

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Program Accreditation Policy



TEACHERS
REGISTRATION
BOARD TASMANIA

Purpose

This policy statement sets out the overarching policy of the Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania (the Board) in performing its function to approve teacher education courses the successful completion of which satisfies a criterion for registration.

To achieve this function, the Board accredits Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs under the national approach endorsed by Education Council comprising all Australian Education Ministers in December 2015. The operational processes to perform this function are outlined in the Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation Procedures.

This policy provides the framework for determination of the category of Teacher Registration granted to individuals upon application for Registration with the Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania.

Legislation

Relevant Sections of the *Teachers Registration Act 2000 (The Act)*.

Policy Statement

The Board, in the public interest, regulates and promotes the teaching profession in Tasmania. It is a function of the Board to promote the Teaching Profession and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The Board is committed to a nationally consistent approach in the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs for registration purposes whilst operating within the provisions of the *Teachers Registration Act 2000 (The Act)*. Pursuant to s6A ((g), (k) (ii)) of the Act, the Board has a function to confer and collaborate with teacher education institutions and corresponding registration authorities with respect to the appropriateness of teacher education courses for registration purposes.

The Board will make the decision to accredit or re-accredit programs in Tasmania while working to a nationally consistent approach to accredit ITE programs for registration purposes, as endorsed by Education Council comprising all Australian Education Ministers in December 2015. A nationally consistent approach to ITE supports the Board's commitment to improving teacher quality *Teachers Registration Act 2000*, s6A (h), by recognising the following key objectives:

- rigour and consistency of decision making by ITE accreditation panels
- continuous improvement of ITE programs
- innovation and flexibility of programs to meet the diverse needs of students and the profession
- accountability of providers for their delivery of quality ITE programs.

Requirements/Guidelines/Procedures

National Accreditation

All ITE programs offered in Tasmania are accredited by the Board in accordance with the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (2018)* (Standards and Procedures).

The Standards and Procedures provide common national standards and consistent national processes as the basis for accreditation.

The *Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia (2020)* (The Guidelines) support the implementation of the Standards and Procedures.

Accreditation is undertaken to ensure that ITE programs:

- meet the requirements of an approved qualification for registration purposes in Tasmania and can be given professional recognition as an approved program
- meet the requirements of the nationally consistent approach to accreditation outlined in the Standards and Procedures.

The national accreditation system for ITE programs has three integrated elements:

- the Standards and Procedures, which sets out a nationally consistent process to accredit programs, including the establishment and composition of accreditation panels, assessment of programs by these panels, reporting accreditation decisions, and mechanisms for achieving national consistency
- the Program Standards, which describe key features expected of high-quality ITE programs: the characteristics of programs that give confidence the Graduate Teacher Standards will be achieved
- the Graduate Teacher Standards, which are the Graduate career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, and make explicit the knowledge, skills and attributes expected of graduates of nationally accredited ITE programs.

Accreditation

Pursuant to *the Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (2018)* there are **two stages of accreditation**:

- *Stage one accreditation* - for programs not previously accredited to ensure programs meet the Program and Graduate Teacher Standards. Accreditation is for 5 years, after which a Stage two accreditation is required, unless a program has had significant changes, in which case a new Stage one accreditation would be required.
- *Stage two accreditation* - occurs within five years after Stage one accreditation to measure the impact of the programs and identify changes and improvements required for the future delivery of the programs. This Stage two accreditation is valid for 5 years, after which a further Stage two assessment is made for accreditation, unless a program has had significant changes, in which case a new Stage one accreditation would be required.

All Tasmanian ITE providers will make application to the Board to have programs nationally accredited. The accreditation process will be undertaken in accordance with the Standards and Procedures and Guidelines.

The ITE accreditation process is managed by the ITE Accreditation Team. An appropriately trained officer of the Teachers Registration Board undertakes the role of Executive Officer for the panels.

Providers are required to *submit applications* for accreditation to the Board generally no later than eight months before the commencement of planned delivery or accreditation expiry of a program. The timelines for accreditation should be negotiated between the provider and the Board to ensure a program can be accredited, or reaccredited, well in advance of its proposed commencement.

Providers are encouraged to maintain ongoing communications with the nominated Officer of the Board whilst preparing accreditation applications and during the accreditation assessment process. The Board Officer will provide advice and feedback on draft applications and keep providers apprised of the progress of the accreditation process.

Upon receipt of an application for accreditation, the TRB will make an initial determination about eligibility based on a completeness check of the documentation, ensuring that the provider has:

- responded to all Program Standards
- responded to all Graduate Teacher Standards
- evidenced any additional jurisdictional requirements
- ensured supporting documentation is labelled, paginated and in order.

After the above process, the final ITE application is submitted by the provider to the Board. Providers are required to submit a hard copy of their submission, and a USB with hyperlinks for each Panel member.

Programs will be assessed by the *Course Accreditation Committee* of the Board from which an Initial Teacher Education Accreditation Advisory Panel (the Panel) will be established and make recommendations to the Board. The Board has delegated authority to the Registrar to select/approve nationally trained panellists for each accreditation panel in accordance with the Instrument of Delegation.

The Board will make the final decision to accredit or not accredit programs (Stage one or two) after having regard to the accreditation panel report and recommendation.

The Board will notify AITSL of their decisions regarding course accreditation and provide them with a decision summary.

The Board is developing an *ITE Procedures document* to support the accreditation process. This document will outline internal steps in the accreditation process including timeframes, administrative processes, and document templates. This document will be a living document and will be amended as administrative changes are identified.

Panel Composition

Accreditation panels will be composed of a cross-section of expertly trained panellists in accordance with the information contained in the Guidelines. Accreditation panels have 4 – 6 members. The TRB arranges relief funding (or a payment equivalent to that for a panellist who is not currently employed in a school) if required and where the process to request this funding has been appropriately completed and approved. The Tasmanian TRB generally has two panellists from interstate, which includes an experienced interstate chair, supporting consistency in assessments across jurisdictions.

Once a nominee has agreed to participate as an interstate panellist, AITSL will organise and fund the costs associated with travel, accommodation, and teacher relief payments (if required).

In accordance with the Board's delegation, the Registrar will select appropriate nationally trained panellists for each accreditation panel.

The experience and qualities required of panel members are outlined in the Guidelines. Before being eligible to sit on an accreditation panel, suitable persons must undergo national panel training conducted by Australian

Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). The learning program is designed to equip panellists to make assessments against the Program Standards, including evidence in relation to demonstration of program impact and Graduate Teacher standards.

The Manager Professional Standards and ITE Accreditation will ensure a cross section of appropriate persons are selected and nominated for National Panel training. Panellists are typically appointed for two-year terms which can be extended by the Board. Trained panellists must complete online refresher training if their appointment extends beyond the two-year term, and/or they have not been a recent panel member. Panellists who do not meet these criteria will be removed from the register of trained and available panellists.

AITSL maintains a register of nationally trained panellists from all jurisdictions.

ITE Annual Report

Providers are required submit updated information about their programs in their Annual Report to the TRB, together with any additional information that the TRB may require.

The Annual Reporting template was developed by AITSL in consultation with Teacher Regulatory Authorities (TRAs) and ITE providers.

The Guidelines 2020, state that ‘Under Program Standard 6.4 all providers are required to report annually to the Authority on their accredited programs to allow any issues to be identified, investigated and addressed by the Authority and/or provider prior to (re)applying for stage two accreditation. Annual reporting is also expected to contribute to the evidence required for demonstrating impact at the end of each accreditation period.

As set out in Program Standard 6.4, annual reporting will include:

- a. data as identified in the plan for impact (Program Standard 6.2)
- b. changes to the program
- c. nationally required data to contribute to national and/or jurisdictional collections and for compliance and accountability purposes
- d. additional data/information requested by the Authority [TRB].’ (pp. 21-22)

The TRB is required to provide data and information on collected on the impact of programs (as per Program Standard 6.3 and 6.4) to AITSL for national analysis. Reporting data is captured at both a program level [Undergraduate or Postgraduate] and program category [Early childhood /Primary or Primary, Secondary or Mixed].

Program Changes

If a provider proposes to make changes to an accredited program during the accreditation period, they are required to have discussions with the relevant officer of the TRB prior to formalising these in writing to the Board. No change to an accredited program should be made until the consultative and formalised stages of the process between the Provider and the Board have been concluded.

The Registrar will determine if the proposed change may substantially affect the program and, if so, will seek the Board’s determination. The Board may wish to ask the provider to re-submit the amended program for accreditation. In the event it is considered the proposed change does not substantially affect a program it may be dealt with by way of annual reporting. The Board will advise the provider in writing of the decision made regarding their request.

A proposed program change could include, but is not limited to, changes to:

- new curriculum proposals
- discontinuation of curriculum

- course structure or program units
- campuses or location of program delivery
- entry requirements
- the mode of delivery
- time frame of delivery
- professional experience, including professional experience undertaken overseas in accordance with this policy
- the number, qualifications, and experience of teaching staff, not including changes of individual staff.
- Professional experience handbook
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

Professional Experience

Program Standard 5: Professional experience, in the Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia, states that 'the approach to placements [should] ensure they are as diverse as practicable. (p. 62)' This is to facilitate a breadth of school specific experience and provide opportunities for the pre-service teacher to be assessed against the Graduate Teacher Standards.

School specific Limited Authorities to Teach (LAT) are a special authority granted by the Board to a school, when certain conditions are met, to enable the school to employ a person who does not qualify for teacher registration, for a specific and short time frame and for a particular purpose. A Generic Relief LAT, once granted, provides approval for the LAT holder to be employed as a relief teacher for schools in the northern or southern region of Tasmania for a specified period. [Refer to Board Policies on LATS].

A professional experience placement is not approved to be completed in a school where a pre-service teacher is currently or has previously been employed. There are, however, some exceptions to this advice, such as when a student is part of the Department of Education's Teacher Internship Placement Program (TIPP), or the Teach for Australia program. Such programs combine employment and placement as integral aspects in the design of the program and have already received Board approval for their structure.

There should be no perceived conflict of interest between the provider of the professional experience placement and the pre-service student.

A conflict of interest may arise from an array of situations, including family connections/relationships or paid employment. To ensure a quality placement experience and a valid final assessment, students must identify, manage, and where possible, avoid undertaking placement in settings where such "conflict of interest" may arise.

Examples of conflict of interest include, but are not limited to:

- current or past employment at a site,
- a child attending a site, or
- a family member/relative (including partner) working at a site.

Overseas Professional Experience

Pre-service teachers may request to complete a placement overseas; however, there are some guidelines that must be followed.

Most of the professional experience days must be completed in Australia and usually only one professional experience placement during the course of a degree may be considered for completion internationally. Final placements must be undertaken within Australia.

Program Standard 5.1: Professional experience, in the Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia states that 'Formal partnerships, schools/sites/systems to facilitate the delivery of programs, particularly professional experience for pre-service teachers. Formal partnerships exist for every professional experience school/site and clearly specify components of placements and planned experiences, identified roles and responsibilities for both parties and responsible contacts for day-to-day administration of the arrangements (p.60).'

The Board has approved that overseas teaching practice placements can be accepted as part of an accredited ITE program provided that:

- the classroom is taught in English
- the school uses British, NZ, USA, or Australian Curriculum (not TESOL)
- there should be only one professional experience placement in an overseas school or education setting
- the overseas placement(s) should not account for more than 50% of professional experience
- the overseas placement is not the final major teaching placement, which must be in an Australian school
- there is evidence of a formal partnership between the ITE provider and the school/setting. This evidence is 'agreed in writing, such as memorandum(s) of understanding, signed professional experience partnership agreements or other documentation, (Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia, p.61).
- the supervising teacher on site:
 - a) is eligible for registration with the TRB. The assessment is against Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
 - b) has a four-year teaching degree, or a three-year degree followed by a postgraduate teaching qualification
 - c) agrees to documentation being sent and evaluated by the TRB (this includes their C.V and transcripts)
 - d) has at least five years (full-time equivalent) teaching experience
 - e) demonstrates proficiency in English – an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic assessment with an average band score of 7.5 across all four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading writing - where no score is below 7 in any of the four skill areas and 8 in speaking and listening; and

- f) is trained in the assessment of pre-service teachers completing professional experience.

The approval to undertake overseas placement needs to be in the written form required by the Board which would contain copies of the formal partnerships between the provider and the school/settings where the professional experience will take place. This approval process may take up to 8 weeks.

Related Policies

[Applying for Registration Policy](#)

[English Language Proficiency Policy](#)

(see all [Board Policies on our website](#))

Related Documents

[Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures \(2018\)](#)

[Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)

[Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia, 2020](#)

Professional Experience Guidelines. <https://www.utas.edu.au/education/professional-experience/procedural-guidelines>. Viewed 21 June 2021

Teachers Registration Act 2000.

Appendices/Attachments

Appendix 1 Draft ITE Program assessment principles and protocols, ATRA

Appendices 1 & 2

Overview of process from stage 1 to stage 2 accreditation, AITSL

Acknowledgements:

Policy and Strategic Development: Initial teacher Education Program Accreditation Policy, Teachers Registration Board of South Australia, 2018

Professional Experience Guidelines. University of Tasmania.
<https://www.utas.edu.au/education/professional-experience/procedural-guidelines>. Viewed 21 June 2021

Elements from Draft ITE Guidelines

Appendix 1

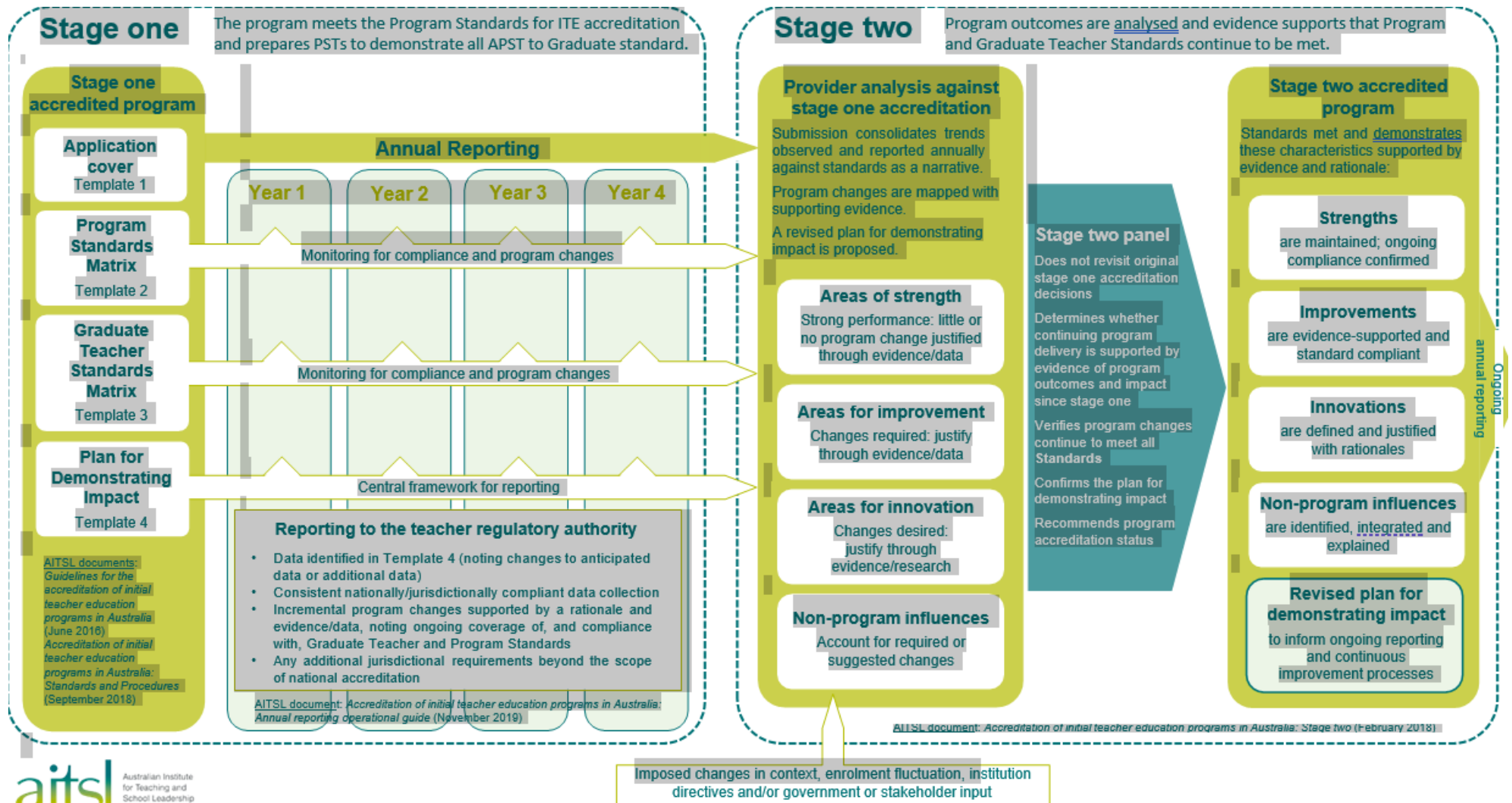
ITE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES AND PROTOCOLS

The following principles and protocols are to be applied when assessing an ITE program for accreditation

	Principles of Assessment	Protocols for Accreditation Panel Members
1	Panel members are invited to join an accreditation panel based on their area(s) of expertise appropriate to the program.	All panel members should assess the entire submission, but it is likely that a panel member will be more comfortable in the assessment of their area of expertise. A comprehensive assessment, however, requires panel members to understand the whole program. (Not all curriculum areas may be covered by a limited number of panel members, and certain aspects, e.g., PEX, are significant for the program in a holistic way.)
2	The total submission is assessed and every aspect of every standard (GTS – taught, practised, assessed, PS, national Priority Areas, PEX) is assessed.	All elements of the submission represent evidence. If the evidence cited in the templates is inappropriate or inadequate to demonstrate achievement of a standard but appropriate evidence is found elsewhere in the program, then the standard has been met.
3	The standard represents a minimum benchmark.	Assessment of whether a standard has been met (in all aspects) or not.
4	Assessment must be conducted in an objective manner.	Panel members must acknowledge personal bias(es) and put them aside when assessing.
5	Determination of achievement of standards is agreed by the whole panel or a majority of members.	Panel members make an independent assessment before the meeting and avoid being influenced at the meeting by 'group think'. Every member has an equal voice. If a controversial issue or an agreed response to the professional judgement questions cannot be resolved by a majority decision, then the panel may seek further advice from the provider.

6	The accreditation panel meeting will be conducted efficiently and managed by the panel chair, supported by the executive officer.	If after discussion, the majority of panel members have agreed to move on from an issue, then all panel members should respect this resolve.
7	The panel chair is responsible for ensuring the rigour of the assessment process.	Panel chairs are experienced panel members and/or chairs and have undergone additional national and jurisdiction-specific training, where applicable.
8	There should be a clear 'line of sight' through the program to ensure that multiple aspects of the GTS are covered throughout.	Panel members must ensure that all aspects of the graduate standard descriptors are covered in the program and that in Template 3, the dimensions of 'Taught, Practised and Assessed' are delivered through the program in a logical sequence.
9	Communication with the provider will be facilitated by the panel executive officer (EO).	The panel, with the executive officer's support, conducts the assessment process to the point at which they find that any issues raised have been satisfactorily addressed by the provider.
10	Panel members may be required to continue engaging with the assessment process after the accreditation meeting.	All panel members are given an opportunity to approve or suggest amendments to the draft accreditation report which reflects the findings of the panel before it is submitted to the provider.
11	Executive officers are responsible for ensuring consistency across accreditation panels.	The elements requiring verification and professional judgement from the <i>Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia</i> (June 2016) should guide the panel's discussion and assessment of each program standard.

Overview of the process from stage one to stage two accreditation



Overview of the process from stage one to stage two accreditation

