

# Guidelines

for teachers applying for renewal of certification by the Queensland College of Teachers as Highly Accomplished Teachers and Lead Teachers

*Renewal of certification against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: for teachers employed in Queensland state schools and in non-state schools represented by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission*

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## Introduction

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) [Certification Renewal Policy](#). Certification is a national process carried out by certifying authorities in participating states and territories.

The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) developed a certification renewal process as outlined in the [Guide to the Renewal of Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia](#) (the 'AITSL Guide'). The AITSL Guide has informed the development of these Guidelines for the Queensland context.

The QCT has the legislated authority to grant and renew certification for Queensland teachers in state schools and non-state schools represented by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC).

Certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (the Standards) is granted for a fixed period of five-years from the date certification takes effect.

Teachers in Queensland who intend to maintain their certification status must apply for renewal of certification according to the process set out in these Guidelines.

## What is renewal of certification?

The purpose of renewal of certification is to verify a certified teacher's ongoing performance at the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stage.

It is an important quality assurance process designed to ensure that when they renew, certified teachers in Queensland continue to demonstrate the abilities, experience, knowledge, and skills stated in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at the relevant career stage.

Certified teachers may only renew their certification at the career stage at which they were originally certified.

As is the case with national certification, renewal of certification is a voluntary process and includes a fee, payable by the applicant.

## Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

The APST are a public statement of what constitutes quality teaching. The Standards define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high quality and effective teaching in 21st century schools, which results in improved educational outcomes for students.

The Standards do this by providing a framework that makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional

engagement required across teachers' careers. They present a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public.

The Standards are organised into four career stages and guide the preparation, support, and development of teachers. The Graduate Standards underpin the accreditation of initial teacher education programs and the Proficient Standards underpin processes for full registration. The Standards at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead are the basis for national certification and ongoing renewal of certification.

## 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.

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 pre-service 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 across a range of content areas for generalist teachers.

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.

## 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 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 pre-service 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 pre-service 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 and the teaching profession in the community. They are professional, ethical, and respected individuals inside and outside the school.

## Process for renewal of certification

The following steps are the process for the renewal of certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher.

1. Commencing the process
2. Pre-assessment
3. Submission
4. Assessment
5. Decision and review processes

### Commencing the process

Certified teachers should ensure that their contact details are up to date in [myQCT](#) through the period of their certification.

How is QCT advised that I intend to renew my certification?

The QCT will contact all certified teachers twelve (12) months before their certification end date, asking them to express their intent to apply for renewal.

The Expression of Intent (EOI) process is important to ensure applicant readiness for renewal submission and supports the QCT to effectively plan for the upcoming certification renewal applications.

When are applications due to renew certification?

Submissions for certification renewal applications are accepted twelve (12) months before the certification end date and close six (6) months before the certification end date.

The QCT will communicate with all certified teachers due to renew their certification to inform them of when their renewal application is due.

The certification end date is five (5) years from the date certification took effect.

The QCT will contact all certified teachers at least twelve (12) months before their certification end date, asking them to express their intent to apply for renewal.

*Example:*

Date certified	1 July 2021
Certification takes effect	31 December 2021
QCT contact for EOI	Before 31 December 2025
Apply to renew	Before 31 June 2026
Decision made	Before 31 December 2026

## Pre-Assessment

Who is eligible to renew certification?

To be eligible to apply for renewal of certification, an applicant must:

- be certified as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher.
- hold full teacher registration with the QCT.
- be employed by the Department of Education or an employer represented by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC).

What will I be asked to confirm?

Applicants will be asked to confirm the following:

- That they have continued to complete annual performance reviews at the relevant HAT or LT career stages in the previous five years.
- That they hold an authentic teaching role in a classroom context where they are responsible for an ongoing teaching program and the assessment of the students over a period time. (There is no requirement for a specified number of hours or teaching load over the five-year period of

certification.)

- That they have discussed their intention to apply for renewal of certification with their current principal/supervisor or delegate, as nominated by the principal/supervisor.
- That they have completed any relevant employer training modules for certification renewal.

## Submission

What documentation must be submitted to renew my certification?

Applicants for renewal must submit the following:

- a professional practice written statement (in the QCT professional practice written statement template)
- a professional learning written statement (in the QCT professional learning written statement template)
- a 30–35-minute unedited video of their classroom teaching practice
- Lead Applicants: may submit an overview of their Lead initiative/s from the five-year period of certification (in the QCT Certification Renewal Lead initiative template). Submission of a separate overview of a Lead initiative/s is optional, applicants may opt to discuss their Lead initiative/s in the written statements.
- written referee statements\* from the three (3) to five (5) referees, including the current principal/supervisor or delegate, as nominated by the principal/supervisor (in the QCT certification renewal template).

In collating the documentation listed above, applicants should be mindful that the renewal application is assessed holistically against the professional capabilities at the relevant career stage.

While all professional capabilities must be met, each only needs to be addressed once.

*\* The information provided in the professional practice and professional learning written statements and for Lead Teachers, the Lead Initiative/s, must be able to be verified by referee statements.*

*The certified teacher should ensure that across the three (3) to five (5) referee statements, verification is provided for all examples given in the professional practice and professional learning statements, and for Lead Teachers, the Lead initiative.*

All applicant templates are available to be downloaded via the [QCT website](#).

A professional practice written statement (1500-2500 words)

The professional practice statement will address the

professional capabilities.

The professional practice statement will include at least three detailed written examples of the applicant's practice. Applicants should ensure:

- the examples are taken from the five-year period of certification
- the examples demonstrate the applicant's practice, and the impact of their practice on student outcomes, and the practice of colleagues
- the professional capabilities at the relevant career stage are considered in the examples
- context for each example is provided
- Lead applicants may opt to discuss their Lead initiative where relevant.

Applicants are not required to provide direct evidence items in their written statements.

The professional practice written statement should be provided in the relevant career stage template:

Professional Practice Statement – Highly Accomplished Teacher

Professional Practice Statement – Lead Teacher

A professional learning written statement (1500-2500 words)

The professional learning statement will describe at least three examples of professional learning the applicant may have undertaken, designed, and/or delivered during the five-year period of certification.

In describing each example, applicant should include:

- a rationale for the selection of the professional learning
- the nature of the professional learning undertaken, designed and/or delivered, by the applicant
- how the applicant has used the knowledge gained through the professional learning to increase their capability and/or the capability of their colleagues
- context for the examples provided.
- Lead applicants may opt to discuss their Lead initiative where relevant.

In their response, applicants should consider the professional capabilities at the relevant career stage.

Applicants are not required to provide direct evidence items in their written statement.

The professional learning written statement should be provided in the relevant career stage template:

Professional Learning Statement – Highly Accomplished Teacher

Professional Learning Statement – Lead Teacher

A 30-35-minute video of classroom practice

The 30-35-minute video of classroom practice provides the applicant with the opportunity to

demonstrate a number of the professional capabilities through their teaching practice. Applicants may wish to include with their video:

- the lesson plan used in the filmed lesson
- any activities or resources used in the lesson
- any other materials relevant to the lesson.

The video may not be larger than 2GB and must be uncut and unedited. This means the video cannot include any texts, special effects, music etc.

Before filming their video, applicants must refer to any relevant employer guidelines about taking video footage. However, some general guidance is provided below.

Before filming, applicants must obtain the relevant consent, identify how to use the best available filming equipment and storage, and practise filming to ensure that the best quality film is submitted in the certification renewal application.

### Obtaining consent

Applicants must obtain consent from all individuals/ students, including volunteers, colleagues, and the parents or legal guardians of all students who will appear or be heard in the video or audio recordings. The relevant employer's consent policy and procedure should be followed as directed.

If consent is not obtained for an individual/s, videos should not be edited or blurred to de-identify the individual/s. Instead, it is recommended that those individual/s be seated out of the camera's range completely.

### Lead applicants – optional overview of the Lead initiative/s (up to 1000 words)

Lead teachers applying for renewal of certification may include in their application a separate description of a chosen Lead initiative/s if they have not already discussed it in their professional practice and/or professional learning statements.

The chosen Lead initiative/s could be ongoing from their original certification application, or a new Lead initiative/s. This will be in the form of a short description of one of the initiatives the applicant has led within a school or across schools.

The initiative/s must:

- have been implemented over a period of at least six (6) months and be linked to school and/or system initiatives
- demonstrate the applicant's leadership in design and/or implementation, evaluation, and review of the Lead initiative
- be designed to build the capacity of colleagues and demonstrate impact on colleagues' knowledge, practice and/or engagement

- be sustainable and demonstrate positive impact over time.

The initiative/s can be a task delegated to the Lead Teacher, which they have then designed, implemented, evaluated, and reviewed. The Lead initiative/s can be demonstrated by Lead teachers who hold formal leadership positions as well as by those who are full time classroom teachers. The description will outline the applicant's individual contribution in the initiative/s.

The description of the Lead initiative/s will be up to **1000 words** and if provided, must be provided in the supplied template.

### Referee Statements

Certified teachers are required to submit referee statements from three (3) to five (5) referees. One must be the current principal/supervisor or delegate, as nominated by the principal/supervisor.

The referee statements must verify the accuracy of the written statements and the lead initiative/s for Lead teachers. Referees may also make comment on the applicant's ongoing performance if they wish (optional). It is important to note that referees are not required to assess the certified teacher's performance against the professional capabilities or Standards.

Collectively, the referees will need to verify all the content of the written statements. At least one referee must be able to verify the information supplied in the Lead initiative.

If needed, applicants may wish to provide referees with additional information to support their verification.

Referee statements must be dated and signed and provided in the relevant career stage template:

Referee Statement – Highly Accomplished Teacher

Referee Statement – Lead Teacher

### Assessment

#### How will my submission be assessed?

The application for renewal of certification will be independently assessed by an assessor trained under the national Assessor Training Program. The assessor will be external to the applicant's school or setting and will be appointed by the certifying authority.

After making their assessment, the assessor will make a recommendation to the QCT to renew the applicant's certification or to refuse to renew the applicant's certification.

In making their assessment, the assessor will:

- assess the applicant's written statements
- assess the applicant's video of classroom practice and associated documentation (if provided)
- assess the applicant's Lead initiative/s

- review the referee optional comments (if provided).

The assessment is made against the Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher Professional capabilities.

Each professional capability must be demonstrated at least once in the full application, that is the written statements, the video of classroom practice and associated documentation, and for Lead teachers, the Lead initiative/s.

### Assessment Professional capabilities

Applicants are assessed holistically against each professional capability. These professional capabilities are drawn from the career stage overviews published by AITSL in the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) and provided on pages 7 and 8.

They describe the full suite of capabilities and characteristics of the career stages and have been [mapped to the descriptors](#) of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

As applicants for certification renewal have already demonstrated all 37 descriptors of the APST, the professional capabilities ensure certified teachers continue to demonstrate the relevant career stage without repeating the initial certification assessment.

Applicants are encouraged to use the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher Professional Capabilities Checklist to ensure that each professional capability is demonstrated at least once in the full application, that is the written statements, video of classroom practice and associated documentation, and for Lead teachers, the Lead initiative/s.

### Decision and reviews processes

How will I know if I have been successful in renewing my certification?

After receiving the assessor's recommendation to the QCT as to the applicant's certification renewal, the QCT make a decision on the recommendation and then notify the applicant of the decision, and the date that the renewed certification takes effect.

The QCT will provide both successful and unsuccessful renewal applicants with a report of their assessment against the Standards.

Where an applicant for certification renewal is unsuccessful, the QCT will issue the applicant with a formal information notice. The information notice will include details about the next steps should the applicant wish to seek an internal review of the decision.

### Internal Review

Where an applicant for renewal is dissatisfied with the QCT's decision, the applicant is able to apply for an

internal review of the decision.

Applicants applying for internal review must do so within 28 days of the information notice being issued.

Applicants may apply to the QCT for an extension of this 28-day period by contacting the QCT.

Applicants must apply for a review to the Internal Review Committee (IRC) using the [Application for internal review form](#).

The IRC consists of:

- at least three persons, including a Board member who is a practising teacher and a Board member who is a representative of major teacher employing authorities
- an experienced assessor.

The IRC conducts the review on:

- the material that led to the original decision
- the reasons for the original decision
- any other relevant material the review committee allows.

The IRC must give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to make oral or written submissions to it.

The IRC will make the final review decision. The final review decision will:

- confirm the original decision
- amend the original decision or
- substitute another decision for the original decision.

The IRC must give the applicant notice of their decision. If you do not receive notice within 60 days of your application, then the original decision stands.

### External review

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the IRC's decision, they may then seek an external review through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

For more information about QCAT or to contact QCAT, see [www.qcat.qld.gov.au](http://www.qcat.qld.gov.au).

## General information

### Payment of fees

Please refer to the [QCT certification webpage](#) for advice on fees for applying for certification renewal. Fees are collected at the time the certification renewal application is made through [myQCT](#). Once assessment of the renewal application has commenced, no refund of fees is possible.

### Record keeping

The QCT is required under the *Public Records Act 2002* to keep records. The QCT regulatory

compliance model and its implementation are based on values and behaviours that are critical to achieving optimal regulatory compliance. The QCT regulatory compliance framework requires good record keeping and reporting arrangements with stakeholders.

## Privacy

The QCT collects personal information, in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Regulation 2009*. Information about the QCT's privacy policy is available here. It includes:

- When personal information is collected and how it is used
- When personal information may be disclosed and the legislative authority for that disclosure
- The impact if you do not consent to supplying the QCT with the information requested
- What to do if you believe that the QCT has not handled your personal information correctly.

Further information is available on the [QCT website](#).

## Applicant resources

All applicant templates are available to be downloaded from the [QCT website](#).

For Highly Accomplished applicants, download the zipped HAT renewal Application templates

For Lead applicants, download the zipped Lead Renewal Application templates.

