



Professional Learning Policy

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1 Objective

The purpose of this document is to detail the requirements for meeting the professional -learning requirement of an application to:

- *renew (full) Registration OR*
- *renew Provisional Registration.*

2 Policy/Legislative Context

The *Professional Learning Policy* complies with the:

- Nationally consistent approach to the registration of teachers endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs in October 2011
- *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* (the Act)
- *Teachers Registration and Standards Regulations 2016* (the Regulations)
- Teachers Registration Board of South Australia Strategic Plan 2016 -2017
- *Teachers Registration Board Code of Ethics for the Teaching Profession in South Australia.*

3 Teachers Registration Board Strategic Framework

The function of the Teachers Registration Board (the Board) is to regulate and promote the teaching profession in South Australia.

It is in the interests of the profession, children, students and wider community that registered teachers continue to practice and directly support student attainment, wellbeing and participation in education and care.

As members of the profession, teachers actively engage in ongoing professional learning reflecting their integrity as professionals and their commitment to teaching.

The Board values, recognises and seeks to build upon the commitment to professional learning that already exists amongst registered teachers.

The Board acknowledges the complexities of teaching in a rapidly changing environment and recognises that as professionals, teachers are committed to personal growth and are responsible for maintaining professional standards.

The Board recognises its responsibility to lead and support the professionalism of teaching.

4 Definition of professional learning

The Board defines professional learning as the many planned and unplanned learning opportunities, processes and experiences in which teachers engage, both within their work time and their own time, that:

- continually build their capacity as a professional
- furthers their professional growth
- assists them in supporting the learning of children and students, now or in the future.

Professional learning is defined as activities over and above the normal expectations of a teacher's role and responsibilities including preparation, planning, programming, assessment and reporting.

5 Professional learning requirements

5.1 Requirement as part of an application to renew (full) Registration and Provisional Registration

The completion of at least 60 hours of professional learning within the current term of registration (normally three years), referenced to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)*, is a requirement for all teachers applying to:

- renew (full) *Registration* OR
- renew *Provisional Registration* (for one further term).

An overview of the factors a teacher should consider when planning and selecting professional learning activities are outlined in section 7 of this policy.

The renewal of (full) Registration or renewal of Provisional Registration is conditional upon a teacher satisfying the Board that the Professional Learning requirement has been met.

5.2 Requirement to maintain a record of professional learning

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that all professional learning activities to be relied upon for the purpose of renewal of (full) Registration or Provisional Registration are appropriately recorded.

All records and evidence to substantiate the completion of the professional learning requirement must be retained by a teacher for audit purposes, for a period of 12 months after the expiry of the teacher's current registration certificate. Refer to sections 7.1 and 8.1 for further information about recording and auditing requirements.

5.3 Requirement to declare completion of Professional Learning

Teachers will be required to make a declaration on the *Application for Renewal of Registration and Application for Renewal of Provisional Registration* forms as to whether or not they have completed at least 60 hours of professional learning within the current three year term of registration, which must be referenced to the APST.

5.4 Referencing professional learning to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST's)*

Each professional learning activity undertaken by a teacher must be linked to at least one of the APST. Teachers are encouraged to seek out opportunities linked to a range of the APST but it is not compulsory to cover all seven standards. A piece of evidence can address multiple descriptors within and across the Standards.

The APST comprise seven standards which describe what teachers should know and be able to do:

- Standard 1: Know students and how they learn
- Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it
- Standard 3: Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
- Standard 4: Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
- Standard 5: Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
- Standard 6: Engage in professional learning
- Standard 7: Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

This referencing must be completed by the teacher and be appropriately recorded (refer section 7.1 of this policy).

A teacher needs to briefly describe, in their own words, how they believe each learning activity that is recorded could be linked to one or more of the APST. This description should clearly demonstrate to a reader how the activity was a meaningful learning opportunity that supports the professional growth of a teacher in the selected APST.

The individual Focus Area Descriptors under each of the APST may help a teacher to work out where a learning activity best fits. Focus areas are not required to be listed in a teacher's summary record. For recording purposes a teacher should select only the most relevant APST as this will assist them to briefly explain the connection in their own words.

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)* document is available from the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) website: www.aitsl.edu.au

6 Professional learning requirement not met

Professional Learning is a mandatory requirement for renewal of (full) Registration, and renewal of Provisional Registration.

The Registrar may not accept an application for renewal which does not satisfy the professional learning requirement. In this case the Registrar will refer the application for consideration by an Admissions Committee of the Board.

The Admissions Committee will consider the circumstances and make a recommendation to the Board to either:

- approve the application for renewal, or
- refer the matter to an Admissions Hearing of the Board.

The teacher will be provided with notice of the admissions hearing at least 21 days before the sitting date and is entitled to attend and/or be represented at the hearing.

The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will be adhered to ensuring the teacher has every opportunity to make representation to the Board.

A teacher may formally request a review of the decision of the Board not to accept an application. Refer to section 8.4 of this policy for further information.

7 Professional learning opportunities

The Board recognises the important role professional learning plays in enhancing a teacher's professional practice so that they can more effectively foster children and student learning, wellbeing and participation.

The Board respects a teacher's decision to choose from a broad range of professional learning opportunities that support their individual plans for professional growth, align with the needs of children and students and complement the goals and priorities of schools/sites and systems.

The approach taken by the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia is intended to provide sufficient flexibility to be inclusive of the range of employment and geographic contexts of teachers holding (full) Registration or Provisional Registration in South Australia.

Professional learning claimed for registration purposes must be over and above the normal expectations of a teacher's role and responsibilities and must be referenced to the APST.

The Board understands that employing authorities may require a teacher to complete specific types of professional learning. Such professional learning will be recognised for registration purposes as long as it is referenced by a teacher to the APST.

Professional learning may include for example:

- Research in teaching and learning or broader education issues;
- Multiple forms of online, e-learning and multi-media learning
- Conferences, forums, workshops or seminars;
- Action research or action learning;
- Post graduate study, or further education;
- Professional learning via local, national or international Communities of Practice.

Further information is available at <https://www.trb.sa.edu.au/types-of-PL>

7.1 Recording completion of Professional Learning

Effective from the 1 February 2018 all teachers must record their professional learning activities on the teachers individual TRB Portal account completing all the required sections of the My Professional Learning History. The record must include the following information for each professional learning activity completed:

- description or title of the professional learning
- dates on/over which the professional learning took place
- time committed to completing the professional learning
- the identified APST's against which the professional learning is referenced
- the type of evidence held to verify completion of the professional learning (i.e. certificate, statement of attendance, academic transcript, reflections, verification statements etc.)
- a brief description, in the teachers own words as to describe how the professional learning is linked to the identified standard(s).

Prior to 1 February 2018 teachers may choose to record their professional learning activities on the Professional Learning Summary record template or in any other manner. The record must include the above information for each professional learning activity completed. Teachers are encouraged to use the TRB portal prior to 1 February 2018.

Refer to website for further information <https://www.trb.sa.edu.au/Recording-PL>

A teacher is responsible for ensuring that they retain evidence of their Professional Learning activities for a period of 12 months after the expiry of their current (full) or Provisional Registration.

8 Other matters

8.1 Audit of application forms

A sample of *Application for Renewal of Registration* forms will be selected at random and audited by the Board on an annual basis.

When selected for audit the Board will check the content of the teachers Professional Learning Portal record to ensure the teacher has recorded completion of a minimum of 60 hours of acceptable professional learning within the previous three year term of registration referenced to the APST.

If necessary, TRB staff will contact a teacher to clarify the content and nature of professional learning activities recorded on their Portal.

Upon request, a teacher must submit any other related documents to the Board for the purposes of verifying the professional learning declaration made in the renewal application form.

The teacher's records will be retained by the Board until the conclusion of the audit process and any resulting actions. After this time, they will be returned to the applicant.

8.2 Requirement to provide information to the Board

In accordance with Section 27 of the Act, the Board or the Registrar may, at any time, require a registered teacher or the employer or a former employer of a registered teacher to provide information relating to the teacher or the teacher's employment. A person who fails to comply is guilty of an offence.

8.3 Provision of false or misleading information

It is an offence under Section 54 of the Act for any person to provide false or misleading information to the Registrar or Board in respect to any matters encompassed in the Act.

If there is reason to suspect that false or misleading information has been provided in any aspect of their application to renew registration, the applicant will be advised in writing of the nature of the allegations and their right to natural justice.

The Registrar may refer the matter to the Board's Investigations Unit or, if it is a serious or complex matter, seek the advice of the Crown Solicitor.

The Registrar will decide if a formal investigation is required. If a formal inquiry is held the matter will be considered by the Board to determine if there is proper cause for disciplinary action to be taken against a teacher.

8.4 Request to review the decision not to accept an application

A teacher may formally request a review of the decision of the Board not to accept an application on the basis that the Professional Learning requirement is not met.

The request must be made within 30 days of the date of the letter to the teacher advising that their application has not been accepted.

The request for a review should be made in writing to the Registrar outlining their reasons for not completing the required professional learning and including any other evidence or information the teacher wishes to be considered.

The teacher will be advised of the outcome of the review in writing.

While the Board is committed to completing the review process expeditiously, it is unable to guarantee that the outcome will be finalised prior to the expiry of a teacher's registration.

8.5 Appeal process

Applicants have a right of appeal to the Administrative and Disciplinary Division of the District Court against a decision of the Teachers Registration Board. The teacher will be contacted in regard to the action being taken on the matter within 28 days from the date upon which the letter is received by the Registrar.

9 References and links

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

- *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004*
- *Teachers Registration and Standards Regulations 2005*

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

- *National (Australian) Professional Standards for Teachers*

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

- *Strategic Plan 2016-2017*