

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 fully registered early childhood teacher as panel chair*
- a fully registered early childhood teacher or teacher who has participated in a VIT teacher mentoring program (EMP or other)
- another fully registered early childhood teacher or teacher colleague who you nominate and who knows your work.

*In an early childhood (EC) setting, the education leader (e.g. centre director or manager) should assume the role of panel chair if they hold full early childhood teacher (ECT) registration. If the education leader does not hold full ECT registration, any EC trained 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 [APST evidence checklist](#), 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 statewide (and indeed national) consistency of judgement. The panel can also use the Workplace panel checklist attached at the end of this document to further ensure the standards are being met.

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 RECOMMENDATION REPORT

After assessment of the evidence, the panel chair must complete the Recommendation Report and submit to VIT.

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 provisional to full registration process.



Workplace panel checklist: evidence of professional practice

Panel members may use this checklist to ensure that applicants for (full) teacher registration have demonstrated that their practice meets the Australian Professional Standards for teachers at the Proficient level.

This checklist is a support document for panel members only and is not required as part of the recommendation report.

The following components of the inquiry have been completed.

- ☐ identification of the learners whose learning is the focus
- ☐ identification of learners with disability and strategies to make the learning accessible
- ☐ identification of learners who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and strategies to make the learning accessible
- ☐ evidence of strategies implemented to promote respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- ☐ identification of factors that may affect learning (including physical and mental, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic or religious factors) of learners
- ☐ description of teaching content for the program of learning
- ☐ learning outcomes for the program of learning
- ☐ identification of an inquiry question which is linked to learner outcomes
- ☐ evidence of professional learning undertaken to support the inquiry
- ☐ record of a professional discussion with a mentor / experienced colleague around the understanding of legislative requirements relating to child safety and wellbeing
- ☐ a report about the understanding of legislative requirements relating to child safety and wellbeing, including two examples of the implementation of these requirements in the workplace
- ☐ a report about the measures taken to ensure appropriate relationships are established and professional boundaries are maintained with learners and their families
- ☐ record of at least one observation of a mentor / experienced colleague's teaching practice
- ☐ record of at least two professional conversations with a mentor / experienced colleague about the inquiry
- ☐ a clearly articulated action plan that incorporates
 - data / information relied upon to determine the focus of the inquiry
 - learning outcomes to be achieved
 - learning resources, practices and activities to be used
 - strategies to develop a safe and challenging learning environment
 - assessment practices and tasks to be used
- ☐ details of the implementation of the action plan which include
 - dates of at least three mentor / experienced colleague visits
 - summaries and learning from professional discussions related to the visits
- ☐ an analysis of the effectiveness of practice in relation to achieving the improvements in learning related to the inquiry question which includes
 - annotated work samples that analyse achievement of learning
 - reflection on what was learned and implications for future teaching practice
- ☐ evidence of all 37 descriptors of the APST at Proficient Teacher level.