



**THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
POLICY – SUPPORTING THE MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION AT
PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the *Undergraduate Studies and Postgraduate Studies Policy – Supporting the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence* is to recognise the ongoing learning of teachers when undergraduate and postgraduate studies are undertaken.

The purpose of the policy is to outline the conditions under which the postgraduate and undergraduate studies will be recognised for the purpose of maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence.

The policy defines undergraduate and postgraduate studies for the purposes of maintaining accreditation at Professional Competence. It acknowledges that teachers from time to time seek further study and qualifications to support their knowledge, skills and capabilities.

This policy forms part of the Professional Teaching Standards as approved by the Minister. The Minister is responsible for the approval of continuing professional development courses, programs and providers, as well as specifying the conditions relating to professional development for continuing accreditation.

The Minister has delegated to the Chief Executive of the NSW Institute of Teachers the function to approve courses, programs and providers.

The policy applies to teachers who have been accredited at Professional Competence, teacher accreditation authorities and providers.

2. Legislation

The Institute of Teachers Act 2004, Section 7 and Section 20 give the Institute responsibility to advise on the conditions for maintaining accreditation, the conditions for continuing professional development and the approval of providers, courses and programs.

3. Related Policies of the Institute of Teachers

The related policies of the Institute of Teachers are:

1. *The Policy for the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence*
2. *The Continuing Professional Development Policy: Supporting the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence*
3. *The Teacher Identified Continuing Professional Development Policy.*

The policies are located on the Institute's website (www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au).

4. Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence

Teachers are required to maintain their accreditation over each maintenance of accreditation period by:

- demonstrating ongoing competent teaching practice
- undertaking ongoing professional development as required by the *Continuing Professional Development Policy: Supporting the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence*.

Each accreditation period is for 5 years for full time teachers and 7 years for casual, temporary and part-time teachers.

5. Policy Objectives

The *Undergraduate Studies and Postgraduate Studies Policy – Supporting the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence* seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- clarifying the purpose and the characteristics of undergraduate and postgraduate studies and the ways it can contribute to the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence
- explaining the respective roles and responsibilities of teachers, teacher accreditation authorities and the Institute in teachers undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate studies for the purpose of maintaining their Professional Competence accreditation
- increasing teachers' access to and participation in high quality continuing professional development programs and courses
- assisting teachers to maintain their accreditation at the level of Professional Competence through participation in undergraduate and postgraduate studies
- supporting teachers' knowledge, skills and capabilities by providing appropriate recognition for the undergraduate and postgraduate studies undertaken
- assisting teachers to direct their own professional learning through their participation in continuing professional development.

6. The characteristics of undergraduate and postgraduate studies for the purposes of meeting the requirements for the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence

6.1 Undergraduate Studies

Undergraduate studies for the purposes of maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence can comprise units within a degree or full degree programs. Teachers are not required to have previously undertaken university study in that area.

Teachers may choose to undertake such study to further their knowledge, skills and qualifications. Completion of an undergraduate program may lead to an award of a Bachelor Degree.

The undergraduate study will need to be directly relevant to the Professional Teaching Standards and the area of their teaching, or future area of teaching if they are retraining. This is defined in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of the policy.

For the purposes of this policy, undergraduate studies are defined as those delivered by a university and other self-accrediting and non-self accrediting higher education institution within Categories II and III of the AQF register that offer courses and programs for teachers that contribute to accredited higher education qualifications.

6.2 Postgraduate Studies

Postgraduate studies for the purposes of maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence are units within a postgraduate degree program requiring teachers to have completed a degree program in a related area.

Teachers undertake postgraduate studies to further their knowledge, skills and qualifications in a specialised area.

Teachers completing a postgraduate program may be awarded Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters Degree or a Doctoral Degree.

The postgraduate study will need to be directly relevant to the Professional Teaching Standards and the area of their teaching, or future area of teaching if they are retraining. This is defined in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of the policy.

For the purposes of this policy, postgraduate studies are defined as those delivered by a university and other self-accrediting and non-self accrediting higher education institution within Categories II and III of the AQF register that offer courses and programs for teachers that contribute to accredited higher education qualifications.

6.3 *Direct relevance of the postgraduate study to the Professional Teaching Standards*

The postgraduate study will need to directly address at least one Standard. Teachers will need to make the case for the relevance of the study to the Professional Teaching Standards.

The study will need to be relevant to the Standard or Standards in a significant manner. The study should support the teacher to maintain or further develop their knowledge, skills and understandings against the Standard or Standards.

6.4 *Direct relevance of the undergraduate study to the Professional Teaching Standards*

The undergraduate study should primarily relate to the Professional Teaching Standards. Teachers will need to make the case for the relevance of the study to the Professional Teaching Standards.

The study will need to be relevant to the Standard or Standards in a significant manner. The study should support the teacher to maintain or further develop their knowledge, skills and understandings against the Standard or Standards.

6.5 *Relevance of the undergraduate or postgraduate studies to areas of teaching or future areas of teaching where a teacher is retraining*

Relevance to teaching for the purposes of maintaining accreditation at Professional Competence means that the study directly contributes to the teacher's professional knowledge, professional practice and professional commitment.

Some ways that such study is relevant to areas of teaching are:

- knowledge required by the Standards (such as curriculum areas; assessment; reporting; literacy);
- teaching contexts and activities which further teachers' knowledge, skills and understandings;
- the way students learn;
- effective communication in the classroom;
- classroom management skills;
- teacher professional learning that improves professional knowledge and professional practice
- communicating with parents and engaging with parents in the educative process.

Where the study is undertaken for the purpose of teaching in a future area of teaching (i.e. out of their subject field) the teacher will need to meet the Institute's subject content requirements for teaching in a NSW primary or secondary school. The policy is located on the Institute's website (www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au).

Teachers should also consult employers regarding any requirements they may have beyond the Institute's requirements.

Relevance to areas of teaching or future areas of teaching will need to be demonstrated by the teacher through the application process. See Section 8.2 for further information.

7. Recognition of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies for the Purpose of Maintaining Accreditation at Professional Competence

The recognition of hours of participation will depend on the extent of the undergraduate or postgraduate study rather than the delivery mode. The indicative hours of instruction will be taken as a measure of time. The recognition will be dependent on the successful completion of the study.

The following scenarios illustrate the recognition of hours.

- A teacher who has undertaken and successfully completed a one-semester unit within a program is deemed to have met the average annual professional development requirements for 20 hours.

The teacher will need to participate in 80 additional hours of professional development comprising 40 hours of Institute Registered professional development and 40 hours of Teacher Identified professional development.

- In circumstances where a teacher has undertaken and successfully completed a one-year subject within a program, they will be deemed to have met the average professional development requirements for two years of 40 hours.

The teacher will need to participate in a further additional 60 hours of professional development comprising 30 hours of Institute Registered professional development and 30 hours of Teacher Identified professional development.

- Where a teacher has undertaken and successfully completed five or more one-semester subjects within a program they will be deemed to have met the professional development requirements for the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence.
- Where the study is undertaken across more than one maintenance of accreditation period, the hours and Standards for each unit will be credited at the point of successful completion.

The recognition of such study for the purpose of applying for accreditation at Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership will be the subject of a future policy.

8. The Process of Undertaking Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies for the Purpose of Maintaining Accreditation at Professional Competence

The process for undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate studies for the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence involves the Institute of Teachers, the teacher and the teacher accreditation authority. The role of each participant is outlined in Sections 8.1 – 8.3.

8.1 Role of the Institute of Teachers

The Institute of Teachers oversees the system of accreditation and recognition of teachers' professional capacity against the Professional Teaching Standards. This includes the professional development requirements for the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence.

The Institute advises and assists teacher accreditation authorities to accredit teachers at Professional Competence as well as monitoring their ongoing professional development. The Institute monitors the application of the accreditation process across schools and teacher accreditation authorities to support the consistent and fair application of the Professional Teaching Standards for each teacher.

Teachers apply to the Institute for the recognition of their undergraduate and postgraduate studies before they commence their study. The Institute on the basis of the teacher's application approves and provides advice to teachers regarding undergraduate or postgraduate studies.

The approval is based on the relevance of the study to the Standards, the area of teaching or future area of teaching.

8.2 Role of the Accredited Teacher

Teachers accredited at Professional Competence who undertake undergraduate or postgraduate study will have that study recognised as part of their the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence as described in Section 7.

Where a teacher chooses to undertake undergraduate or postgraduate study, they should apply to the Institute for approval before they commence their undergraduate or postgraduate study. This will give teachers security that their study will be recognised when successfully completed.

Teachers can apply to the Institute for approval after the commencement of their study.

The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study Application Form require teachers to make the case for how their study is directly relevant to the Standards, their teaching or future area of teaching.

The application form is attached at **TAB A**. The form is available on the Institute's website at www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au.

The form is to be submitted to the NSW Institute of Teachers for approval.

Once approved, the teacher is to submit proof of enrolment and successful completion of subjects and programs on an annual basis to the NSW Institute of Teachers. Certified documents such as official verification of enrolment and academic transcripts issued by the Institution must be provided.

Certification will need to be by either a representative of the Institution where the study is undertaken; or a Justice of the Peace; or a Teacher Accreditation Authority or delegate.

8.3 Role of the Teacher Accreditation Authority

The teacher accreditation authority determines if a teacher meets the requirements for maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence.

The teacher accreditation authority or their delegate signs the teacher's application form for the recognition of their undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

Where appropriate, the teacher accreditation authority or delegate should discuss, as part of a formative and collegial process, the maintenance of the Professional Competence Standards and the continuing professional development requirements.

The feedback should involve recognition of the teacher's progress against the Standards and their undergraduate or postgraduate studies.

The teacher accreditation authority through the Institute's online database checks that the teacher has undertaken and completed the undergraduate or postgraduate study. The Institute's database will record the teacher's successful completion of study on the basis of certified academic results forwarded by the teacher to the Institute. This is required for a determination of the maintenance of accreditation at Professional Competence decision.

9. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study during Leave of Absence from the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence

In circumstances where teachers are undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate studies during a period of approved leave of absence, applications may be made to the Institute of Teachers to have their study recognised.

The application for Recognition of Professional Development during an Approved Period of Leave of Absence is attached at **TAB B**.

Approvals will be based on the teacher providing proof of enrolment and successful completion of study. The study should have direct relevance to the Professional Teaching Standards, the areas of teaching or future areas of teaching where the teacher is retraining.

10. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study undertaken overseas during Leave of Absence from the Maintenance of Accreditation at Professional Competence

In circumstances where teachers will undertake or have undertaken study overseas, the teacher will need to demonstrate that the study meets the Standards.

Teachers undertaking or have undertaken undergraduate and postgraduate study will need to submit the application for Recognition of Professional Development during an Approved Period of Leave of Absence is attached at **TAB B**.

11. Review Process

A review process is available to teachers following submission of an unsuccessful application. The review will be considered by the Professional Learning Endorsement and Advisory Committee (PLEAC). The PLEAC is a committee of the Quality Teaching Council.

Basis for review

The basis of the review available to teachers will be for matters relating to:

- i) procedural fairness
- ii) evidence of the teacher's capacity to meet the Institute's criteria relating to relevance to the Professional Teaching Standards, areas of teaching and future areas of teaching where a teacher is retraining
- iii) reasons why the criteria should not be applied in the teacher's particular circumstances
- iv) any other relevant considerations.

The PLEAC's executive officer should continue to operate as the executive officer to the committee in such cases.

Functions of the PLEAC during the review process

The functions of the PLEAC during the review process are to:

- i) consider reviews against the criteria
- ii) make recommendations to the Quality Teaching Council.

The PLEAC will meet on a needs basis in such circumstances.

The Review Process

The review process will comprise the following:

- i) submission of the request for a review to the PLEAC by the teacher
- ii) consideration of the review by the PLEAC
- iii) recommendation from the PLEAC to the Quality Teaching Council
- iv) decision endorsed by the Institute of Teachers
- v) notification of the review's outcome to be communicated to the provider by the Institute.

12. Glossary

Term	Meaning
Accreditation	Process which recognises and certifies a teacher's achievement of the <i>Professional Teaching Standards</i> on entry to the profession and at the levels of Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership.
Continuing Professional Development	Processes, activities and experiences that provide opportunities to extend teacher learning and support accreditation against the standards.
Course	A professional development activity of 10 hours or less.
Institute Registered Continuing Professional Development	Institute registered courses and programs. These courses and programs can only be provided by Institute endorsed continuing professional development providers. This type of continuing professional development has been mapped to the <i>Professional Teaching Standards</i> at the level of Professional Competence. Institute Registered Continuing Professional Development is placed on the Institute's website via its public register.
Postgraduate Studies	<p>For the purposes of this policy, postgraduate studies are defined as those delivered by a university and other self-accrediting and non-self accrediting higher education institution within Categories II and III of the AQF register that offer courses and programs for teachers that contribute to accredited higher education qualifications.</p> <p>In addition, the area of postgraduate study must be directly relevant to the Professional Teaching Standards or the teacher's area of teaching (or future teaching if the teacher is retraining).</p>
Professional Development	The processes, activities and experiences that provide opportunities to extend teacher learning.
Professional Learning	Growth of teacher expertise that leads to improved student learning.
Professional Teaching Standards	A set of career-long standards that describe a teacher's knowledge, practice and commitment at four key stages – Graduate Teacher, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership.

Term	Meaning
Program	A professional development activity of more than 10 hours. It may comprise one or more courses.
Register	The online listing of Institute Endorsed providers and registered courses and programs.
Teacher Accreditation Authority (TAA)	A person or body authorised to determine if a teacher meets the requirements for accreditation at any level within the <i>Professional Teaching Standards</i> .
Teacher Identified Continuing Professional Development	Professional Development that may involve experiences similar to those in Institute Registered Continuing Professional Development. Activities in Teacher Identified continuing professional development can include conferences, workshops, forums, courses, professional reading, observations, in-house training, research, delivery of professional development, preparation of articles published in professional journals, working with industry and reflection activities. Teachers are required to select a variety of professional development activities from this category. This type of continuing professional development can be offered by either endorsed continuing professional development providers or other providers who have not been endorsed by the Institute.
Undergraduate Studies	<p>For the purposes of this policy, undergraduate studies are defined as those delivered by a university and other self-accrediting and non-self accrediting higher education institution within Categories II and III of the AQF register that offer courses and programs for teachers that contribute to accredited higher education qualifications.</p> <p>Undergraduate studies can comprise units within a degree or the full degree programs which do not require teachers to have undertaken university study in that area to enrol.</p> <p>The undergraduate study will need to be directly relevant to the Professional Teaching Standards and the area of their teaching, or future area of teaching if they are retraining.</p>

Term	Meaning
Unit	<p>A period or quantity of educational instruction delivered by a recognised tertiary institution*</p> <p>The validation is determined by the completion of study and the reporting of results by the institution to the teacher.</p> <p>* Must be a university or other self-accrediting or non-self accrediting higher education institution within Categories II and III of the AQF register.</p>

THE UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDY APPLICATION FORM

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Accreditation Number: _____

Teacher Accreditation Authority: _____

SECTION 1 – STUDY DETAILS (TITLE, INSTITUTION AND DURATION OF STUDY)

I _____ apply to undertake
(insert name of teacher)

undergraduate / postgraduate studies for the purpose of maintaining my accreditation
(cross out whichever does not apply)

at Professional Competence.

I intend to undertake the following study:

I will study at the following Institution:

Duration of program or subject: _____
(Number of weeks or months or years, commencement and completion dates)

Please attach the program outline for the qualification or subject.

This form should be completed by the teacher and signed by the teacher and Teacher Accreditation Authority or delegate.

PLEASE FORWARD COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

**THE NSW INSTITUTE OF TEACHERS
PO BOX A976
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235**

OR FAX 02 92686313

OR EMAIL contactus@nswteachers.nsw.edu.au

**SECTION 2 – RELEVANCE TO THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS,
RELEVANCE TO THE AREAS OF TEACHING OR FUTURE AREAS OF TEACHING IF
RETRAINING**

**PLEASE OUTLINE HOW THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDY OR POSTGRADUATE STUDY
IS RELEVANT TO YOUR AREAS OF TEACHING OR FUTURE AREAS OF TEACHING**

--

**PLEASE IDENTIFY THE STANDARDS YOU BELIEVE THE COURSE SUPPORTS AND
INDICATE HOW THE COURSE ADDRESSES THE STANDARDS.**

**THE PROGRAM OUTLINE YOU ATTACH TO THIS APPLICATION SHOULD REFLECT
THE STANDARD/S YOU IDENTIFY**

STANDARDS ADDRESSED	COMMENT

SECTION 3 – TEACHER AND TEACHER ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY DECLARATION

The signature of the Teacher

I _____
(insert name of teacher)

attest that the information I have provided in this application is true and accurate.

Teacher's name: _____
(please print)

Teacher's signature: _____

Date: _____

The signature of the Teacher Accreditation Authority or their delegate

I am aware that _____ is
(teacher's name)

undertaking the study.

Name of Teacher Accreditation Authority: _____
or their delegate (please print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Application for Recognition of Undergraduate or Postgraduate Studies During an Approved Period of Leave of Absence

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Accreditation Number: _____

Teacher Accreditation Authority: _____

Period of Leave of Absence: _____

SECTION 1- STUDY DETAILS (TITLE, INSTITUTION AND DURATION OF STUDY)

I _____ apply to undertake
(insert name of teacher)

undergraduate / postgraduate studies for the purpose of maintaining my accreditation
(cross out whichever does not apply)

at Professional Competence.

I intend to/have undertake the following study:

(circle relevant response)

Institution where study is to be undertaken/or is being undertaken:

Duration of program or subject: _____

(Number of weeks or months or years, commencement and completion dates)

Please attach:

- the program outline for the qualification or subject
- evidence of enrolment and completion of qualification or subject/s.

PLEASE FORWARD COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

**THE NSW INSTITUTE OF TEACHERS
PO BOX A976
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235**

OR FAX 02 92686313

OR EMAIL contactus@nswteachers.nsw.edu.au

**SECTION 2 – RELEVANCE TO THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS,
RELEVANCE TO THE AREAS OF TEACHING OR FUTURE AREAS OF TEACHING IF
RETRAINING**

**PLEASE OUTLINE HOW THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDY OR POSTGRADUATE STUDY
IS RELEVANT TO YOUR AREAS OF TEACHING OR FUTURE AREAS OF TEACHING**

--

**PLEASE IDENTIFY THE STANDARDS YOU BELIEVE THE COURSE SUPPORTS AND
INDICATE HOW THE COURSE ADDRESSES THE STANDARDS.**

**THE PROGRAM OUTLINE YOU ATTACH TO THIS APPLICATION SHOULD REFLECT
THE STANDARD/S YOU IDENTIFY**

STANDARDS ADDRESSED	COMMENT

SECTION 3 – TEACHER AND TEACHER ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY DECLARATION

The signature of the Teacher

I _____
(insert name of teacher)

attest that the information I have provided in this application is true and accurate.

Teacher's name: _____
(please print)

Teacher's signature: _____

Date: _____

The signature of the Teacher Accreditation Authority or their delegate

I am aware that _____ is
(teacher's name)

undertaking the study.

Name of Teacher Accreditation Authority: _____
or their delegate (please print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____