also complete 80 days of teaching as a provisionally registered teacher in Australian or New Zealand schools or early childhood services prior to presenting your evidence to a [workplace recommendation panel](#).

The Inquiry process is usually undertaken concurrently with a period of workplace induction where a PRT works with, and is supported by, more experienced colleagues. The Inquiry is an evidence-based process that supports a PRT to develop their practice through observations, professional discussions, professional learning and reflection.

During the Inquiry, you need to

- assess the learning needs of a group of learners
- apply new practices in the learning environment
- assess and reflect on the effectiveness of these practices to improve learning.

There is no set length of time that the Inquiry should take, and PRTs will be guided by their own context. The length of time for the Inquiry must allow a PRT to teach and assess the identified focus of the Inquiry, and gather enough evidence to demonstrate the standards. Generally, if a teacher is seeing their learners regularly (at least twice per week), then the Inquiry could be completed in approximately 4-6 weeks.

The process of moving to full registration may take longer when working as a CRT or teaching in a non-school setting, so you may need to extend this timeframe. This will depend on a number of variables, such as your Inquiry question, how often you see your learners and what opportunities you have to gather evidence of your practice against the APST.

The way in which the process is completed will look different from one PRT to the next, depending on the type of work they are undertaking. On the next page, in Diagram 1, are some contexts that outline four possible ways that the Inquiry can be undertaken as a CRT or teacher in a non-school setting.

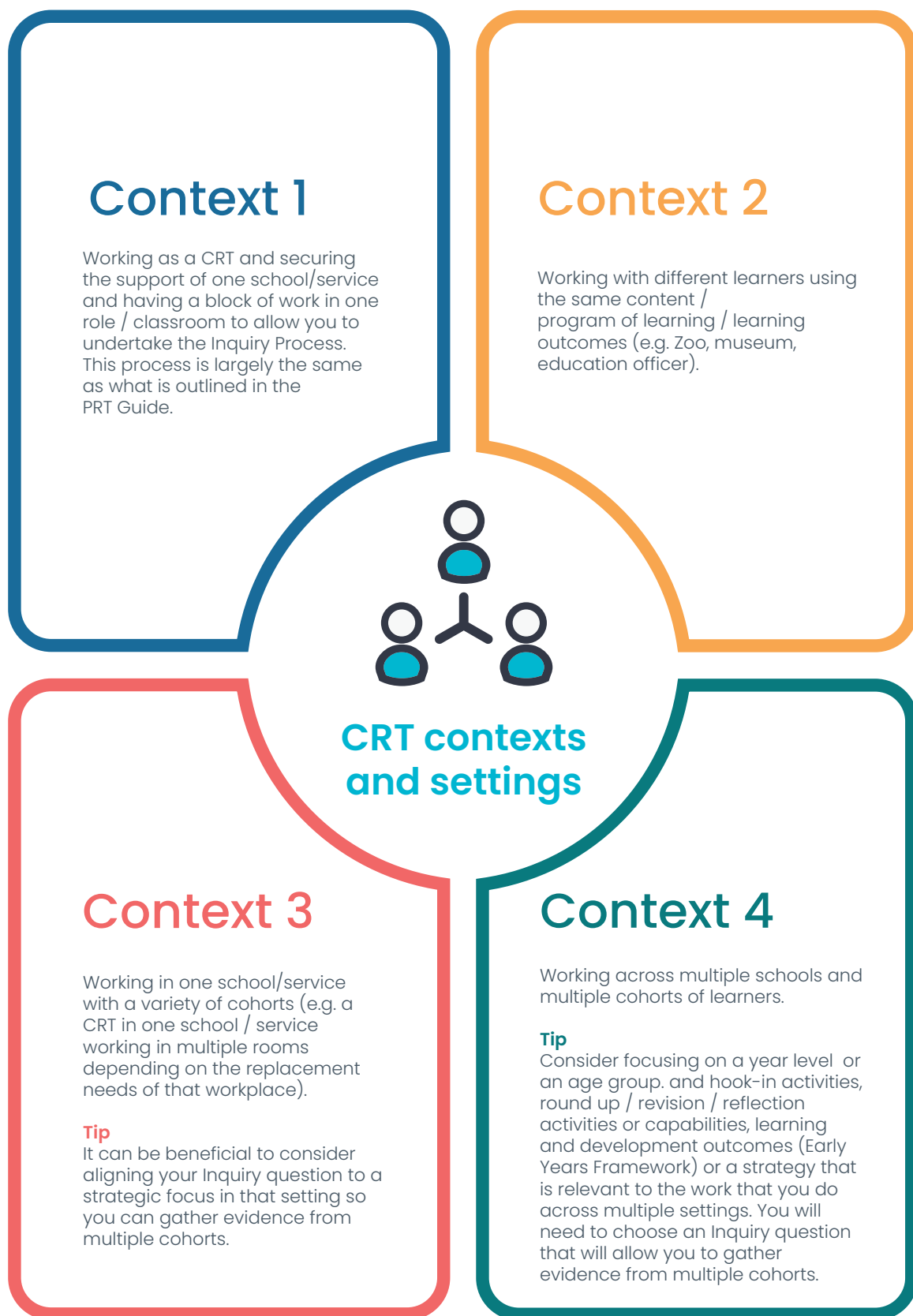


Diagram 1: CRT examples in various contexts.



Carly Rezuk (registered teacher) with learners
Craigieburn South Primary School

Requirements of the process

All teachers are responsible for meeting their regulatory obligations, regardless of their registration type or employment context. As a PRT, you must take ownership of the Inquiry process and develop an understanding of the supports you need from the school(s)/service(s) where you work. The best way to do this is to cultivate and establish a relationship with your colleagues and leadership team so they become familiar with you and your practice. This will give them confidence that they can support you and that you are ready to undertake your Inquiry.

The requirements to move to full registration are the same for all PRTs, regardless of their employment type. These requirements are listed below with additional information to support those working as a CRT or in a non-school setting.

Securing the support of a workplace (where your workplace recommendation panel meeting will take place)

You will need to determine which of the workplaces you regularly attend is in a position to convene your workplace recommendation panel meeting. Depending on your context, there are a number of things that you will need to clarify prior to gathering your evidence.

If you are working across multiple settings, you will need to ascertain if your supporting workplace is willing to accept evidence or observations that have been gathered from, or conducted in, other workplaces. If not, it is best to know this prior to commencing an Inquiry, as you will need to focus on gathering evidence and completing your observations in that specific workplace.

If the workplace is willing to accept evidence from other schools/services, you will need to inform all the workplaces that you are intending to gather evidence from. It is recommended that all evidence is de-identified and this is particularly important if you are using evidence from outside the setting of your workplace recommendation panel meeting.

Securing a mentor

Whether you are new to teaching, new to Victoria, new to Australia or returning to teaching after an extended period, developing your practice is best done with the support of experienced colleagues. PRTs need to secure the support of a mentor, as the Inquiry process requires them to work with more experienced colleagues who hold full registration with VIT. This provides opportunities for observations and professional discussions that support PRTs to reflect on the effectiveness of their practice in relation to their learners' identified needs.

The workplace that is supporting you with your recommendation panel may be able to provide you with a mentor. Depending on your context, however, there may not be an appropriate teacher to mentor you at this workplace. You may need to source a mentor yourself. It is possible to be mentored by a teacher from another setting, including a teacher working with learners of a different age group.

Your mentor will work with you as you investigate the effectiveness of your practice and gather evidence to demonstrate the APST at the Proficient teacher level. You should feel confident to share data, working documents and other information about your practice with them. You should also seek guidance from your mentor whenever necessary, as their experience will be of support to you.

You will need a mentor to support you with the following compulsory elements

- one documented observation of their practice
- three documented observations of your practice during your Inquiry
- three documented professional conversations.



Although beneficial and strongly recommended, your mentor does not need to have completed a [VIT mentor program](#), but they must hold full registration with VIT. The VIT collaborates with the Department of Education and Training and is supported by the Catholic Education Offices and Independent Schools Victoria to provide mentor training opportunities so that workplaces have appropriate staff to support PRTs. If your mentor would like information about how to support you in your specific context, they can contact mentors@vit.vic.edu.au.

Observations

As part of your Inquiry, you must observe the practice of a fully registered teacher once. This can be your mentor or another suitable colleague who holds full registration with VIT. The observation should relate to the focus of your Inquiry as this will support you in implementing your Inquiry. You will also be observed by your mentor or another teacher who holds full registration with VIT three times.

All three observations do not need to be completed by the same person. These observations will be of your Inquiry in action with your learners.

Following the observations, you will need to set aside time to receive feedback on your practice and to discuss your next steps. You are required to document these observations and the feedback that you receive, as this will be included in the evidence that you submit to your workplace recommendation panel. For templates and further information about observations, please refer to the [PRT Guide](#).



Robyn Croucher (registered teacher) with learners
Carey Early Learning Centre

Professional conversations

Your Inquiry will also include three professional discussions with your mentor. Two of these professional discussions will relate directly to your Inquiry. It is recommended that you use this time with your mentor to consider what you have identified as a need for your learners.

This will provide the opportunity for you to consider possible strategies to support the learners, ways that you can assess this, and possible professional learning opportunities that would be beneficial for you to engage with to support you in the process.

The third professional discussion relates to your professional boundaries and responsibilities as a teacher. This includes the legal obligations that all registered teachers have in line with the [Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct](#).

It is essential that you have a thorough understanding of these obligations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learners in your care. The Professional Practice Team offers a Code of Conduct seminar to support teachers with developing their understanding. You can [register for the seminars](#) on our website.

All three of these discussions will be documented as part of the evidence that you will gather and submit to your workplace recommendation panel meeting.



Demi Wood (registered teacher) with learner St Mel's Kindergarten

Professional Responsibilities Report

As part of your Inquiry, you will need to be responsive to the safety and wellbeing of your learners. With regard to the [Code of Conduct](#), [Child Safe Standards](#), [Mandatory Reporting](#) and [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#), all teachers need to inform themselves of the relevant policies, and their obligations and responsibilities. If you are working as a CRT or in a non-school setting, ensure you have spoken with the workplace leadership about internal policies and processes for these schemes.

Following the professional boundaries and responsibilities discussion with your mentor, you will need to write a brief Professional Responsibilities report. In the report, you will discuss how you maintain professional boundaries with your learners and two ways in which you have discharged your legal responsibilities in the course of your work. There is a template to support you in the [PRT Guide](#).

Workplace recommendation panel

When you have completed the Inquiry process, undertaken 80 days of teaching, and gathered evidence of your practice against the Proficient teacher level of the APST, you will need to organise your workplace recommendation panel meeting. The workplace panel will need to make a recommendation to VIT that you provided evidence of all 37 descriptors of the APST at the Proficient Teacher level.

The 80 days of teaching can be completed in one or more Australian or New Zealand schools / early childhood services, and can be undertaken at any time during your provisional registration period as it is not directly connected to your Inquiry. The days must be completed prior to your workplace recommendation panel meeting taking place, as you will need to provide evidence of the 80 days to them. The evidence can take the form of payslips or attestations from previous workplaces.

Identifying focus learners

Depending on your context and how you are approaching the Inquiry, you will identify your learners in one of four ways.

Context 1

If you are working with one cohort for an extended period, you will choose your focus learners based on your observations and assessments of their needs. Although you will be teaching all your learners, you will only gather evidence for your Inquiry from 3–4 focus learners. This context aligns with the advice offered in the [PRT Guide](#).

Context 2

Consider the age group and ability level of the cohorts that you see regularly and note any commonalities between them. These commonalities could relate to difficulties in grasping aspects of the content, challenges with engagement or the achievement of learning outcomes. Based on what you have noted as an ongoing need, you will select a type of learner that you see across the cohorts that you work with in your non-school setting.

Context 3

Working across multiple rooms in one school or service provides a great opportunity to liaise with a mentor or the workplace leadership about the workplace priorities and strategic initiatives. This will ensure the need that you are focusing on will provide opportunities to gather evidence across a range of cohorts in the same school or service. If it is not possible for you to choose something that is aligned to a school or service priority, you can work with your mentor to identify a common area of need.



Farid Benserai (registered teacher) with learner
Al-Taqwa College

Context 4

Where you teach multiple cohorts of learners across a range of different settings and are unable to identify one specific cohort for your Inquiry, you should choose a focus that can be developed to improve the learning outcomes for all learners you teach. This could be how you can develop learning for a particular type of learner, such as a learner who disrupts the learning of others, a learner who requires extension or a learner who lacks confidence.

Alternatively, you can focus on an area of identified need, such as managing the behaviour of Year 9 learners, giving effective feedback to high achievers in a Year 5 cohort or nurturing numeracy skills in five-year-old learners. This will help determine a good focus of your Inquiry and assist you to make it manageable. How you determine the appropriate focus for your Inquiry will depend on the work you are doing and the context(s) you are doing it in.

Developing your Inquiry question and action plan

To undertake the Inquiry process, you need time to assess the needs of a cohort of learners, to apply new practices and to assess and reflect on the effectiveness of this practice on learning outcomes. When developing your Inquiry question, be mindful of your context. If you work with different learners and / or across different content areas from day-to-day, you will need to develop a question that is relevant for all or most teaching circumstances. If you have employment as a CRT for a fixed term of 4 weeks or longer, then your Inquiry question can be focussed on one group of learners.

In developing your action plan, you may want to focus on researching and planning learning activities that can be utilised in a range of contexts. Where your context means you are teaching from the regular classroom teacher's lesson plans, you may want to use activities or strategies that can be implemented at the start or end of a session and still allow you to follow the program set by this teacher. For instance, you could look at introductory activities to gauge prior knowledge of learners or develop a program of short activities to provide evidence of learning.

Gathering evidence of proficiency against the standards

You will need to provide evidence that you demonstrate all 37 descriptors of the APST at the Proficient teacher level to a workplace recommendation panel who will provide a recommendation report to VIT. While the Inquiry process will naturally allow you to evidence most of the descriptors, if you find there are gaps in your evidence, you can address these descriptors through teaching that sits outside of the Inquiry.

A good way for you to obtain additional information or evidence of learning is to talk to the teacher you are replacing (if available) or other teachers who are familiar with the cohort of learners. This can be beneficial both before and after your teaching, where possible. It can provide information to assist you in getting to know your learners and their needs before you begin.

If this isn't possible, reporting your findings back to the teacher and having a professional conversation about the learning can assist you in reflecting on your practice, and will provide evidence you may be able to use for your Inquiry.

If there are no learners who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the cohorts that you are teaching, you must still evidence descriptor 1.4 of the APST. You can achieve this by detailing the strategies that you would use to support this group of learners if they were in the cohort that you're working with. You should also outline why you have chosen these specific strategies and how they would be supportive to the learners. It is a good idea to talk about such learners with experienced teachers where you are teaching and to undertake some appropriate professional learning to identify relevant pedagogy.



Rhiannon Hercus (registered teacher) with learners
Catherine McAuley College

You also will need to demonstrate how you cater for learners with a disability by including evidence of how you have modified your teaching to meet these learner needs. The learner does not need to be one of your focus learners, as you can detail the adjustments that you have made separately in your [action plan](#).

The definition of disability as defined in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* is broad, and incorporates a range of physical and intellectual needs. A significant portion of learners in Victoria require adjustment to their learning environment, curriculum or pedagogy and therefore fall under the definition of having a disability according to the Act. As such, it is likely you to have at least one learner with a disability in your wider group of learners.

The learner does not need to be funded or have a diagnosed disability. You should consider which of the learners you are needing to make adjustments for. This could be physical adjustments to the learning space, adjustment to the types of activities planned or to the content delivered. The disability does not need to be permanent; you may have a learner who has sustained a temporary injury that you need to make adjustments for.

Note: adjustments made for learners with English as an additional language cannot be used for the purpose of 1.6.

Some standards can be more difficult to evidence when working as a CRT or in a non-school setting. Such standards include, but are not limited to reporting and communicating with parents/carers.

Having a conversation with your mentor about how best to evidence any identified descriptors is strongly recommended. You can find examples of appropriate evidence in the [CRT Evidence Guide](#), and these will support for your discussions with your mentor.

Regardless of your Inquiry focus, you will still need to annotate evidence of learning and analyse the effectiveness of your teaching to support and develop learning.

Where this evidence of learning is 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).

You can gather and present your evidence any way that you choose. We recommend you ask your workplace if they have any specific requirements (e.g. templates, hard copy or digital). The VIT has created a [template](#) to support you in covering all required components of the process. There is also a [checklist](#) you can review with your mentor prior to your workplace recommendation panel meeting so that you can be confident that all descriptors have been evidenced.

Whether or not you choose to use the template, you must ensure that whatever evidence you document and present to your workplace recommendation panel allows them to judge that you have met the APST at the Proficient teacher level based solely on that evidence.

During the workplace recommendation panel meeting, you will be able to present your evidence. However, if you are selected for audit, your documented evidence must allow VIT's auditor to determine that you have met the APST requirements.

It is strongly recommended that you de-identify any evidence included in your presentation to your workplace recommendation panel. This is particularly recommended if you are including evidence from multiple settings, to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of learners concerned. This is not a requirement of the process but it is good practice as a professional. You must have a conversation with leadership of these workplaces to seek permission to gather evidence for a workplace recommendation panel meeting at another workplace.

Applying for full registration and the workplace recommendation panel meeting

Once the Inquiry process is complete, you should commence the recommendation process by applying for full registration via your [MyVIT account](#).

To complete the recommendation process, you must present your evidence to a [workplace recommendation panel](#). All members of a recommendation panel must hold full registration with VIT.

The workplace panel will assess your evidence of practice* to determine whether you have met the Proficient Teacher level of the APST, and submit their recommendation to VIT through their Employer portal.

The VIT will assess your application for full registration once all requirements are provided.

If you hold dual registration (both teacher and early childhood teacher), you only need to complete the Inquiry once, in the setting of your choice. When the application for full registration is approved, you will be granted full registration in both categories (the APST are the same, regardless of the context someone teaches in).

*You must ensure that, if requested, you can provide VIT with a copy of the evidence of practice you compiled as the basis of the workplace recommendation. It is expected that you keep your evidence for a minimum of two years after a successful panel recommendation.

More information can be found in the [Workplace Recommendation Panel](#) guide and the [PRT Guide](#) on the VIT website.

Additional tips to support you

1. Connect with your local CRT Networks

There are a number of CRT networks within metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. These networks provide a community of practice for teachers where they can meet regularly to share knowledge and experience. These networks are not employment agencies; they exist to support the professional development of CRTs.

Joining a network connects you with experienced colleagues who can provide information about professional learning that is appropriate for CRTs as well as guidance for your practice. Contact details for [CRT networks](#) can be found on the VIT website.

2. Engage in professional learning

All registered teachers, regardless of their employment type (full-time, part-time, CRT), or whether they hold provisional or full registration are responsible for ensuring they are engaging in relevant and appropriate professional learning to continue to build their practice. The Teacher Learning Network (TLN) offers [free professional learning to casual relief teachers](#), which can be accessed on the TLN's website.

The VIT runs a range of seminars to support all teachers to meet their regulatory obligations including provisionally registered teachers across a range of teaching contexts. You can [register for available seminars](#) on the VIT website. You can also seek opportunities to be involved in school / service based professional learning, as this will support you to develop a deeper understanding of the learners and their needs. Have a discussion with your workplace leadership about opportunities for you to be involved.

3. Working directly with schools or services

If you are employed directly by the schools/services that you work with, have a discussion with the Daily Organiser (or equivalent) about opportunities to work with particular cohorts, content or age groups to support your Inquiry or about a block of work if that is something that you're interested in securing.

4. Working through a teaching agency

Many teaching agencies are aware of the specific needs of PRTs. We recommend you discuss your employment needs with your consultant, as they may be able to support you to return to the same workplace or to secure work across multiple settings with learners of the same age or level. If you are interested in securing a block of work, you should have this discussion with your consultant. Talk to agencies and find out the level of support they can provide to you as a PRT. This may help you to identify which teaching agency best suits your needs.

References

The following references are useful for providing additional knowledge around the full registration process and mentoring.

- [PRT Guide: a guide to the full registration process](#)
- [Overview of moving from provisional to full registration](#)
- [CRT networks](#)
- [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)
- [Standards Inquiry Matrix](#)
- [Workplace recommendation panel document](#)
- [Code of Conduct and Ethics](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)
- [Podcasts: teacher experiences using the inquiry approach](#)
- [Videos: how to become \(fully\) registered with VIT](#)
- [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\)](#)

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