



Policy and Strategic Development Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation Policy

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1 Objective

This policy statement sets out the overarching policy of the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia (the Board) in performing its function to confer and collaborate with Higher Education Providers with respect to the appropriateness for registration purposes of teacher education courses pursuant to s6 (c) of the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* (the Act).

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.

2 Context – Legislation and Policy

The *Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation Policy* complies with the:

1. *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* (the Act) www.legislation.sa.gov.au
2. *Teachers Registration and Standards Regulations 2016* (the Regulations) and Variation Regulations www.legislation.sa.gov.au
3. Nationally consistent approach to the accreditation of Initial Teacher Education programs for the registration of teachers endorsed December 2015 by the Education Council.
4. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) [*Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures*](#) (December 2015) (the Standards and Procedures)
5. [*Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*](#) (February 2011)
6. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) [*Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia*](#) (June 2016) (the Guidelines)
7. Teachers Registration Board of South Australia [*Strategic Plan 2017-2018*](#).

3 Policy Statement

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

The Board acknowledges the quality and expertise that exists in South Australian teacher education.

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 & Standards Act 2004* (the Act). Pursuant to s6 (c) of the Act the Board has a function to confer and collaborate with teacher education institutions with respect to the appropriateness for registration purposes of teacher education courses.

The Board will make the decision to accredit or re-accredit programs in their jurisdiction whilst 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 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.

In making decisions to accredit or re-accredit programs the Board should take into account local context requirements and employer demands.

4 National Accreditation

All ITE programs offered by South Australian Higher Education Providers are accredited by the Board in accordance with the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (2015)* (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 (2016)* (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 South Australia 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.

5 Accreditation

Pursuant to *the Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (2015) there are two stages of accreditation:

- Stage one accreditation - for programs not previously accredited to ensure programs meet the Program and Graduate Teacher Standards
- 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.

All South Australian ITE providers will make application to the Board to have programs nationally accredited and will provide evidence of meeting all Program and Graduate Teacher Standards. The accreditation process will be undertaken in accordance with the Standards and Procedures and Guidelines.

Programs will be assessed by a committee of the Board known as the Initial Teacher Education Accreditation Advisory Panel (the panel).

The Board has delegated authority to the Registrar to select nationally trained panellists for each accreditation panel in accordance with the Instrument of Delegation: Initial Teacher Education Accreditation Advisory Panel.

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.

The ITE accreditation process is managed by the Policy and Strategic Development (PSD) Team. The Professional Standards Project Officers undertake the role of Executive Officers to the panels.

Providers will be encouraged to maintain ongoing communications with the Executive Officers whilst preparing accreditation applications and during the accreditation assessment process. Executive Officers will provide advice and feedback on draft applications and keep providers apprised of the progress of the accreditation process.

The Board has developed a comprehensive Initial Teacher Education Accreditation Procedures document to support the accreditation process. This document outlines each internal step in the accreditation process including administrative processes and document templates. The procedures document is a living document and will be amended as administrative changes are identified.

In the event that the panel is contemplating making recommendations to the Board to either impose conditions upon an approval of an application or refuse an application, a Show Cause Notice must be issued to the provider. This Show Cause Notice outlines the panel's proposed recommendation to the Board and the reasons for this, and also allows the provider a period of time to make further submissions in response. The panel may then review any further submissions by the provider and adjust their recommendations if appropriate.

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. Programs currently accredited by the Board under National Accreditation will continue to be accredited for the maximum five year accreditation period when the program must be submitted for stage two accreditation.

6 Program Changes

Where a provider intends to make proposed changes to an accredited program during the accreditation period they are required to seek approval from the Board before making any changes.

The Registrar will determine if the proposed change substantially affects the program and, if so, does the Board 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.

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

- course structure or program units
- campuses or location of program delivery
- the mode 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.

7 Panel Composition

Accreditation panels will be composed of a cross section of expertly trained panellists in accordance with the information contained in the Guidelines. To assist in ensuring national consistency there will be at least one interstate panellist on each panel.

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).

A chairperson, who has undertaken national panel chairperson training conducted by AITSL, will be appointed for each accreditation panel. Unless there are exceptional circumstances chairpersons will be from South Australia.

The Registrar 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.

AITSL maintains a register of nationally trained panellists from all jurisdictions. The PSD team maintains a register of nationally trained panellists nominated by the Board.

To ensure they maintain their expertise, trained panellists who have not participated in an accreditation panel in their two-year period will no longer be considered for panels unless there are exceptional circumstances. They will not be eligible for refresher training and will be removed from the register of trained and available panellists.

8 Overseas Professional Experience

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

- the learning and teaching is within an Australian curriculum;
- the supervising teacher on site is to be proficient in English and have a valid current local registration, a teaching qualification of no less than three years higher education study or at least five years (full-time equivalent) teaching experience;
- the assessment is against Australian Professional Standards for Teachers;
- there should be only one professional experience placement in an overseas school or education setting with a maximum of 20 days duration;
- there is evidence of a formal partnership between the ITE provider and the school/setting;
- it is not the final major teaching placement;
- the learning and teaching is in the medium of English.

The approval to change an existing accredited program and approval to undertake overseas placement would need to be in the form of a written request to the Board which would contain copies of the formal partnerships between the provider and the school/settings where the practice will take place.

9 References and Links

Legislation (www.legislation.sa.gov.au)

- *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004*
- *Teachers Registration and Standards Regulations 2016*

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (www.aitsl.edu.au)

- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (February 2011) (www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/standards)
- Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (December 2015) (www.aitsl.edu.au/deliver-ite-programs/standards-and-procedures)
- Guidelines for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia (June 2016) (www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/guidelines-for-the-accreditation-of-initial-teacher-education-programs-in-australia)

Teachers Registration Board of South Australia (www.trb.sa.edu.au)

- Strategic Framework 2017-2018 (<http://www.trb.sa.edu.au/sites/default/files/PdfDocuments/2017-2018-draft-strategic-planning-update.pdf>)
- TRBSA Initial Teacher Education Program Accreditation Procedures
- Instrument of Delegation: Initial Teacher Education Accreditation Advisory Panel
- Show Cause Notice RE: Application for Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Program