Australian Professional Experience Guidelines

Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, sea countries, and waterways from across Australia. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and living cultures; and to Elders past and present.

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1 Introduction

Professional experience is a critical element of all initial teacher education (ITE) programs and a key component of the ITE curriculum.

High quality professional experience placements provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to develop, practise and demonstrate their ability to teach and manage a classroom/learning environment. Each placement builds the practical skills needed to become an effective teacher, as well as developing their professional identity.

High quality professional experience is underpinned by well-structured programs, ongoing collaboration between key stakeholders, effective communication and support for pre-service teachers and their wellbeing.

Accreditation of Australian ITE programs is governed by Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (Accreditation Standards and Procedures). High level requirements for professional experience are outlined in the Accreditation Standards and Procedures. These Guidelines supplement the Accreditation Standards and Procedures and support a consistent national approach to professional experience, while acknowledging that different settings will require flexibility. The Guidelines are designed to clarify roles and responsibilities, improve consistency, and reduce administrative burden for ITE providers, education systems, schools, early childhood settings and teacher regulatory authorities.

The Guidelines should be used by:

- jurisdictions to guide the development of quality partnerships between ITE providers and schools/early childhood providers

- ITE providers to guide the development and implementation of professional experience

- schools, early childhood settings and education systems to manage and implement consistent professional experience

- school leaders, early childhood management representatives, supervising teachers, mentors, and pre-service teachers to guide their work, support pre-service teachers and reduce the administrative burden of professional experience

- teacher regulatory authorities to guide the development of policies and processes.

The Guidelines have been developed in the context of the Strong Beginnings Report of the Teacher Education Expert Panel (TEEP report). The TEEP report noted that the Accreditation Standards and Procedures "do not provide clear directions for planning and delivering high quality placements" and proposed that "there is a case for guidance at the national level" (Strong Beginnings, 2023).

Key areas of coverage include:

- the role of professional experience in integrating theory and practice

- key components of high-quality professional experience

- stakeholder roles and responsibilities to support professional experience

- the link between effective professional experience placements and successful transition to teaching

- professional experience placements in regional and remote settings and alternative settings

- planning and implementing effective professional experience
- establishing formal partnerships to support professional experience

These Guidelines will be evaluated periodically to assess their effectiveness and ensure they continue to be fit for purpose.

2   Terminology and acronyms

Terminology to support professional experience varies across jurisdictions, ITE providers and settings. These Guidelines use specific terms for consistency. These terms are defined below, with relevant synonyms provided.

Term/Acronym	Definition
Academic Director of Professional Experience	Provides academic and research leadership in professional experience. Their leadership focuses on bridging the gap between ITE providers, systems and sectors, and the wider education landscape; establishing and maintaining productive partnerships with key stakeholders; and supporting high quality professional experience for pre-service teachers.
Alternative authorisation to teach (AAT) Permission to teach, authority to employ, special authority to teach, limited authority to teach.	Allows for provision, in clearly defined circumstances, under specified conditions, for a person who does not meet the qualification requirements of teacher registration to teach.
Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Teacher Standards)	A nationally agreed statement explicitly defining the work of teachers and the elements of high-quality, effective teaching.
Conditional accreditation (NSW only)	Allows for individuals to begin teaching before graduation if they have: • completed a substantial part of an accredited undergraduate or graduate entry teaching degree (for example at least three quarters of an approved/accredited undergraduate teaching degree, or one half of an approved/accredited graduate entry teaching degree), or • been awarded a non-teaching bachelor degree and have an offer of employment to teach that discipline.
Early childhood settings	Early childhood settings include long day care, preschools and kindergartens, and similar services.
Employment-based pathways	A pathway into teaching that combines academic study and employment, allowing employers to have earlier access to a teaching cohort and providing ITE students with structured on-the-job training.

Term/Acronym	Definition
Graduate Teacher Standards	The standards and standard descriptors within the graduate career stage of the Teacher Standards.
Hybrid roles	Personnel who work across both ITE providers and education settings, bridging gaps and supporting partnership-based professional experience.
Initial teacher education (ITE) program	A program of higher education and training for individuals who wish to become registered teachers.
Limited registration (Western Australia only)	A category of teacher registration that gives an employer the ability to employ suitably qualified people to fill specific teaching roles when needed.
Mentor teacher	A registered or accredited teacher responsible for mentoring and coaching pre-service teachers during professional experience.
Placement site	A classroom or learning environment.
Pre-service teacher Student teacher, teacher candidate, placement student, trainee teacher	A student enrolled in an accredited ITE program.
Pre-service teacher coordinator Placement coordinator, site coordinator, professional experience coordinator, site director, organiser of teaching practice	The individual at a placement site/partner school/service who has responsibility for the management of pre-service teachers, including allocating supervising teachers, pre-service teacher induction and timetabling.
Professional experience Practical experience	Workplace-based learning units of study with a theoretical and practical focus (i.e. where theory is put into practice and assessed).
Professional experience placement Practicum/prac, teaching practice, clinical experience, teaching rounds, rounds	The period required to undertake professional experience. It comprises meaningful, real-world experiences under the supervision of an experienced teacher, links theory with practice, and includes assessment against the Graduate Teacher Standards. ITE programs have a minimum requirement for placement days, as outlined in the Accreditation Standards and Procedures.
Provider mentor Tertiary supervisor, university mentor/supervisor, provider liaison, field	An experienced educator employed by an ITE provider tasked with monitoring, supporting, supervising, and observing a pre-service teacher

Term/Acronym	Definition
supervisor, placement tutor, professional experience liaison officer, learning advisor	while on their placement. Provider mentors liaise directly with pre-service teacher coordinators and/or supervising teachers.
Provider Higher education institution, university, college, institute, institution	Providers are responsible for the development and delivery of higher education programs. An ITE provider delivers programs for the professional preparation of teachers, as outlined in the Accreditation Standards and Procedures.
Supervising Teacher Cooperating teacher	A registered or accredited teacher responsible for supporting, providing feedback, and assessing pre-service teachers during professional experience.
Teacher regulatory authority (TRA)	A state or territory body whose functions include the registration and regulation of members of the teaching profession and the accreditation of ITE programs.
Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)	A tool used to assess the practical skills and knowledge of pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers collect evidence of practice to complete a TPA in the final year of their initial teacher education program. It is assessed by ITE providers and is a requirement for graduation.

3 The significance of professional experience

3.1 The importance of professional experience placements

Professional experience plays a key role in teacher workforce development and provides pre-service teachers with learning opportunities that support professional growth. Pre-service teachers who have positive professional experience placements are more likely to stay in ITE; make a successful transition to teaching; and stay in teaching for the long term (Izadinia 2015, Darling-Hammond & Podolsky 2019, Podolsky et al. 2019, AITSL 2022, Truwit 2023).

3.2 Integrating theory and practice

High-quality teaching occurs when teachers combine their learning of pedagogical theories with practice in the context of the Teacher Standards. Effective teaching refers to both the quality of teaching and the capability of teachers. It requires teachers, and therefore pre-service teachers, to continually strengthen practice by adopting an evaluative mind-set (AITSL 2022b).

Professional experience is a key component of ITE program curriculum. Pre-service teachers 'take their learning to work', that is, they take what they have learned (knowledge and skills) to the professional experience placement and they work to build their skills and knowledge during their placement. ITE providers and professional experience sites help prepare, nurture, and develop high quality teachers who feel ready and prepared to enter the workforce. It is critical that schools, early childhood settings and other education settings work closely with ITE providers to ensure that learning during placements complements and builds upon theory and knowledge from ITE providers.

The effective integration of professional experience into ITE programs, rather than as a separate component, can be linked to the teaching effectiveness of graduates. This is established in the Graduate Teacher Standards and strengthened by clear communication between the ITE provider and the professional experience site about the knowledge, skills and experiences that pre-service teachers bring to a placement, and the expected learning outcomes of their placement (Le Cornu 2015). This is why strong working partnerships between placement sites and ITE providers can contribute to quality placements.

Successfully integrating theory and practice through professional experience gives pre-service teachers the opportunity to develop their skills and create safe and engaging learning environments for students/children.

4 Components of effective, high-quality professional experience

Quality professional experience placements are well structured, managed and supported and underpinned by strong relationships and effective communication between key stakeholders (ITE providers, jurisdictional systems and sectors, schools, early childhood settings, pre-service teachers as well as families and communities).

Placements should clearly link theory to practice and ensure there are processes to support the assessment of pre-service teachers. Placements will differ according to the stage of development of each pre-service teacher and should be appropriately structured according to the stage they are at in their ITE program, as well as the knowledge and skills the pre-service teacher will bring to their placement given their stage of development.

Placements should align to the course content which is underpinned by the Graduate Teacher Standards. Placements should provide pre-service teachers with an opportunity to meet the required Graduate Teacher Standards and complete their Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA).

4.1 Meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards

The content of all ITE programs is underpinned by the Graduate Teacher career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Teacher Standards). These standards define what a teacher needs to know and be able to do to teach effectively. The Teacher Standards at the Graduate career stage comprise a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge. Professional experience should focus on practical skills in the Graduate Teacher Standards that are best demonstrated and developed in classrooms and learning environments.

The Teacher Standards are included in the Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template at **Appendix A**. This template can be used to support consistent professional experience across all providers.

4.2 Consistent assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers

All pre-service teachers should be provided with ongoing and substantive feedback about their teaching practice. Effective feedback may include formative advice as part of lesson observations, written feedback on lesson plans, professional conversations, and/or other teaching tools and supports, and should facilitate reflective practice for the pre-service teacher. The type of feedback pre-service teachers receive will change as they build their skills and knowledge throughout each placement.

A number of the Graduate Teacher Standard descriptors are specifically written to be assessed as part of professional experience. These are highlighted in the template at Appendix A. Supervising teachers should seek evidence from the pre-service teacher's classroom practice and participation in the teaching environment. Evidence can be drawn from observation of the pre-service teacher's practice, and documents and resources that have been developed by the pre-service teacher.

4.3   Well-structured and sequenced placements

High-quality professional experience placements are well-structured, integrate theory and practice effectively and are scaffolded.

Pre-service teachers generally undertake at least one placement in the first year of their program (especially in the case of postgraduate degrees).

Placements can be in a block, full-time, part-time, or part of work integrated learning. ITE providers determine the required number and sequence of placement rounds. Pre-service teachers may speak with their ITE provider and chosen school/early childhood setting to seek out opportunities for additional placements.

Pre-service teachers should undertake each placement at different times of the year, to help increase a pre-service teacher's exposure to the full range of teaching duties across the Teacher Standards.

Structured placements include a minimum number of days per placement, with the opportunity to increase total days in partnership with ITE providers and schools/early childhood settings.

In-school experience may not always be in the form of a professional experience placement. ITE providers can build other purposeful in-school experiences into their programs (e.g. school-based professional learning days, employment-based pathways).

4.4   Well-managed placements

Well-managed professional experience placements reduce the administrative burden of placing a pre-service teacher, allowing for greater focus on teaching practices and quality supervision of pre-service teachers.

Coordination leads to a clear understanding for the pre-service teachers about the purpose, objectives and conduct of the placement. It means that the pre-service teacher does not need to find their own placement and there is shared responsibility for the conduct and management of the placement.

The key to well managed placements is a consistent approach, clear communication and established procedures that are outlined through agreements between ITE providers and systems and sectors. These agreements set out specific responsibilities for all parties.

4.5   Well-supported placements

High-quality placements and programs require ITE provider and leadership support. This includes commitment from ITE provider leaders such as Vice-Chancellors, Deans of Education and Academic Directors of Professional Experience, to ensure all pre-service teachers undertake high quality professional experience as part of their ITE program.

System and school leaders in schools/early childhood settings that are responsible for placing pre-service teachers in classrooms/learning environments also play a key role in supporting quality placements. These leaders should actively support professional experience placements and emphasise the critical role of professional experience in developing quality teachers.

4.6   Relationships and pre-service teacher wellbeing

Well-supported placements prioritise positive professional relationships and pre-service teacher wellbeing and safety. ITE providers, school/site leadership, mentors and supervising teachers should prioritise promoting positive relationships and pre-service teacher wellbeing and safety.

Teachers, school personnel, and learners build and strengthen connections though positive relationships. Good relationships support a seamless placement experience and are more likely to result in successful placements. Where applicable, pre-service teachers should be encouraged to participate in activities that contribute to building professional relationships during their placement.

Supporting wellbeing is critical to fostering healthy mental and physical conditions in pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers who are provided with structured wellbeing support can better meet the demands of their placement, handle stress and focus on placement objectives and the learning needs of their students.

Effective and well-supported placements should provide access to information and services to support pre-service teacher wellbeing. ITE providers can support the pre-service teacher's wellbeing with resources, structured organisational frameworks, and a commitment to understanding their wellbeing needs in their placement context. Schools/sites and supervising teachers can support pre-service teachers' wellbeing and safety through regular check-ins and debriefs if and when any issues arise. Additionally, providing guidance on managing workload and encouraging the maintenance of studies can support pre-service teachers.

4.7   Diverse placements

Experiencing a variety of professional experience placements provides pre-service teachers with a wide range of teaching scenarios and capacity to expand their skills and knowledge in a range of contexts. Diversity strengthens a pre-service teacher's understanding of different teaching contexts and can also help them identify the environments that align best with their future career goals.

Diversity in placements can also help pre-service teachers identify elements of effective teaching practices that are common across diverse contexts and student cohorts. Diversity can relate to various characteristics of a placement site. Examples include the site/setting size (staff and student/child numbers), whether it belongs to a larger system or is independent, its geographical location, whether it is co-educational or single sex. Diversity is also evident in the range of year levels, children's stages of development, or learning areas that are offered and accessible to a pre-service teacher during their placement.

ITE providers will describe the meaning of diverse settings in their program requirements. Typically, this will result in placements in at least two different settings and may include a regional or remote placement. It may also include a placement with learners from diverse backgrounds including schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In some instances, it may not be feasible for a pre-service teacher to undertake placements in two different settings (e.g. employment-based pathways; in regional and remote settings, or due to pre-service teacher personal responsibilities). In these cases, the pre-service teacher may be provided with other teaching opportunities as part of their current employment.

4.8   Innovation and professional experience

ITE providers may also use virtual reality technologies to offer pre-service teachers interactive simulation learning environments (for example, virtual classrooms with avatar students) that help

them develop, practise, and demonstrate their ability to teach and manage a classroom (AITSL, 2023a). Simulated professional experience can offer pre-service teachers valuable practice time for experimenting with different teaching and classroom management strategies across different contexts and complexity levels before or between real classroom experiences. Simulated learning environments can serve as intermediate preparatory experiences between coursework and practical placements, providing pre-service teachers with safe learning environments to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-life application.

Using simulated learning environments can assist ITE providers to support and embed communities of practice, where educators and pre-service teachers can actively engage together in teaching and learning. Establishing a community of practice benefits all invested parties, and from an ITE provider perspective, it allows for greater control over pre-service teacher preparation prior to and in addition to professional experience. In this way, pre-service teachers can develop confidence in teaching and classroom management by having more opportunities to practise and ultimately become more classroom-ready.

Simulated learning environments cannot be used as a substitute for professional experience days.

4.9 Clear and effective communication

ITE providers and schools/early childhood settings should work together effectively to provide high quality professional experience to pre-service teachers. Open and clear communication channels are critical and should be established and maintained by all key stakeholders. Clear and effective communication should occur before, during and after placements. This will help ensure all pre-service teachers are supported and adjustments are made to cater for their diverse needs and/or disabilities. Guidance regarding communication, organised into key stages, is outlined below:

Communication before placement commences

ITE providers should check in with their pre-service teacher to assess their suitability and compliance with the relevant working with children check clearances to undertake a placement before any professional experience is organised. Suitability includes the pre-service teacher's skill level, geographic location, and any adjustments that may need to be made to allow the pre-service teacher to undertake a placement.

ITE providers should then work with potential schools/early childhood settings to ensure that the pre-service teacher has the requisite skill level to undertake the placement, and there are systems in place to support the pre-service teacher.

Where possible, the ITE provider should also set up a 'meet and greet' between the pre-service teacher and the school/early childhood setting before the placement begins; and/or develop and share guidance materials on what to expect during their placement, particularly the first few days.

Communication during the placement

ITE providers should maintain contact with the pre-service teacher during their placement period, to provide support and guidance as needed.

Providers should work collaboratively with schools/early childhood settings to address any concerns that arise during the placement. This includes when a pre-service teacher is experiencing difficulty, the placement site is unable to continue to meet its placement obligations and/or there is insufficient supervision of the pre-service teacher.

Communication after the placement finishes

ITE providers should undertake structured conversations with the pre-service teacher and their supervising teacher to ensure they complete an assessment and reporting template such as the Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template **(Appendix A)**. The ITE provider and pre-service teacher should discuss areas for further development, referencing the Graduate Teacher Standards.

ITE providers should liaise with schools/early childhood settings to complete any relevant information and assessment tasks following the placement, including the [Teaching Performance Assessment](link) (where applicable).

In the final placement, the ITE provider should conduct professional conversations with the supervising teacher to finalise the assessment of the pre-service teacher.

4.10 The role of core content in professional experience placements

Pre-service teachers should have the opportunity to apply and practise the core content during their professional experience placements, as outlined in the Accreditation Standards and Procedures.

The TEEP determined that core content is a shared feature of high-quality teacher preparation programs, as it "prioritises the knowledge and practices which are essential for all ITE students to learn" (Strong Beginnings, 2023).

ITE providers can support supervising teachers with templates and evidence guides that outline how core content can be put into practice during placements.

4.11 Placement supply and demand matching

Supply and demand matching supports the effective management of pre-service teacher placements. Matching involves an ITE provider working collaboratively with systems and sectors to establish systems and processes to match placements to ensure supply/demand balance across schools and early childhood settings as well as addressing current and future workforce requirements.

Supply and demand matching should prioritise:

- demands of learning areas, year level or age/stage cohorts of children, geographical areas of demand, acknowledging this often relates to hard-to-staff schools/early childhood settings (e.g. low SES, regional/remote)
- placement types (e.g. sequencing, core content exposure, learner cohorts, school types, professional experience activity)
- placement timing and length (e.g. at different stages of the school calendar, of extended or intensive duration)
- collaborative data-sharing arrangements with stakeholders (where appropriate, in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements) to support decision-making.

5 Establishing Formal Partnerships

Collaborative relationships between ITE providers, schools/early childhood settings and systems enable the delivery of high-quality professional experience. Formal partnerships set out the requirements, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

The TEEP recommended that '(s)ystem-level agreements should be developed to support delivery of more consistent, high-quality practical experience placements for all students' (Strong Beginnings, 2023).

Two templates are included in these guidelines which may be used to strengthen provider-school partnerships. The first template at **Appendix B** describes a high-level agreement between all parties at a jurisdictional level. These jurisdictional level agreements are underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or similar agreement. **Appendix C** provides a guide to developing MOUs.

An MOU defines the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in relation to professional experience. MOUs support the coordination and delivery of professional experience, increasing consistency in quality and effectiveness.

Any developed agreements would meet local needs, and should:

- be developed with schools and systems, regulatory authorities, providers, and professional experience sites (schools/early childhood settings), as appropriate
- be designed flexibly to suit the specific needs of employers and jurisdictions
- establish clear roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in delivering professional experience
- outline strategies and mechanisms to identify, support and train supervising teachers
- encourage delivery models across clusters of schools/early childhood settings to support high quality professional experience and reduce administrative burden
- require pre-service teachers to be given opportunities to practise and apply core content as part of their professional experience
- include mechanisms to ensure that the partnership delivers on its objectives such as a self-assessment and monitoring tool
- focus on effective coordination of professional experience across the system. This may include:
  - implementing a system to match placements across schools/services and sectors/systems (i.e. addressing supply/demand issues)
  - data sharing arrangements to support the placement system
  - agreement about the conduct of professional experience including the use of recording to support TPAs
  - regularly reviewing the placement system in consultation with key stakeholders, to ensure it continues to be effective and fit for purpose.

6 The role of partners to support high-quality professional experience

Each partner has specific responsibilities for administering professional experience to develop the skills and knowledge of pre-service teachers.

6.1 Initial teacher education providers

ITE providers are responsible for developing and delivering higher education programs to prepare teachers to enter the classroom. ITE providers prepare their students to undertake placements, integrating professional experience into the ITE curriculum. ITE providers may engage specialist staff to directly support professional experience and develop partnerships with schools/early childhood settings.

ITE providers may also use educational technology as described in section 4.8 (for example, simulated classrooms) for preparation prior to placement, to refine skills and as part of post-placement review. Simulations, for example, provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to experiment with rapport-building and classroom management strategies before or between real classroom practical experiences (AITSL 2023).

6.1.1 Preparation and support for pre-service teachers

ITE providers are responsible for ensuring pre-service teachers are well-equipped and prepared to engage in their placements successfully.

ITE providers should set clear expectations of placements including the objective of each placement. This may include guidance on setting goals, self-assessment and reflection, and self-advocacy during placement experiences. ITE providers should prepare pre-service teachers for successful placements by ensuring they understand how placements should operate, what should be achieved, how to achieve personal and professional goals, and who to speak to if any issues arise.

ITE providers should work closely with schools/early childhood settings to:

- arrange pre-placement meetings (to establish and embed support for the pre-service teacher throughout their placement)
- provide information for the pre-service teacher to improve their contextual knowledge of the school/early childhood setting and the broader community
- ensure the pre-service teacher is equipped to deliver culturally responsive lessons when undertaking a placement in a culturally and linguistically diverse community
- provide information relating to accommodation, transport, and access to services while the pre-service teacher is on placement, acknowledging that communities are diverse and context-specific, and
- understand community expectations.

6.1.2 Professional Experience Placement Plan

The Professional Experience Placement Plan is a guide for the initial teacher education (ITE) provider and a pre-service teacher for their professional experience **(Appendix D)**. This plan should be discussed in conjunction with the assessment and reporting template **(Appendix A)**. The two templates combine to provide a clear understanding of the conduct and expectations of the placement for the pre-service teacher.

The plan includes the:

- number and sequence of professional experience placements included in their ITE program
- teaching coverage and sequence of Graduate Teacher Standards over the course of their program
- the pre-service teacher's preferences for placements over the course of their program, including placements outside the provider's home state/territory
- interest in consideration for an Indigenous community placement
- implications for completing professional experience if a pre-service teacher engages in an employment-based pathway during their program.

6.1.3 Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template

The Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template **(Appendix A)** can be used by ITE providers to implement a consistent approach to professional experience. The use of the standardised template is not mandatory and can be used in jurisdictions that do not have strong existing reporting processes.

6.1.4 Teaching Performance Assessments

A TPA is a capstone assessment against the Graduate Teacher Standards, where a pre-service teacher illustrates their skills, knowledge and practices through evidence of their performance. ITE providers are responsible for administering TPAs.

The Accreditation Standards and Procedures require that all pre-service teachers successfully complete a TPA by the time they graduate.

6.1.5 Resourcing professional experience placements

ITE providers are responsible for coordinating and administering professional experience. This includes:

- placing pre-service teachers in schools and early childhood settings
- managing simultaneous professional experience placements across multiple programs
- supporting and providing feedback to pre-service teachers (before, during and after their placement)
- providing clear and detailed advice to the pre-service teacher about their teaching practice
- maintaining relationships with schools and early childhood settings
- keeping and managing relevant data about pre-service teachers
- providing placement diversity for pre-service teachers, where practicable
- managing any issues that may occur during placements, having clear procedures in place to manage any issues that may arise, and providing support when a pre-service teacher is experiencing difficulty

- conducting professional discussions with supervising teachers in schools/early childhood settings to assess the pre-service teacher's performance in the final placement **(Appendix A).**

6.1.6 Placements in regional and remote settings

Regional and remote settings are used to describe areas outside of major cities. Each setting has unique features and characteristics related to accessibility of services and remoteness.

Pre-service teachers who are interested in undertaking regional and remote placements should be supported wherever possible. These placements provide diverse and enriching experiences for pre-service teachers and help support future teacher supply in regional and remote communities.

Where practical, ITE providers can encourage metropolitan-based pre-service teachers to travel further afield to achieve placement diversity, promoting the future benefits to pre-service teacher employment through such experiences.

There are a range of requirements ITE providers should consider when supporting professional experience placements in regional and remote settings, including:

- ensuring pre-service teachers are classroom, school/early childhood setting and community-ready when offering placements in these settings. This can be done by:
  - promoting the availability of community placement that is culturally sensitive and realistic
  - adequately informing pre-service teachers about the social and physical context and conditions in which the placement may occur
  - selecting candidates for community placements who are resilient, able to adapt and be self-sufficient and/or have appropriate support networks in place
- ensuring comprehensive support is provided for pre-service teachers, including colleagues, supervising teachers, provider staff and community members (see AITSL Spotlight on placements beyond urban settings)
- considering the employment of a suitably qualified leader to support and assess the pre-service teacher while on a regional or remote placement.

Providers and pre-service teachers should consider the Professional Experience Placement Plan and the Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template together. This will support the pre-service teacher's understanding of the Graduate Teacher Standards and their application in their placement.

7 Education sectors, systems and settings

Education sectors and systems play a key role in supporting high quality professional experience and developing classroom ready beginning teachers. Strong support for professional experience from school staff and early childhood leaders leads to high quality placements.

7.1 Establishing high-quality placements

Education sectors and systems should work closely with ITE providers and professional experience sites to maximise the availability of quality placements, including opportunities for pre-service teachers in a range of diverse settings.

Establishing quality placements includes:

- providing a safe and supportive environment for pre-service teachers
- supporting pre-service teachers to meet placement objectives, including having a positive impact on student/child learning, development, and wellbeing
- providing a clear and well documented learning program for pre-service teachers that focuses on all aspects of teachers' work, including opportunities for meaningful participation in broader staff activities.
- fostering good practice and working closely with professional experience sites to ensure that professional experience is consistent with quality teacher preparation
- celebrating the importance and value of professional experience.

7.2 Building a supportive staff culture

Education sectors and systems should support the development of teachers who can supervise and mentor pre-service teachers across professional experience sites (e.g. promoting best practice, providing resources and guidance, providing support for supervising and mentor teachers to undertake relevant professional learning). This includes upskilling and resourcing supervising teachers including investment in Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) certification.

7.2.1 Principals and site leaders

Principals and site leaders should foster a culture of trust and support within their respective school/early childhood setting, supporting the value and quality of professional experience placements. Leadership that is committed to professional experience creates an environment where pre-service teachers are considered a member of the school/early childhood setting community. This ensures that pre-service teachers are treated as peers, exposing them to all aspects of teaching that can be overlooked when classroom instruction/learning environment teaching practice is the sole focus.

Education leaders are responsible for implementing processes and procedures to support both pre-service teachers and supervising teachers. The role of the supervising teacher is significant and has

long-term implications on the pre-service teacher. Supporting these activities helps establish the expectations for the supervising teacher who will enrich the pre-service teacher's experience.

7.2.2 Pre-service Teacher Coordinators

The pre-service teacher coordinator serves as the primary contact for all matters related to professional experience within a school or service, overseeing both internal arrangements and external relationships. Parts of the role are administrative; however, the role may also include leadership, induction, and support. At times, the role may include pre-service teacher assessment and mentoring.

The specifics and responsibilities of this role depend on the size of the school or early childhood setting. In smaller sites, individuals with existing leadership roles may take on this additional responsibility, considering the relatively small number of pre-service teachers placed. Conversely, larger schools or early childhood settings may assign teachers without other leadership responsibilities, to help ensure that time can be devoted to the pre-service teacher coordinator role.

7.2.3 High-quality teacher supervision

Professional experience placements provide the first opportunity for pre-service teachers to receive guidance and feedback in a classroom/learning environment. Pre-service teachers should receive regular observation, assessment and feedback during placements.

In addition to receiving feedback on their own teaching, professional experience placements provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to observe effective teaching practices in action. Observation of and collaboration with experienced teachers can be influential in the development of a pre-service teacher's own instructional effectiveness and teaching repertoire.

Equally crucial is the supervising teacher's responsibility to undertake professional development in pre-service teacher supervision, ensuring they are well-prepared to effectively support their pre-service teacher. Effective supervising teachers positively influence individual pre-service teachers, foster a supportive network within the teaching community and contribute to elevating the overall standard of education.

Provider mentors also play a critical role in supervising, supporting and monitoring pre-service teachers during professional experience placements. They observe pre-service teachers in the classroom/learning environment, engage in collaborative and positive reflective conversations with pre-service teachers, and liaise with supervising teachers and pre-service teacher coordinators as needed.

Supervising teachers should encourage two-way feedback and communicate sensitively with their pre-service teachers. Supervising teachers should be aware of the power dynamics between themselves and pre-service teachers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers.

Supervising and mentoring pre-service teachers has a range of benefits for teachers. These benefits include supporting the development and entry of new practitioners to the profession, collaborating with pre-service teachers to share student learning experiences, reflecting on their own teaching experiences, and developing more effective teaching and learning practices.

7.2.4 Mentor teachers

Pre-service teachers may also be allocated a mentor teacher in addition to their supervising teacher, to provide support and guidance during their professional experience.

Systems and sectors run programs to help equip teachers with effective mentoring skills (e.g. Victorian Institute of Teaching – Effective Mentoring Program).

HALTs take an active role in supporting and mentoring pre-service teachers as part of their certification requirements. Other groups who can support pre-service teachers include:

- teachers aspiring to HALT certification, and
- teachers who wish to use mentoring to support their renewal of registration.

8 Early childhood settings

Pre-service teachers who are enrolled in early childhood and primary, birth to 8 and birth to 12 years programs may undertake placements in early childhood settings.

Early childhood service delivery differs across states and territories. Pre-service teachers may undertake professional experience in a range of settings across early childhood education and care services, including long day care, stand-alone preschools and kindergartens, and preschools and kindergartens attached to schools.

The success of these placements depends on clear communication and strong relationships between the ITE provider, early childhood setting and pre-service teacher.

Early childhood settings should:

- ensure they have capacity to effectively supervise, mentor, and support pre-service teachers during their placement
- understand the Graduate Teacher Standards and how they are demonstrated in an early childhood setting.

ITE providers should:

- build relationships across a range of early childhood settings to provide diverse professional experience opportunities to pre-service teachers
- provide early childhood settings with relevant documentation to support high quality placements.

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) determines the qualifications for educators and teachers under the National Quality Framework (NQF). The structure and diversity of the early childhood education and care sector typically means that there are fewer registered early childhood teachers, who can act as a supervising teacher, within a service.

ITE providers should be cognisant of the availability of supervising teachers in early childhood settings and coordinate professional experience opportunities accordingly. Depending how the early childhood setting is structured, there may be limited resources to support and supervise pre-service teachers.

There are resources on the AITSL website for staff in early childhood settings to support pre-service teachers. These resources include advice about TPAs and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

9 Managing alternative arrangements for professional experience

Pre-service teachers can undertake professional experience in a variety of settings.

9.1 Alternative professional experience arrangements

Where permitted, alternative arrangements can include:

Out-of-jurisdiction placements

This is where the pre-service teacher either:

- resides in another state or territory, or is studying remotely and wishes to undertake a local placement
- requests to undertake a placement in another jurisdiction, for example, a remote Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

Away from home placements

These are placements within the jurisdiction when the pre-service teacher is either a resident in a:

- metropolitan area and requests a regional or remote placement
- regional or remote area and requests a metropolitan placement.

Non-school or service settings

These include placements in alternative settings such as hospitals or correctional facilities (noting the extra regulatory requirements such placements might entail).

International placements

Pre-service teachers may undertake a professional experience placement in an educational setting in another country.

9.2 The role of placement coordinators in managing alternative professional experience arrangements

Placement coordinators should:

- work with provider staff to assess the pre-service teacher's suitability for alternative placement contexts, including applying special requirements (for example, providers that impose a minimum Grade Point Average, or performing in the top 15% of the cohort, for students making alternative placement requests)
- understand existing options for alternative placements, acknowledging the implications regarding placement agreements and the lead time involved in such arrangements
- consider available funding and logistical support for alternative placements.

10 Supporting employment-based pathways

A number of programs combine study with employment. These programs are known as "employment-based pathways". Enrolling in an employment-based pathway allows pre-service teachers to teach in schools or early childhood settings prior to graduation.

Each teacher regulatory authority has a form of alternative authorisation to teach (AAT) or flexible registration category that enables a pre-service teacher to access an employment-based program. The purpose of AAT is to enable people who do not have an approved qualification (for the purposes of teacher registration) to fill specific teaching roles when needed.

Each jurisdiction has different nomenclature, purposes, and applications for AAT. In most jurisdictions, employers apply to their teacher regulatory authority for permission to use AAT to employ an individual. In some cases, ITE providers can apply for AAT to support pre-service teachers to enter employment before they have completed their ITE program.

Specific arrangements for professional experience are required to ensure pre-service teachers meet placement requirements while they are employed.

10.1 Strategies to support professional experience in employment-based programs

Teacher regulatory authorities can support employment-based ITE pathways and enable professional experience requirements to be met by:

- working with ITE providers to establish guidelines to support the implementation of professional experience under AAT/conditional accreditation arrangements
- collaborating with ITE providers to establish specific requirements to be met during employment-based professional experience including:
  - expanding the diversity of experiences where practicable
  - strongly recommending adherence to observational/assessment protocols and targeted support from supervising teachers
- monitoring progress of pre-service teachers under AAT arrangements (where possible)
- enabling pre-service teachers to teach a different class, age/stage group or year level for placement, to clearly differentiate the two modes of working.

11 Culturally responsive practices for professional experience placements

ITE providers, systems and schools/early childhood settings are responsible for establishing and maintaining culturally responsive practices at all professional experience sites.

11.1 Culturally responsive practices during professional experience placements

Regardless of the school/early childhood setting type and location, pre-service teachers should be equipped with the required knowledge to deliver culturally responsive and appropriate lessons during their professional experience placement.

Culturally responsive knowledge and information may include:

- knowing the Traditional Custodians and Country of the placement to understand in the context of teaching and other interactions
- understanding a placement school/early childhood setting's approach to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the classroom/learning environment and cultural responsiveness strategies
- understanding student/child demographics, including knowing which students/children identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and any other factors that may influence student/child learning
- ensuring pre-service teachers understand the local context and diversity across professional experience sites.

In regional and remote settings, particularly where there is a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or children, pre-service teachers may require additional information and support before and during their placement to ensure their placement is successful.

11.2 Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers

Placement schools/early childhood settings should foster and support a working environment that is culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers and focuses on developing their teaching practices.

The following considerations may be applied to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers during their placements:

Workplace safety and cultural responsiveness

Schools/early childhood settings should create culturally safe environments that allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers to seek support from supervising teachers if unsafe

situations arise, including racially biased interactions with staff, parents and carers, and community members.

Relationships

Supervising teachers should foster supportive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers, allowing for sensitive communication and two-way feedback.

Additional responsibilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers

Schools/early childhood settings should be aware that there can be an expectation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-service teachers to represent all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Supervising teachers have a responsibility to ensure that the focus of the pre-service teacher remains on improving teaching practices and learning rather than taking on additional opportunities that may arise during a placement regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation.

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Professional Experience Assessment and Reporting Template

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This template is for the assessment and reporting of a pre-service teacher's development while completing the professional experience components of their initial teacher education program (ITE). The template references the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Teacher Standards) for assessing the progress and capabilities of a pre-service teacher based on the professional judgements of a supervising teacher during a placement.
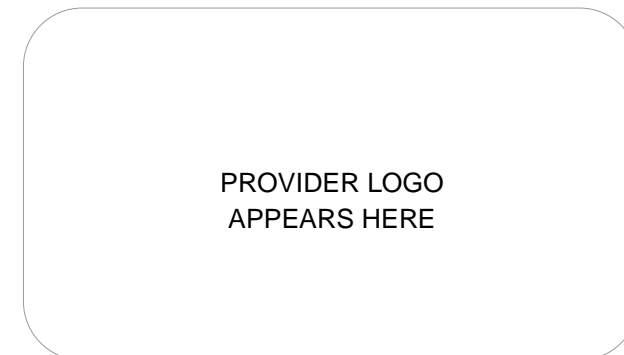
Expectations

Pre-service teachers should:

- complete the applicable parts of Section 1 and provide this template to their supervising teacher at the beginning of the placement
- complete the relevant sections of the template in collaboration with their supervising teacher through ongoing professional conversations
- have a professional conversation with their supervising teacher mid-way through the placement and a written reflection (see Section 2)
- work to the processes and within the expectations of their ITE provider for the placement
- engage in self-reflective practice
- participate in collaborative and reflective conversations with their supervising teacher (and/or other school/education setting colleagues) about their teaching practice.

Supervising teachers should:

- complete the assessment template by consensus if there is more than one supervising teacher
- engage in collaborative and reflective conversations with the pre-service teacher relating to their teaching practice
- conduct a professional conversation and provide written feedback to the pre-service teacher mid-way through the placement (see Section 3)
- use their professional judgement to assess the pre-service teacher's progress using the Graduate Teacher Standard descriptors with the assessment scale provided (see Section 3)
- give progressive feedback to the pre-service teacher on their development during the placement
- facilitate opportunities for the pre-service teacher during the placement to encounter professional learning opportunities relevant to their development of the graduate teacher standards.
- make professional judgements about the pre-service teacher's progress towards attainment of the graduate teacher standard descriptors at the completion of the placement
- liaise with the ITE provider, and the provider mentor during placement visits, in relation to professional experience processes and consult as required.

Provider mentors should:

- where possible, observe the pre-service teacher at least once during the placement relating to this assessment and reporting template
- conduct collaborative and positive reflective conversations with the pre-service teacher
- undertake discussions with relevant placement site staff in relation to the pre-service teacher's progress.

Section 1: Placement details and context (completed by pre-service teacher)

Pre-service teacher name	
Pre-service teacher Student ID	
Course name	
Course code	
Course year level	
Is this a final placement? (check box)	☐ Yes ☐ No (noting the implications for assessment in Section 3)
Placement dates	
Number of scheduled placement days	
Number of placement days completed on this placement	
Supervising teacher name(s)	
Supervising teacher(s)' contact details (email and phone)	
Year level(s) Methods / subject specialisation(s) EC setting	
School/EC setting contact (PST coordinator)	

Section 2: Interim feedback and professional conversation

- A mid-point/interim conversation between the supervising teacher and pre-service teacher has taken place.

- The mid-point/interim reflection template has been completed by the supervising teacher and pre-service teacher.

- Comments should be linked to specific graduate teacher standard descriptors where appropriate.

Pre-service teacher summary of mid-point feedback (box expands as text is entered)	Supervising teacher summary of mid-point feedback (box expands as text is entered)

Section 3: Assessment recommendation against the graduate teacher standards (completed by the supervising teacher)

- Supervising teachers should apply professional judgements based on observing the pre-service teacher, using evidence of the pre-service teacher's demonstrated knowledge, practice, and engagement in relation to the expected graduate teacher standard descriptors.

- Consider the placement context and opportunities to encounter relevant experiences enabling the pre-service teacher to demonstrate the graduate teacher standard descriptor.

For a final placement, only the Met and Not Met scale descriptors are to be used.

Assessment Scale for Descriptors			
Assessment descriptors applicable to all placements		Met (M)	Graduate teacher standard descriptor has been met
		Not Met (NM)	Graduate teacher standard descriptor has been offered for assessment but not been met
	Assessment descriptors **not** to be used for **final** placement	Developing (D)	Graduate teacher standard descriptor has been partially met with scope for further development during a subsequent placement
		Not Encountered (NE)	No opportunity was available for the pre-service teacher to meet the descriptor in this placement, and it should be a focus in a future placement

Planning for teaching and learning

Graduate teacher standard descriptor		M	NM	D	NE
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.	1.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.	1.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.	1.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.	1.5	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.	2.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.	2.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.	2.5	☐	☐	☐	☐
Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.	3.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.	3.2	☐	☐	☐	☐

Teaching effectively

Graduate teacher standard descriptor		M	NM	D	NE
Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.	1.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.	2.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.	2.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum learning opportunities for students.	2.6	☐	☐	☐	☐
Include a range of teaching strategies.	3.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.	3.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.	3.5	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate broad knowledge of strategies that can be used to evaluate teaching programs to improve student learning.	3.6	☐	☐	☐	☐
Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process.	3.7	☐	☐	☐	☐

Creating and Maintaining Supportive Learning Environments

Graduate teacher standard descriptor		M	NM	D	NE
Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.	1.6	☐	☐	☐	☐
Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.	4.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.	4.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate knowledge of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.	4.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Describe strategies that support students' wellbeing and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.	4.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues and the strategies available to support the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.	4.5	☐	☐	☐	☐

Assessing and providing feedback

Graduate teacher standard descriptor		M	NM	D	NE
Demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.	5.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.	5.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.	5.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.	5.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate understanding of a range of strategies for reporting to students and parents/carers and the purpose of keeping accurate and reliable records of student achievement.	5.5	☐	☐	☐	☐

Professional and ethical conduct

Graduate teacher standard descriptor		M	NM	D	NE
Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.	6.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.	6.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.	6.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.	6.4	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand and apply the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.	7.1	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.	7.2	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.	7.3	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers' professional knowledge and practice.	7.4	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4: Recommendation for placement formative and summative feedback

- A supervising teacher should use evidence to evaluate the pre-service teacher referencing specific graduate teacher standards in the space provided.
- The pre-service teacher will reflect and respond to feedback received during their placement. A pre-service teacher should use Not Met, Not Encountered, or Developing as a focus for attention in subsequent placements.
- The terms Met or Not Met can only be used to assess the pre-service teacher in the final placement.
- The provider mentor should comment on the pre-service teacher based on their observations as well as professional conversation with the supervising teacher.
- The template should be signed after agreement from all parties.
- For a final placement, assessment should be made based on the Graduate Teacher Standards and readiness to enter the profession and teach.

Satisfactory	☐
Not Satisfactory	☐
Require further discussion regarding decision (Please contact the provider Professional Experience Office)	

Supervising teacher(s): Feedback and relevant details for final assessment result (box expands as text is entered)	Pre-service teacher: Reflection on the placement (box expands as text is entered)	Provider mentor: Reflection on placement by observation and discussion with supervising teacher(s)/pre-service teacher (box expands as text is entered)

Signatures

Either copy and paste your signature into the space provided OR use the PDF signature tool OR type your name.

Pre-service teachers	Supervising teacher(s)	Provider mentor
Date	Date	Date

Partnership agreement template

The following template outlines the sections of a partnership agreement and provides advice about the intended content of each section.

Note: These guidelines and the template provided are not intended to be, nor do they constitute, legal advice. Partnership agreements may be developed in a range of ways and not all partnerships need to be legally constituted partnerships. Providers wanting to take a legal approach to their partnership arrangements should seek legal or other professional advice before acting or relying on this guidance or the partnership template.

Schedules

It is suggested that the preceding, main body of each partnership be generic to all partnerships to which a provider is party. It is then suggested that those features that individualise and differentiate a particular partnership with a partner(s) be attached as schedules, annexes, or attachments to the template.

There is a range of topics for possible inclusion in annexes, such as numbers of placements agreed to in a year, names of a school's team of supervising teachers, arrangements for training and development of supervising teachers and supervising lecturers, financial arrangements, and commitments (if any).

Please include schedules, annexes or attachments as required.

This partnership is agreed in writing on [date] between:

1. [Name of provider] and	2. [Name(s) of other partners]
Date	Date

A. Background

This section provides information about the role and importance of professional experience in the initial preparation of teachers and the place of partnership in its delivery. It may also provide a summary of the philosophical and theoretical bases on which the provider's programs have been developed.

[Insert background information here]

B. Definitions

The language of professional experience, and of school/site-provider partnerships more generally, is used differently across institutions and contexts. In this section, key terminology is defined in the context of each particular partnership for the purpose of clarity and conciseness as well as to provide emphasis. These terms are likely to refer to specific personnel such as pre-service teachers, school coordinators, provider professional experience coordinators, supervising lecturers, and so on. They may also refer to activities, such as observation lessons, practicum, internships, extended experience, and demonstration lessons.

[Insert definitions here]

C. Purposes

In this section, the purposes of the formal partnership will be identified and spelt out. It is not intended that this section describe the purpose of professional experience itself.

[Insert purposes here]

D. Scope

Here the partners should clearly state all aspects of their partnership that are covered by the formal partnership.

Partners should also make specific reference to aspects of their partnership that are not within its scope as deemed relevant, including aspects covered by other arrangements/agreements.

[Insert purposes here]

E. Implementation / conditions

There are a wide range of activities undertaken in effecting professional experience partnerships, and these are guided by key agreed protocols, processes, and procedures. This section of the document should list these and provide some detail of their significance and execution. Note that the later "Roles and responsibilities" section will include many of these with details about responsibility for them.

Headings within this section should include, but are not limited to:

- Overview of the components of placements and planned experiences.

(Note: The specific details of each individual placement are likely to be outlined in any schedules developed as part of the formal partnership).

[Insert purposes here]

F. Term of the formal partnership

The anticipated timeframe of the formal partnership is included here, with starting and finishing dates and any special milestone events.

[Insert term here]

G. Review

In this section, the parties agree to arrangements for the evaluation, review, and revision of the partnership, including such components as frequency, initiation, and responsibilities. Many partners will wish to conduct annual reviews of their partnerships considering institutional developments, placements required or changes in personnel. Others may prefer to link review arrangements with the timeframe specified in Section F.

[Insert term here]

H. Signatures of representatives

There needs to be evidence that the formal partnership is agreed by the parties to it, and this is usually indicated by the signing of the partnership arrangement by representatives of each partner.

[Provider] signature	
[Partner(s)] signature	

Memorandum of Understanding guide

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is an essential aspect of a formal partnership agreement. It needs to make clear and explicit the obligations all parties agree to carry through in professional experience placements. Ideally, the partnership agreement text will be as consistent as possible, particularly between a large system with multiple providers. The associated MOU can also possess many common features, but equally, needs to meet the needs of specific contexts.

The following is a guide to the questioning process that can inform the shaping of an MOU.

Roles, responsibilities, and expectations

- Have clear roles for all stakeholders been established – ITE providers and employers?
- Have the responsibilities and expectations for delivery of professional experience been outlined?
- Are all stakeholders responsible for specific activities, e.g. providing feedback to ITE students?

Supervising teachers

- Have support mechanisms for supervising teachers been identified for both ITE providers and schools? Consider:
  - time release
  - high-quality professional learning in preparation for supervision
  - financial incentives
  - enhanced recognition, e.g. crediting mentoring hours toward professional learning requirements for registration
- Have resources been developed to consistently support supervising teachers in assessing pre-service teachers against the Teacher Standards and the core content?
- Has the existing workload and responsibilities of supervising teachers been considered e.g. peak periods in the school calendar?

System-level delivery models

- Can administration and cost be reduced? Consider:
  - adopting system-level delivery models across clusters of schools, such as practicum hubs
  - standardising assessment and reporting templates across providers
  - supporting strong links between schools and providers
  - providing financial and administrative support for host schools
  - establishing clear processes to ensure placement conditions are satisfied and for handling grievances and processing payment claims.

Matching placements to demand

- Can a system be developed to match placements to ensure supply/demand balance across schools and sectors? Consider:
    - subject and geographic areas
    - placement types (e.g. sequencing, core content exposure, learner cohorts, school types, practical experience activity)
    - placement timing and length (e.g. at different stages of the school calendar, of extended or intensive duration)
- Are there clear data sharing protocols and arrangements, where appropriate, to ensure ongoing visibility of the placement system?

Continuous improvement and measuring impact

- How will the impact of professional experience be measured? Consider:
    - overall implementation progress of provider–school partnerships
    - effectiveness of existing partnerships
    - extent to which parties are fulfilling responsibilities
    - impact of initiatives on attracting and retaining ITE students.

Alternative and employment-based pathways

- How will placements be facilitated for pre-service teachers who are already employed in a school setting (e.g. supervision requirements and feasibility, fair and consistent assessment)?
- Are there clear processes for communication between providers and schools?
- How will pre-service teachers be supported as both employees and students by providers and employers? Consider:
    - reduced teaching load
    - early career teacher mentoring
    - alternative access to coursework
    - support to meet course demands
    - support to meet workplace demands e.g. marking and reports
- Are there clear expectations and mechanisms for data sharing between schools and providers, where appropriate, to ensure transparency around pre-service teachers who are employed?

Professional Experience Placement Plan

This plan captures key information regarding professional experience for pre-service teachers and their initial teacher education (ITE) provider. It is designed to enable conversations between pre-service teachers and providers to ensure there is a clear understanding about the requirements and conduct of professional experience.

It is strongly recommended that it is reviewed annually by both parties.

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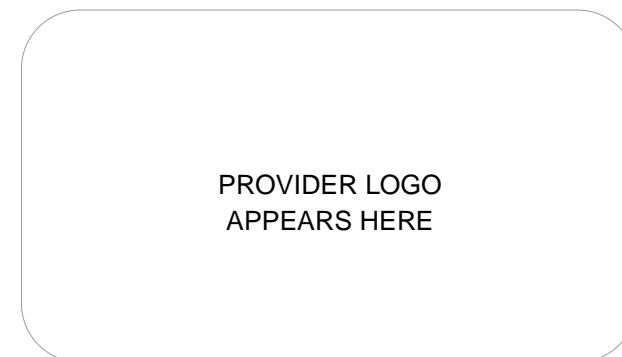
1. Student details

Pre-service teacher name	
Pre-service teacher Student ID	
Course name	
Course code	
Full time / part time*	

* Note: for part-time students, ITE providers can add extra years of study in sections 2-4 as needed

2. Program placement schedule (completed by ITE provider)

Outline the planned placement structure for the duration of the program (e.g., semester 1, 2-week observation placement, semester 2, 6-week block placement).

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		

3. Planned Graduate Teacher Standards coverage (completed by ITE provider)

Provider outlines the sequence of Graduate Teacher Standard (GTS) coverage based on taught units (e.g., 1.1, 1.4, 2.4, etc). GTS mapping must be current at the year of PST commencement.

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		

4. Proposed plan (completed by pre-service teacher)

PST to nominate placement preferences in accordance with structure in section 2. As applicable, for each placement, nominate the desired placement settings:

- size (small, medium, large)
- sector (public, Catholic, independent)
- type (co-ed, single sex, other)
- location (metropolitan, regional, rural, remote)
- nominate early childhood or primary, primary, or secondary for PSTs undertaking a combined degree

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		

I am studying online and intend to undertake placements in a state/territory other than my ITE provider's location, as follows:

☐ ACT ☐ NSW ☐ NT ☐ QLD ☐ SA ☐ TAS ☐ VIC ☐ WA

I wish to be considered for a remote and/or Indigenous community placement.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If I engage in a formal or informal employment-based pathway, I agree to discuss the implications of this for professional experience with my provider.

☐ I Agree

5. Signatures

I understand that this Professional Experience Plan is used to guide placement planning and should be reviewed as needed.

Pre-service teacher		Date	
Program coordinator (or delegate)		Date	