

A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHING

TEACHER QUALITY AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
TASKFORCE

MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATION,
EMPLOYMENT TRAINING AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

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PREAMBLE

The National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century (The Adelaide Declaration) adopted by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in 1999, was an historic commitment to improving Australian schooling within a framework of national collaboration. The Declaration acknowledges that achievement of the agreed national goals entails a commitment to collaboration for the purposes of:

- Further strengthening schools as learning communities where teachers, students and their families work in partnership with business, industry and the wider community;
- Enhancing the status and quality of the teaching profession;
- Continuing to develop curriculum and related systems of assessment, accreditation and credentialing that promote quality and are nationally recognised and valued; and,
- Increasing public confidence in school education through explicit and defensible standards that guide improvement in students' levels of educational achievement and through which the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of schooling can be measured and evaluated.

As a critical step towards the achievement of the national goals, MCEETYA established the Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce (TQELT) in July 2001, to provide advice, among other things, on:

- Teacher preparation and ongoing development aimed at improving the quality and standard of teaching and learning; and,
- Professional standards for teachers and principals, both for entry to the profession and to meet the ongoing needs of students over time.

At the MCEETYA meeting in July 2002, Ministers considered a report from TQELT outlining the benefits of the development of a national framework for professional teaching standards. MCEETYA endorsed a recommendation that a developmental approach be adopted in relation to a national framework and TQELT was asked to provide advice regarding the structural components of quality teaching across a teacher's career. As a result of a lengthy consultation process, the *National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching* was formulated and then considered at the July 2003 MCEETYA meeting. It received State, Territory & Federal Education Ministers' endorsement and Ministers agreed that the next step in implementing this decision was to use the National Framework to nationally align entry or graduate level standards. The significance of this endorsement by Ministers cannot be overstated and other groups such as employers and professional associations who are undertaking or will undertake work on standards for teaching need to recognise the imprimatur that the National Framework has and refer to it as a guide and key point of reference.

INTRODUCTION

This National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching is the current response in continuing efforts to define and promote quality teaching. During the 1980s and into the 1990s, teachers and teacher educators in Australia were encouraged to understand and articulate what effective teachers do, influenced by a competency-based agenda (Louden, 2000). As part of responding to these challenges, the National Competency Framework for Beginning Teachers was developed by the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning and published by the Australian Teaching Council in 1996 (National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning, 1996). Across the country, professional bodies, registration authorities, employing authorities and academics entered discussions about developing competences for teachers' work. However, critics argued that defining teachers' work through competencies not only deskilled teachers but also reinforced teachers' practices as reproductive of schooling rather than being transformative (e.g. Porter, Rizvi, Knight, & Lingard, 1992). The potential of competencies to fragment, technicise, and decontextualise teachers' work was highlighted (e.g. Hattam & Smyth, 1995; Louden & Wallace, 1993), as was their potential to restrict teachers' professional growth rather than transform and extend it (e.g. Whitty, 1994). Many critics were particularly concerned with a perceived emphasis on 'doing teaching' rather than 'knowing about teaching'. By the end of the 1990s in Australia, the UK and the USA, there was a shift from the discourses of *competencies* to *standards*. As explained by Reynolds (1999), the concept of standards still aims to make the basis for accreditation of practice transparent but it is a broader concept than competencies as it includes a range of factors such as values and attitudes. Further, standards refocus issues of teachers' processes, purposes and efforts rather than outcomes alone.

This current National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching provides an architecture within which generic, specialist and subject-area specific professional standards can be developed at National, and State and Territory levels. It provides an organising structure which establishes, at a national level, the agreed foundational elements and dimensions of effective teaching. The Framework complements the National Goals for Schooling, providing an agenda for strategic action on teaching and learning policy at the national level. It provides an agreed language, utilising commonly understood terms and definitions, with which to discuss professional teaching practice at the national level. It will therefore facilitate more effective information sharing about professional teaching practice across jurisdictions and provide a source document for Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to draw upon for their own strategic purposes. The Framework also aims to enhance the effectiveness of professional discourse between teachers and schools communities both within and across their respective jurisdictions, as well as providing a common framework for professional dialogue between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations and associations and the public. The National Framework will provide guidance, support and recognition for ongoing professional development of teachers. It aims to improve alignment of standards for pre-service teacher education graduates across Australia and thus portability of teacher qualifications.

Professional standards for teaching describe the skills, knowledge and values for effective teaching. They capture key elements of teachers' work, reflecting their growing expertise and professional aspirations and achievements. Standards make explicit the intuitive understandings and knowledge that characterise good teaching practice and enable this to be widely shared within the profession. The National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching provides the basis for agreement on and consistency around what constitutes quality teaching and facilitates the articulation of the knowledge, understandings, skills and values for effective teaching through development of standards at the local level. The nature and content of standards developed and implemented at the local level will vary according to the purpose for which they are being developed, and the context in which they will be utilised.

In achieving all these intentions, the National Framework provides a powerful mechanism for raising the status and standing of teachers, and a common reference point for engagement within the profession and the community.

RATIONALE

Quality teaching

A strong and effective school education system is integral to individual success, social cohesion, progress, and national prosperity. It is clear that teachers have to be more and more successful with a wide range of learners in order to prepare future citizens with the sophisticated skills needed to participate in a knowledge-based society. The sort of pedagogy needed to help students develop the ability to think critically, create, solve complex problems and master complex subject matter, is much more demanding than that needed to impart and develop routine skills. Thus teachers have to be both knowledgeable in their content areas and extremely skilful in a wide range of teaching approaches to cater for the diverse learning needs of every student.

Internationally, a growing body of research confirms teacher quality as one of the most important school factors influencing student achievement (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Santiago, 2002). Based on reviews of studies of student achievement in the United States, Darling-Hammond, LaFors, & Snyder (2001) concluded that 'teachers' qualifications – based on measures of knowledge and expertise, education, and experience – account for a larger share of the variance in students' achievement than any other single factor, including poverty, race, and parent education (p.10). In Australia, a number of studies have similarly concluded that the quality of teaching and learning is an important factor accounting for variations in school students' achievements (e.g. Cuttance, 2001; QSRLS, 2001; Rowe, 2003; Rowe, Turner, & Lane, 2002).

Thus, quality teaching is at the centre of schooling systems and school effectiveness, and recognition of the critical relationship between teachers and learners highlights the need to better define and communicate what constitutes good teaching (National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003). Likewise, specific understanding of what constitutes quality teaching is a necessary aspect of any strategic and long-term approach to ensuring the provision of quality teachers, and necessary also in ensuring a shared commitment across teacher employers, the community and all levels of government on how best to develop and support teacher quality.

Moreover, it is increasingly agreed that identifying and publicly recognising what it is that effective teachers know, do and value is an important step in enhancing the public profile and standing of the profession. Teachers often feel that their work is more complex and demanding than the community comprehends, that their status with regard to community standing has declined, and that the demands arising from their work and its complexity are increasing (e.g. Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003; Ministerial Council for Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), 2003; Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998). Articulating professional standards for teaching helps make the knowledge and capabilities of teachers explicit for those within and outside the profession, and provides means by which good teaching can be identified, rewarded and celebrated (National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003; Ramsey, 2000).

Therefore, deciding how to capture what it is that effective teachers know, do and value, is central to the development of any national framework for standards for teaching. There is a large body of relevant national and international literature which informs this, and many national and state groups have sourced this literature and worked intensively with the profession over extended periods of time to develop the professional elements associated with teachers' work in today's rapidly changing social, economic and political environment (see Appendix 2). TQELT has drawn on the work of these groups and the relevant literature, and carried out its own intensive consultation (see Appendix 1) to develop the Professional Elements of the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching: Professional Knowledge; Professional Practice; Professional Values; and, Professional Relationships.

Career aspirations and achievements

In developing a framework, which captures teachers' growing expertise throughout a career, emerging new conceptions of career must be considered. In the 21st century, many employees regard the notion of a single career or loyalty to one employer as a thing of the past. Today's workforce is characterised by flexible or 'portfolio' careers where workers are likely to work in many organisations and experience a range of occupations throughout their working lives. Hence, a teaching career must now be positioned within the context of a more flexible working life (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003). Professional learning is central to career development and standards can be used to support the development of career pathways. Central to this is a fully functioning system of professional learning for Australia's teachers with recognition and reward for teachers who demonstrate advanced competencies and continued professional development (Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003).

Learning to teach is an ongoing process involving pre-service teacher preparation, induction and beginning teaching, and ongoing professional learning (Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003; Coolahan, 2002; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999). 'The knowledge base on which a teaching career is based has deepened and calls for teachers to engage with it on an ongoing basis as lifelong learners' (Coolahan, 2002, p.13). The value of teachers engaging with professional standards as a strategy for continuing professional learning which is directed and controlled by them, is well supported (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2001; Ingvarson, 2002a, 2002b; National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003). In Australia, there is some evidence that teachers' engagement in advanced certification processes built around professional standards, contributes to their professional growth (e.g. Jasman & Barrera, 1998), and that engagement with professional standards can help teachers plan, structure and facilitate their ongoing professional learning (e.g. Mayer, Mitchell, Macdonald, Land, & Luke, 2002). Likewise, in the US, there is some evidence that the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process is linked to improved professional practice for accomplished teachers, and that the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) licensing process is similarly linked for beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

Therefore, deciding how to capture the profile of teachers' careers is central to the development of a national framework for standards for teaching. Again, TQELT drew on relevant national and international literature, the current work of national and state groups, and their own intensive consultation, to develop the Career Dimensions of the National Framework which are designed to capture profiles of teachers as they engage with their teaching career: Graduation; Competence; Accomplishment; and Leadership.

The importance of a national approach

The local and national impacts of economic and cultural globalisation have raised a series of major, unprecedented questions for Australian education: specifically, how will we educate our citizens to live together in difference; and further, how will we prepare our students to engage with, critique, analyse, and understand a globalised nation and world? Even though the Australian Council of Deans of Education has argued for a national system for national standards and guidelines for initial teacher education (Australian Council of Deans of Education, 1998), pre-service teacher education programs and ongoing professional development programs are currently set up and regulated to produce a 'New South Wales' teacher or a 'Queensland' teacher, in an era in which we should take up the challenge of producing, educating and training a truly 'Australian teacher' who can engage with dynamic national and international knowledge contexts, can teach a diverse and changing student and community population, and introduce them into critical engagements with globalised and globalising economies and environments (Luke & Mayer with Leitch, 2002).

The issue of teacher quality is an issue of national significance that can only be fully addressed through the shared commitment and support of both State and Territory and Commonwealth governments. The overlapping responsibilities of States and the Commonwealth for universities and teacher preparation also necessitate a cooperative approach to developing and supporting teacher quality. The National Framework for Professional Standards will facilitate national agreement on and

consistency around what constitutes quality teaching and national collaboration in supporting quality teaching. These broad purposes provide the rationale for the National Framework.

1. National collaboration in developing a framework for professional standards for teaching will support the achievement of the National Goals of Schooling by identifying the knowledge, understanding, skills and values that all Australian teachers should hold or aspire to in order to improve student learning outcomes.
2. Teachers are the greatest resource available to students, schools and communities. A National Framework will provide a coherent approach to planned and systematic professional learning to improve teacher quality and a more appropriate and equitable basis for the allocation of Commonwealth, State and Territory funds to teacher quality priorities. It will also support the priority of ensuring the quality of teachers entering the profession, supporting their induction and mentoring, and supporting the continuing educational needs of experienced teachers.
3. The internationalisation of education requires of Australia a national approach to education to ensure the quality of education in all jurisdictions. Australia is increasingly seen as a source of quality education and the increased value placed on knowledge as a commodity in current societies, raises the importance of the intellectual and social capital of nations in determining international competitiveness.
4. The mobility of teachers, students and parents in contemporary society requires nationally consistent approaches to recognising and affirming the quality of teachers working within and across jurisdictions. A National Framework will provide greater assurance of the quality of and consistency in teacher education outcomes.
5. Students, parents and the community need to be assured that all teachers have attained minimum standards. The importance of quality teaching to the outcomes of students has always been apparent to parents as consumers of the services of education, as well as teachers.

A National Framework: The development process

From the outset, the Taskforce acknowledged that the development of a National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching would not succeed without the active engagement of teachers themselves and key education stakeholders through broadly based consultation. To do this, the Taskforce prepared an initial Consultation Paper outlining a rationale and key issues for the development and implementation of a national framework for professional standards. This document was considered at a National Conference of key stakeholders in November 2002. (A detailed description of the consultation process and the outcomes of the national conference is provided in Appendix 1).

Following the conference, the revised Consultation Paper *A National Framework for Standards for Teaching: A consultation paper* (Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce of MCEETYA, 2002) was distributed nationally for extensive consultation. Written submissions were invited on the architecture for a National Framework. By March 2003, responses from every jurisdiction and a wide range of teacher representative organisations, professional associations and teacher educators had been received. Along with the input from conference participants, the written submissions informed the development of the Framework.

Additionally, international and national research was drawn upon as the Framework was developed, as was the professional standards work occurring at both State and Commonwealth levels by professional associations, employing authorities and established and emerging teacher registration authorities. In Australia, standards development activities have been taking place on four major fronts:

- Commonwealth ARC-SPIRT projects involving national professional teaching associations, university partners and state jurisdictions to develop standards for accomplished teachers of English literacy, Mathematics and Science;

- Development of a generic standards framework supported by the Australian Association for Research in Education, Australian College of Educators, and the Australian Curriculum Studies Association. This has extended its membership and functions with support from the Commonwealth to include other professional associations as the National Reference Group for Teaching Standards, Quality and Professionalism;
- State-based initiatives either through the Departments of Education or through legislatively established Boards of Teacher Registration, Colleges and Institutes of Teaching or Teachers; and,
- MCEETYA Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce activities.

A brief overview of these activities is provided in Appendix 2, including the actual standards and frameworks developed by each group. These have been drawn upon in the development of the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching. The National Framework will guide and support this ongoing work, providing clear direction for improving teacher quality.

The relationship of a national framework to State and Territory and Commonwealth initiatives

The National Framework recognises not only the constitutional responsibility of States and Territories for providing school education, but also the need for professional standards to have meaning for teachers within individual jurisdictions. It reflects teachers' work and builds on the existing work of teachers, teacher unions, professional associations, teacher educators, employers, and others in the field. The priority for any framework for, or of, professional standards must be that it be relevant to practising teachers. A genuine approach in this regard must build on the work of schools within jurisdictions on the nature and value of teachers' work. States and Territories are best placed to implement processes, or assist the profession in the implementation of processes, that will be recognised as reflecting the real quality of teachers' work.

The specific role of the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching is to achieve national consistency and a common approach to recognising quality, as well as to facilitate a national co-operative approach in supporting teacher quality. The Framework provides a mechanism through which the detailed work within jurisdictions and professional associations can have national application. Where work on standards is already underway, the challenge for a national framework is to acknowledge and reflect commonalities between initiatives. Where specific work on standards is not substantially developed, the national framework will allow a common foundation and articulate parameters for consistency and mutual recognition.

The benefits of a national framework

A professional framework for teachers can provide clear benefits, not only to the teaching profession, but also to students, parents, the community and governments. Benefits relate, inter alia, to: student learning outcomes; the status and standing of teachers; and, professional support for teachers. To realise such benefits, a Framework must be capable of reflecting, supporting and recognising teachers' professional growth throughout their careers. It should articulate the basis of a whole of career approach to supporting teachers' development, recognising their achievements and capacities, while assuring the quality of teaching in Australian schools.

Within this broad purpose, the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching aims to:

- Provide common national understandings of what teachers need to know and be able to do to support and improve student learning;
- Describe levels of teaching quality to which teachers might aspire and ensure teacher development opportunities are available nationally to achieve these levels;
- Provide a basis for national recognition of the quality of teaching;

- Provide the basis for national alignment of standards for graduates of teacher education programs;
- Strengthen initial teacher preparation and ensure national commitment to effective and adequate teacher preparation; and,
- Provide a basis for ongoing commitment by Commonwealth and State and Territory governments to support teachers' professional learning.

Therefore, recognising the importance and benefits of a national approach, the following National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching has been developed to contribute to ongoing discussions about the status of the profession and teaching quality. It acknowledges the importance of building and sustaining quality teaching in a global context characterised by ever-changing and challenging social, economic and political environments with an increasingly diverse group of students, and the value of the ongoing work on standards by groups throughout Australia. Drawing on this work the framework aims to capture professional elements of teachers' work across career dimensions which profile teachers' careers. It aims to allow existing work around professional standards to be recognised and new work, either by jurisdiction or subject association, to be developed.

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHING

The National Framework is designed to be evolutionary, providing a vision, principles and structures for jurisdictions and the profession to align current or proposed standards for teaching.

Vision

The adoption of the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching is an acknowledgement of the need for the highest quality of education to be available to all Australians, and an assurance that this quality should be maintained and built upon for this and future generations. The key to this assurance is the successful partnership between teachers and the teaching profession, teacher educators, teacher employers, the community and Government.

The responsibility for delivering the highest quality education rests personally and collectively with teachers, in a context that is contingent on the recognition and support of governments for quality teaching. Individually, teachers are ultimately responsible for the career long development of their professional skills. Teacher educators must share responsibility for ensuring that students graduate with skills that align with the demands of schools and the teaching profession. Employers must ensure that teachers are supported, encouraged and provided with opportunities for ongoing professional learning. Governments, both Commonwealth, and State and Territory, have a responsibility for ensuring coherent policy and resource frameworks.

A framework to guide the development of equitable, trusted, reliable and nationally consistent and acknowledged teaching standards is central to achieving this vision and to supporting and enhancing the professionalism of teachers. The National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching is an expression of the commitment of all responsible parties toward supporting quality teaching.

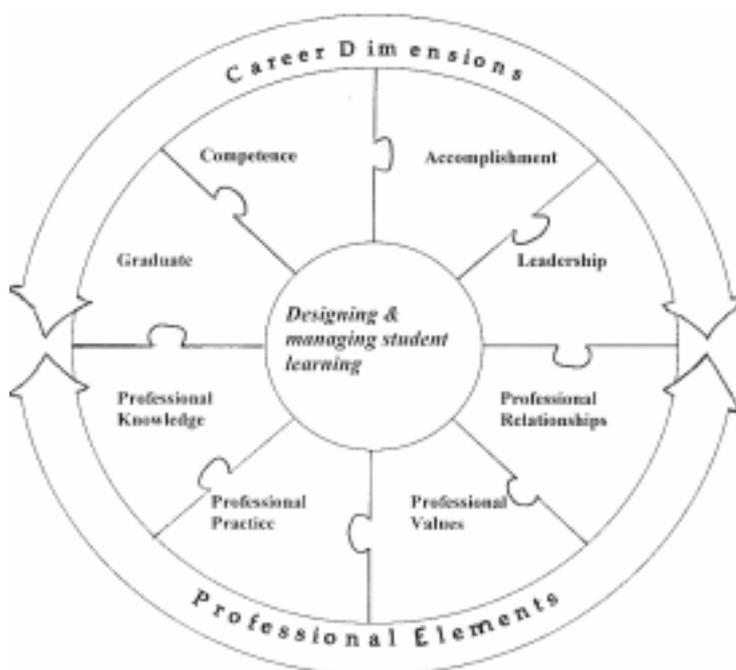
Principles underpinning the development of professional standards for teaching consistent with the Framework

The National Framework does not provide standards but presents the parameters within which they can be developed, outlining core dimensions and attributes of standards that allow the development of generic, specialist and subject specific standards. It embodies principles to strengthen the definition and articulation of teachers' work. The National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching enables and supports the development of standards that:

- Acknowledge the link between quality teaching and improved student learning outcomes;
- Ensure consistency and enable recognition of quality teaching;
- Reflect authentic and extensive knowledge about teaching and learning;
- Encourage teachers to aspire to a higher level of performance;
- Have regard for the future but are grounded in current effective professional practice;
- Reflect the theoretical knowledge of specific content and pedagogy and the practical application of that knowledge to improve student learning;
- Are outcomes-based to ensure strong links between standards for teaching, their evaluation and professional learning;
- Reflect teachers' professional experience and growth on a continuum from undergraduate preparation to professional leadership; and,
- Promote, support, recognise and reward quality teaching in the full range of social and cultural contexts in which teaching occurs.

The Framework

The diagram below represents the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching's career dimensions and professional elements, and illustrates how they interconnect with each other and how they collectively contribute to the central focus of teachers' work. The career dimensions and professional elements of the National Framework provide guidance to, but do not limit the capacity of jurisdictions or the profession to articulate professional expectations for teachers within standards.



Career Dimensions

Teachers develop their knowledge, skills and practices throughout their professional lives, but teacher development is not a simple linear process. They enter the profession with varying levels of prior learning, work experience and professional preparation, and work in a range of different contexts. Individual teachers display a profile pattern along a continuum of practice related to their competence and confidence in particular aspects of their role over the period of a career. These circumstances reflect a reality best captured in a framework that suggests a profile approach to learning and practice throughout a career rather than a staged representation. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that there are aspects that can serve to recognise dimensions in the development of teachers for the enunciation of professional standards.

These dimensions do not signify levels of experience; rather they frame general and recognisable aspects of professional capacity and achievement. They reflect a broad continuum of professional development rather than a simple temporal framework of experience. This approach is essentially neither sequential nor “lock step” and is dependent on application and context. While graduation clearly relates to a specific activity, descriptors of competence, accomplishment and leadership are aspects of professional status, rather than detailed or sequenced events.

The National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching describes four career dimensions for teachers: Graduation; Competence; Accomplishment; and Leadership.

- *Graduation*

The National Framework allows the identification of the specific attributes of individual teacher education graduates. This dimension is distinct from newly accredited or newly appointed teachers because their essential qualification lies predominantly in study rather than professional practice. While practice is an essential component of theoretical investigation, reflection and learning in preparation for teaching, a graduate is not yet recognised as a competent and capable practitioner with full professional standing. Graduate teachers are about to begin their teaching careers. They have undertaken endorsed programs of teacher preparation and possess the requisite knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to plan for and manage successful learning.

Effective graduate teachers are equipped to engage in and negotiate a process of on-going professional learning. They identify their development needs and seek advice and support from colleagues. They have high expectations of themselves as professional learners, and for the learning of their students. Their commitment to students and student learning is reflected in their desire to support students' achievement of the highest possible education outcomes. They have the commitment, enthusiasm and interpersonal skills to assume a professional role within their schools and its broader communities and to contribute to the operations of a school as a whole.

- *Competence*

The National Framework allows for the establishment of a mechanism and process that signifies professional competence or formal and full entry to the profession. Professionally competent teachers have demonstrated successful teaching experience. They effectively monitor, evaluate and plan for learning and are able to tailor teaching programs to meet the needs of individuals and groups within the class.

Professionally competent teachers have a record of effective and ongoing professional learning. They work collegially and in teams to further enhance their professional practice, and take greater responsibility in collaboration with others for identifying and addressing their own learning needs. They are effective members of a school and its broader community and interact effectively with stakeholders.

- *Accomplishment*

Consistent with the priority of recognising teacher quality and supporting the development of teachers, the National Framework allows for recognition of teachers who are highly accomplished and highly regarded by their peers. Teachers at this level are highly proficient and successful practitioners. They are recognised by other teachers as having in-depth subject knowledge and pedagogical expertise. They keep abreast of and contribute to professional learning and contribute to the professional learning of others. These teachers are advocates for the profession and their schools. They communicate effectively to diverse audiences and interact professionally with the community.

- *Leadership*

A framework, which facilitates a culture of recognition and quality, should also enable professional leaders to be identified. Within a profession, and among the most accomplished of professionals, some individuals will have the capacity and the willingness to apply their professionalism in ways that are transformative for their profession, for students and the community. Such teachers have a record of outstanding teaching and are committed to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. They are committed educators who can articulate a vision of education to their students, peers, the profession and the wider community.

These teachers are knowledgeable about the latest developments in pedagogy and can apply those developments to unique student contexts. They have outstanding interpersonal and leadership skills, underpinned by principles of fairness, compassion, integrity and equity. They recognise the talents of others and promote and encourage those people to achieve their potential. They apply critical analysis and problem solving skills to educational matters, and engage in ongoing professional learning and facilitate and support the professional learning needs of others. They communicate effectively with the community to support the development of the school and promote student learning.

Professional Elements

The career dimensions of the National Framework can be described through specific aspects of teachers' work. The categories outlined below have been drawn from a mapping of a range of activities, nationally and internationally. These categories are interdependent and overlapping. In practice, no teacher activity will be applied in a way that draws on any area independently of the other. In addition, the extent or complexity of achievement may not be captured in a two dimensional category. But neither a framework for standards nor standard statements are intended to or capable of capturing the complexity of practice. They are intended as common and recognisable reference points for professional engagement.

- *Professional knowledge*

Teachers know and understand the fundamental ideas, principles and structure of the disciplines they teach. They know and understand the links to other content areas and are able to integrate learning across and between content areas. They know how to effectively teach that content, and understand the prompts and barriers to learning likely to be encountered by students.

In addition, effective teachers have a detailed understanding of how young people learn and their role in facilitating that learning. They know and understand and can articulate a range of philosophies of learning. They critically evaluate the range of teaching and learning theories and know how to apply them where appropriate. They know and understand and take account of the diverse social, cultural and special learning-needs background of their students and the influences these have on teaching and learning. Effective teachers structure learning to take account of these differences.

- *Professional practice*

Teachers communicate effectively with their students and establish clear goals for learning. They possess a repertoire of inquiry techniques and teaching strategies, and use a range of tools, activities, and resources to engage their students in learning. They select and organise the content in logical and structured ways to meet learning goals. They are adept at managing the range of behaviours and situations that occur in the classroom and establishing a climate where learning is valued and fostered. Teachers create safe and supportive learning environments and recognise and are attentive to their child protection and welfare roles.

Teachers plan for learning, and utilise a range of formative and summative assessment techniques to report on learning and to inform their planning. They understand the need to evaluate their teaching and the importance of providing both formal and informal feedback to students as a stimulus to learning.

- *Professional values*

Teachers are committed to their own development and continually analyse, evaluate and enhance their professional practice. They understand that the contexts in which they work are continuously evolving and changing and the need to adapt and respond to these changes. They work closely with parents and carers to acknowledge that the education of students is a shared enterprise.

They uphold high professional ethics with regard to their own conduct and that of others, and respect their students and value their diversity. They act professionally at all times in their dealing with their students, peers, members of the profession and members of the community.

- *Professional relationships*

Teachers engage with diverse student populations representing equally diverse communities. They meet these challenges by forming professional relationships at all levels of the community. It is within this context that teachers design and manage learning experiences for individuals and groups of students that value opportunities to actively engage with other members of their profession and their wider school communities. They work productively with colleagues and other professionals to enhance the learning of their students, and understand and value the importance of close links between the school, home and community in the social and intellectual development of their students. They understand and foster the critical relationship between them and the student. This is a relationship that is underpinned by trust, respect and confidence.

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APPENDIX 1: THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS

In October 2002, the Taskforce produced a Consultation Paper outlining a rationale and key issues for the development and implementation of a national framework for professional standards, and convened a national conference on 7 November 2002 involving 79 representatives from: all States and Territories; public and private sector employers; key stakeholders including teacher professional associations and those organisations representing teachers as employees; those involved in the preparation of teachers and those involved in research about teaching; principals associations; and, teachers themselves. The delegates at the conference considered the Consultation Paper and a series of discussion questions. They endorsed a national framework based on the following **principles**:

- Flexibility;
- Commonality of language;
- Credibility; and,
- Simplicity and transparency.

In addition, conference participants stressed that a national framework should be informed by the following **values**:

- A commitment to enabling rather than directing the development and implementation of professional standards;
- The adoption of a developmental stance, supporting aspirational signposts for teachers in terms of their professional learning and growth;
- A commitment to continuous revitalisation of the profession in recognition of the increasing complexity of teachers' work; and,
- A basis in recognition and celebration of teachers' work and their contribution to social cohesion and national prosperity and growth.

Moreover, they highlighted the following **purposes** of a national framework:

- Providing an organising structure and language within which statements of professional standards can be developed;
- Promoting professional growth;
- Providing an assurance to the community about the quality of the teaching profession with a corresponding enhancement in the status of teachers;
- Strengthening teacher education and induction;
- Supporting the efforts of all employers to attract high quality recruits to the profession;
- Improving teacher morale; and,
- Supporting progress towards achievement of the National Goals for Schooling.

Participants argued that the two dimensional matrix presented as the **organising structure** in the Consultation Paper, with one dimension describing the key elements of a teacher's work (practice, knowledge, skills and professional attributes) and the second dimension outlining professional growth along a career continuum, was an inadequate way of thinking about professional standards. They

highlighted multiple pathways to becoming an accomplished teacher, of which gaining considerable experience is one. They argued that highly skilled and accomplished teachers who are young and/or relatively inexperienced deserve professional recognition and opportunities to influence the practice of others.

Conference participants provided desirable **elements** of a national framework as:

- Recognising the importance of the context of teachers' work
- Identifying growth in terms of increased mastery of skills, enhanced professional learning and profiles of professional expertise
- Recognising increasing spheres of influence as teachers become more accomplished and undertake professional leadership roles

Generally, participants saw **value in a national framework** in terms of:

- Revised registration standards for beginning teachers
- More strategic alignment of professional development both within states and territories and between the states and territories and the Commonwealth
- Clarification of expectations of teachers beyond initial registration
- Provision of evidence of professional learning and growth

Overall, participants agreed that the initial Consultation Paper developed by the Taskforce should be edited to clarify terms and intentions before broader distribution. In particular, clarification was seen to be needed as to whether the framework was to be for teachers, the teaching profession or teaching. The general preference was that consultation should be around a proposal to develop a National Framework for Standards for *Teaching*.

Following the conference the revised Consultation Paper, *A National Framework for Standards for Teaching: A consultation paper* (Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce of MCEETYA, 2002), was distributed nationally for extensive consultation. Written submissions were invited on the architecture for a National Framework. By March 2003, responses from every jurisdiction and a wide range of teacher representative organisations, professional associations and teacher educators had been received.

Along with the input from conference participants, the written submissions informed the development of the National Framework approved by Ministers in July 2003. Additionally, international and national research was drawn upon as the National Framework was developed, as was the professional standards work occurring concurrently at both State and Commonwealth levels by professional associations, employing authorities and registration bodies.

APPENDIX 2: CURRENT STATE AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Many groups at state and national levels are currently working on developing and implementing standards for the teaching profession, including professional associations, established and emerging teacher registration authorities, and employers. A brief overview of some of these activities follows. The standards and standards frameworks, which have been developed as part of these initiatives, have informed the development of the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching. The National Framework will guide and support this ongoing work.

The Australian College of Educators (<http://www.austcolled.com.au>) supported by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Technology has played a major role in bringing together a large number of teacher, principal and school leader associations in two national forums aimed at developing a national collaborative approach to teacher standards, quality and professionalism:

- a National Meeting of Professional Educators in Canberra on 3-4 April 2002 (Report of a National Meeting of Professional Educators, 2002); and,
- a National Forum on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism in Canberra on 26 May 2003 (Australian College of Educators for the Department of Education Science and Training, 2003).

ACE also convened a National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism of invited organisation representatives, which prepared a *National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism* (National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003). As part of that statement, principles for guiding standards were developed, stating that professional standards for teaching should:

- Be the responsibility of, and be owned by, the teaching profession in collaboration with key stakeholders;
- Be applied in the interests of learners, the profession and the public;
- Be firmly grounded in an accurate and comprehensive understanding of teachers' work;
- Provide a framework for teacher qualifications and registration;
- Recognise the value of both generic and subject-specific standards;
- Be clear to the profession and the wider community;
- Enhance the public perception of and esteem for teachers and their work;
- Promote teaching as a desirable career, thus contributing to recruitment;
- Focus on high-level capabilities and be described in terms of professional knowledge, understanding, skills and values;
- Promote engagement in professional learning throughout a teacher's career, allowing for different points of entry and re-entry to the profession;
- Acknowledge that context and resourcing will have an impact on implementation and sustainability; and,
- Acknowledge the responsibility of employers and the profession to establish conditions conducive to developing and maintaining profession-defined standards.

In addition, national subject associations have developed, with the assistance of Commonwealth ARC-SPIRT grants between 1999 and 2001, standards for accomplished teaching in English literacy, Mathematics and Science:

- *Standards for Teachers of English Language and Literacy in Australia* (Standards for Teachers of English Language and Literacy in Australia (STELLA), 2002).

- Professional Knowledge
 - Teachers know their students
 - Teachers know their subject
 - Teachers know how students learn to be powerfully literate
- Professional Practice
 - Teachers plan for effective learning
 - Teachers create and maintain a challenging learning environment
 - Teachers assess and review student learning and plan for future learning
- Professional Engagement
 - Teachers demonstrate commitment
 - Teachers continue to learn
 - Teachers are active members of the professional and wider community
- *Standards for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics in Australian Schools* (Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, 2002).
 - Professional knowledge
 - Knowledge of students
 - Knowledge of mathematics
 - Knowledge of students' learning of mathematics
 - Professional attributes
 - Personal attributes
 - Personal professional development
 - Community responsibilities
 - Professional practice
 - The learning environment
 - Planning for learning
 - Teaching in action
 - Assessment
- *National Professional Standards for Highly Accomplished Teachers of Science* (Australian Science Teachers Association, 2002). See Appendix 4.
 - A. Professional Knowledge

Highly accomplished teacher of science have an extensive knowledge of science, science education and students.
 - B. Professional Practice

Highly accomplished teachers of science work with their students to achieve high quality learning outcomes in science.
 - C. Professional Attributes

Highly accomplished teachers of science are reflective, committed to improvement and active members of their professional community.

Moreover, some State Boards of Teacher Registration, Colleges and Institutes of Teaching or Teachers with responsibility for regulating entry to the profession, are also considering professional standards. For example:

- *The Interim Committee for a NSW Institute of Teachers* (<http://www.icit.nsw.edu.au/>) was established to advise on the development of professional teaching standards, the accreditation of teachers against these standards, and the endorsement of teacher education programs. The Draft Professional Teaching Standards Framework incorporates seven *Elements* of professional practice:
 1. Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students
 2. Teachers know their students and how they learn
 3. Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning
 4. Teachers communicate effectively with their students
 5. Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills
 6. Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice
 7. Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community

Specific *Aspects* are delineated for each *Element* in each of four *Key Stages* of teachers' careers:

1. Graduate Teacher;
 2. Professional Competence;
 3. Professional Accomplishment; and,
 4. Professional Leadership.
- The *Victorian Institute of Teachers* (<http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/>) has responsibility for the registration of teachers, the development of professional standards and the accreditation of teacher education programs. VIT's Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration comprise domains and core elements.

Professional Knowledge –

- Teachers know how students learn and how to teach effectively
- Teachers know the content they teach
- Teachers know their students

Professional Practice –

- Teachers plan and assess for effective learning
- Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments
- Teachers use a range of teaching practices and resources to engage students in effective learning

Professional Engagement –

- Teachers reflect on, evaluate and improve their professional knowledge and practice
- Teachers are active members of their profession

- The *Queensland Board of Teacher Registration* (<http://www.btr.qld.edu.au/>) has developed Professional Standards for Teacher Education Graduates which are designed to 'serve as a measure of accountability of the readiness of graduating teacher for potentially fulfilling teaching careers. They indicate what graduating students will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their pre-service preparation' (Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, 2002, p.5).

1. Graduates will possess and be able to apply professional and disciplinary knowledge bases.
2. Graduates will possess and be able to apply a range of literacies relevant to their professional roles.
3. Graduates will exhibit the skills to create supportive and intellectually challenging learning environments to engage all learners.
4. Graduates will understand and participate in relationships that characterise ethical professional practice within and beyond learning communities.
5. Graduates will be committed to reflective practice and ongoing professional renewal

Other state based initiatives include the development of standards by employers, most notably State Departments of Education. For example:

- The *Department of Education in Western Australia* (<http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/>) has developed standards with explicit links to career paths, professional development expectations and recognition of accomplishment in teaching. The Competency Framework for Teachers articulates competency standards for teachers working within three broad phases. It identifies, and is arranged around, five generic dimensions of teachers' work that are central to the achievement of professional excellence in schools:
 - Facilitating student learning;
 - Assessing student learning outcomes;
 - Engaging in professional learning;
 - Participating in curriculum policy and program initiatives; and,
 - Forming partnerships within the school community.
- *Education Queensland* (<http://education.qld.gov.au/>) has developed Professional Standards for Teachers (The State of Queensland (Department of Education), 2002) which aim to define teachers' work in Queensland state schools and provide a framework for individuals, teams and networks of teachers to reflect on teaching practice, and formulate professional learning goals and plans to improve their professional practice.
 1. Structure flexible and innovative learning experiences for individuals and groups.
 2. Contribute to language, literacy and numeracy development.
 3. Construct intellectually challenging learning experiences.
 4. Construct relevant learning experiences that connect with the world beyond school.
 5. Construct inclusive and participatory learning experiences.
 6. Integrate information and communication technologies to enhance student learning.
 7. Assess and report on student learning.
 8. Support the social development and participation of young people.
 9. Create safe and supportive learning environments.
 10. Build relationships with the wider community.
 11. Contribute to professional teams.
 12. Commit to professional practice.