

OXFORD



Preface

Depending on where you are in your studies, you may have a considerable amount of theoretical and practical preparation gained from your university studies and practicum experiences, and you will be in the process of developing your teaching-learning philosophy and your professional teacher identity

The most successful preservice teachers and early career teachers are those who are highly proactive practitioners and take responsibility for their own learning and development. Such people set out to make the most of every opportunity to learn about their profession, and consistently reflect on their own professional practices. This book is focused on helping you become a successful proactive practitioner.

We have found that preservice and early career teachers are often concerned that they might not be ready to deal with the day-to-day realities of working in schools. While many are relatively confident about their capacity to teach, they are less certain about their preparedness to deal with the variety of personal and professional demands that come with a teaching position. The nature of this uncertainty, about assuming a professional role and the responsibilities that come with it, can be gleaned from the type of questions asked by preservice teachers when considering applying for vacancies, and early career teachers during the induction phase of their first appointment.

The questions most often raised include:

- How can I best demonstrate that I have met the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)?
- How can I be successful in getting a job?
- How much support will I get as an early career teacher?
- How can I best prepare for my first few weeks of teaching?
- What can I do to ensure my students are engaged in my lessons?

- How can I manage challenging behaviours in my class(es), and will I be supported in this?
- What steps can I take to be well prepared to teach students with special learning needs?
- How can I develop effective working relationships with the parents or carers of my students?
- What will be expected of me in terms of workload in my first year of teaching?
- What ethical challenges might I face as a teacher?
- What advice can you give me regarding teaching and living in the same community?

In providing adequate and realistic answers to questions such as these, we need to consider some of the fundamental aspects that make the work of the teacher so intrinsically complex and demanding, especially for the preservice and early career teacher.

In this book, we provide you with guidelines to help you gain insights into the nature of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as they operate in the school and classroom context. We also include suggestions concerning how you, a preservice teacher, can most effectively demonstrate your developing competency in selected Standards as you prepare job applications, respond to interview questions, and develop your professional portfolio. Furthermore, this support should help you, as an early career teacher, to take a more proactive role in the induction program offered in your first year of teaching.

The best advice we can give you after preparing this book is to be realistic about what you can and cannot do in your first months. Appreciate that you will need to give yourself time to come to know the curriculum, and how it is taught in your school. Over time, teachers develop their own approaches to what they teach, how they teach, and the strategies they employ. As you get to know your students, their interests and what engages them, you should be able to include many of the strategies in your lessons. We hope this book helps you on your path to becoming a highly successful teacher.

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Chapter 1: Becoming a Teacher

As a preservice teacher or an early career teacher you have chosen to enter one of the most satisfying, rewarding and important professions. This book has arisen from our experience over many years of helping those new to the profession adjust to the realities of working with students, parents/carers and colleagues in often very diverse contexts.

Key Topics

- Meeting the central aims of the Australian Curriculum
- Meeting the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- School culture
- Relationships
- Ethics
- Becoming a teacher: Being proactive and reflective
- Your induction program

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Chapter 2: Building Your Teaching Portfolio and Applying for a Job

Applying for your first teaching position can be a challenging experience. This chapter considers the steps you can take as soon as you start your work-integrated learning, so that you can later secure a position that is right for you.

Key Topics

- Applying for a teaching role
- Developing a teaching portfolio
- Finding the right school
- Types of vacancies
- Writing a job application
- The interview process

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Chapter 3: Beginning Your Teaching Career

This chapter provides guidelines to help you take the initiative and navigate the early stages of your induction with confidence.

Key Topics

- First steps on being appointed
- Meeting your mentor
- Orientation
- Meeting your colleagues
- Ongoing induction
- Getting to know your students
- Planning for your first day
- Foundation classes

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Chapter 4: Getting to Know Your Students through Assessment

Early career teachers may find it difficult to know where to start when planning to teach. You may feel overwhelmed with the amount of work required, and the variety of decisions you need to make. In many instances, more experienced staff will have made decisions for you. You may find in these circumstances that teaching strategies and activities, and approaches to assessment will have been discussed in some detail before you take up your appointment. However, you may find that there is still significant planning to be done by the teaching team and individual teachers in your area. Either way, the same kind of understandings or principles apply regarding your decision-making.

Key Topics

- Getting to know your students
- The central place of assessment
- Learning intentions and goals

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Chapter 5: Effective Strategies for Lesson Planning

What makes a successful lesson? In this chapter we look at what research has revealed about teacher best practice. We examine some high-impact teaching strategies (HITS) and other essential elements that enhance student learning outcomes

Key Topics

- Incorporating research in your practice
- Structuring lessons
- Questioning
- Cooperative learning
- Differentiated learning and instruction
- Engaging your students in their learning
- Putting it all together

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Chapter 6: Learning Diversity in the Classroom

One of the most challenging aspects of the role of teachers today is catering for the wide range of students' learning needs in our classrooms. It is important in terms of your professional practice that you have some knowledge of the characteristics of the physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs of your students. The adjustments you make to your teaching approaches, strategies and resources to cater for these students are also essential aspects of your development as a teacher. In accommodating students with special learning needs, you will face ethical considerations. The way you respond to these challenges and the way you support your students, their parents/carers and your colleagues, will enhance the growth of your own professional identity as a teacher. Teaching students with different learning needs within a mainstream classroom can be very tiring, time-consuming and stressful, particularly for an early career teacher. It is important that your own well-being is considered, and that you know when and where to get support.

Key Topics

- Students with special learning needs
- Learning diversity at your school
- Communicating with parents
- Student Support Groups
- Individual Learning Plans
- What is the NCCD?

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Chapter 7: Supporting Students with Special Needs

Every student in your class is unique. Some will have physical or intellectual impairments or challenges, some may be gifted learners, and others may experience social or emotional disabilities - for some, perhaps a combination of all of these.

This chapter examines the characteristics of different students that you may have in your class, and the challenges some of these students face in accessing the curriculum and participating fully in school life, including staying engaged in their learning. We also present strategies recommended in the research literature that can assist you with these areas.

Key Topics

- Autism spectrum disorder
- Hearing impairments
- Visual impairments
- Physical disabilities
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Students with specific learning disorders
- Severe language disorders
- Gifted and talented students

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Chapter 8: Understanding Behaviour and Student Well-being

Why is student well-being, welfare and behaviour management so important? Research has shown that student well-being is paramount to academic success and that lack of feeling safe at school, sometimes caused by the misbehaviour of others, leads to a decline in students' achievement overall. Buchanan and colleagues (2013) found that one of the primary reasons early career teachers become dissatisfied with the job, and many actually leave the profession, is because of the challenges they face trying to manage student behaviour and cater effectively for the well-being of all their students.

Key Topics

- Understanding well-being and behaviour
- Beginning to understand your students as individuals
- Proactive approaches to behaviour management
- Dealing with specific types of misbehaviour

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Chapter 9: Working with Colleagues: A Whole-School Behaviour Management Approach

In this chapter, we build on the understandings explored in Chapter 8, and emphasise the importance of all staff members consistently implementing their school's student well-being and behaviour management policies. Your understanding of, and adherence to, your school's policies will help ensure you are in a position to successfully manage challenging behaviours when they occur.

Such policies include preventative components that encourage positive student behaviour school-wide, and encourage close links between parents/ carers and staff of at-risk students.

Key Topics

- Whole-school behaviour management models
- Tier 3 students
- Bullying
- Parents and cases of chronic misbehaviour

Your guide to becoming a proactive, successful teacher

Teaching is a multi-faceted, challenging and complex profession. Preparing for the Teaching Profession addresses the uncertainties you might have about assuming a professional role and the responsibilities that come with it. This practical handbook focuses on the key principles you need to know to become a successful and proactive teacher. It answers the following questions and many more, giving you the confidence to thrive in your teaching profession.

- How can I be successful in getting a job?
- How can I best prepare for my first few weeks of teaching
- How can I best demonstrate that I have met the AITSL Graduate Standards?
- What can I do to ensure my students are engaged in my lessons?
- What strategies can I employ to effectively maintain positive behaviour in my classroom?
- What steps can I take to be well prepared to teach students with special learning needs?
- How can I develop effective working relationships with the parents or carers of my students?
- What ethical challenges might I face as a teacher?

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THANK YOU FOR READING!

PREPARING FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION

You will need:

