



# Certification Pathways

Guidelines for providers and applicants

Certification 

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## Purpose

These guidelines provide professional learning program providers and aspiring certification applicants with information about the Queensland College of Teachers' (QCT) certification pathways process.

## Rationale

The national Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (2023) (the Framework), requires certifying authorities to have a pathways process to recognise prior assessment from credible programs where teachers have demonstrated they already meet part or all of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at the Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stages. The process requires certifying authorities to map the APST achieved previously and only requires evidence from applicants against the APST not yet demonstrated through the prior assessment.

## Principles

The QCT's certification pathways process is informed by national principles of the Framework. The national principles are reflected in the table below:

<b>Standards-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the specific APST Highly Accomplished or Lead descriptors to be successfully demonstrated and met are identified</li></ul>
<b>Student-improvement focussed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>outcomes include measurable evidence of impact on student outcomes including student learning, engagement in learning and wellbeing</li></ul>
<b>Development driven</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>directly supports a participant's pedagogical practice through active learning and reflection</li><li>involves participants applying and modelling teaching and learning practices for sustained improvement</li><li>involves participants collaborating and reflecting with colleagues</li><li>provides opportunities for peer feedback</li></ul>
<b>Credible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>sustained and substantial duration, enabling continuous and coherent learning over an extended period that is embedded in everyday practice</li><li>verification that a participant was involved for the required time</li></ul>
<b>Evidence-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>focussed on evidence-informed teaching practices, identified as responsive to student need</li><li>requires tangible collection of evidence of teaching practice, aligned to the nominated standards/descriptors</li></ul>
<b>Streamlined</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a certificate will be provided to participants at the conclusion of the program to verify successful completion of all endorsed program components and identified descriptors</li></ul>

## Eligibility, terms and conditions – program provider

1. Eligible program providers include state government agencies, tertiary organisations, teacher employers and professional associations. Other organisations should contact the QCT to determine eligibility.
2. An application for recognition of a certification pathway program must be submitted to the QCT for consideration using the *certification pathway program application form*.
3. Recognition of prior learning / evidence of Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher standards will only be recognised from the date the QCT endorses the professional learning pathway program. The QCT will issue a certificate of endorsement with a defined date period, as indicated on the application form.
4. Programs must be able to successfully demonstrate alignment to the principles stated above.
5. Successful program applications will remain valid for the nominated time period unless changes are made to the program - in which case, a new application for endorsement must be submitted - or the program is no longer offered.
6. The program provider must issue teachers with a certificate of completion which should be used in the teacher's individual certification application to the QCT when a pathway option is nominated. This certificate will be confirmation that all identified APST descriptors are successfully demonstrated via the nominated evidence requirements of the program.
7. If the program does not adhere to all eligibility requirements and required principles, the QCT may withdraw endorsement as a pathway to certification.

## Eligibility, terms and conditions – certification teacher applicants

1. Teacher applicants applying for certification who participate in professional learning programs can only have evidence recognised from the date the program is endorsed by the QCT.
2. Program participating teachers must keep evidence of successful demonstration of the APST at the appropriate career level and provide samples for moderation and quality assurance processes when requested. This is a requirement of the national Framework.
3. When submitting an application for certification to the QCT, teacher applicants should nominate pathways on their application form as one of the evidence types, and include the certificate issued by the program provider.
4. Evidence collected through participation in the endorsed pathway program is not required to be submitted as part of a certification application to the QCT, unless for quality assurance processes, as stated above.
5. Teacher applicants can use a pathways option towards a Stage 1 application.

## Process for program endorsement

1. Program providers are encouraged to contact the QCT for advice on program requirements and alignment with the Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stage of the standards.
2. A fully completed application for program endorsement, including a detailed outline of program components, must be submitted by the program provider using the *certification pathway program application form*.
3. Providers may include additional information attachments to the application form.
4. Program applications will be assessed by a QCT pathways panel including nationally trained certification assessors with in-depth knowledge and experience of the Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher career stages of the APST.
5. The QCT will issue an endorsement certificate for successful applications, confirming all requirements of the pathways program, including defined date period.

## Quality assurance

Any certification via a pathways approach will be subject to national quality assurance processes as outlined under element 8 of the Framework.

Certified teachers who use pathways as an evidence type must keep evidence for a period of two years and make it available for moderation purposes, if requested.

# Understanding the Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher standards

The following section provides an outline of what constitutes a teacher who is working at a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stage of the APST. This should be taken into consideration by professional learning providers considering applying for endorsement of a certification pathway.

## Highly Accomplished teachers

Highly Accomplished teachers are recognised as highly effective, skilled classroom practitioners and routinely work independently and collaboratively to improve their own practice and the practice of colleagues. They are knowledgeable and active members of the school/setting.

Highly Accomplished teachers contribute to their colleagues' learning. They may also take on roles that guide, advise, or lead others. They regularly initiate and engage in discussions about effective teaching to improve the educational outcomes for their students.

They maximise learning opportunities for their students by understanding their backgrounds and individual characteristics and the impact of those factors on their learning. They provide colleagues, including preservice teachers, with support and strategies to create positive and productive learning environments.

Highly Accomplished teachers have in-depth knowledge of subjects and curriculum content within their sphere of responsibility. They model sound teaching practices in their teaching areas. They work with colleagues to plan, evaluate, and modify teaching programs to improve student learning. They keep abreast of the latest developments in their specialist content area or, if generalist teachers, across a range of content areas.

Highly Accomplished teachers are skilled in analysing student assessment data and use it to improve teaching and learning. They are active in establishing an environment which maximises professional learning and practice opportunities for colleagues. They monitor their own professional learning needs and align them to the learning needs of students. They behave ethically at all times. Their interpersonal and presentation skills are highly developed. They communicate effectively and respectfully with students, colleagues, parents/carers, and community members.

## Lead teachers

Lead teachers are recognised and respected by colleagues, parents/carers, and the community as exemplary teachers. They have demonstrated consistent and innovative teaching practice over time. Inside and outside the school/setting they initiate and lead activities that focus on improving educational opportunities for all students.

They establish inclusive learning environments that meet the needs of students from different linguistic, cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. They seek to improve their own practice and to share their experience with colleagues.

They are skilled in mentoring teachers and preservice teachers, using activities that develop knowledge, practice, and professional engagement in others. They promote creative, innovative thinking among colleagues.

Lead teachers apply skills and in-depth knowledge and understanding to deliver effective lessons and learning opportunities and share this information with colleagues and preservice teachers. They describe the relationship between highly effective teaching and learning in ways that inspire colleagues to improve their own professional practice.

They lead processes to improve student performance by evaluating and revising programs, analysing student assessment data, and taking account of feedback from parents/carers. This is combined with a synthesis of current research on effective teaching and learning.

Lead teachers represent the school/setting and the teaching profession in the community. They are professional, ethical, and respected individuals inside and outside the school/setting.

## Evidence

Participation in an endorsed program must include collection of evidence that successfully demonstrates the nominated APST descriptors. Evidence examples include learning plans, student work samples, reading logs or unit plans. Other examples of evidence types can be found in the 'Guidelines – Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers in Queensland.'

## Resources

[Certification pathway program application form \(for professional learning providers\)](#)



(QR code to access the application form)

[Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers](#)

[Guidelines - Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Queensland](#)

[Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#)

## Contact us

### Certification Team

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