

# Maintaining Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher Accreditation Procedure

Information for early childhood and K-12 teachers

May 2024

# Information for teachers

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NESA oversees the system of accreditation and recognition of teachers' professional capacity against the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers \(the Standards\)](#) which includes the requirements and processes for maintaining HALT accreditation. The functions of NESA do not extend to industrial matters concerning teachers, such as the salaries or employment conditions of teachers.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with your employer's internal procedures.

## Why must Highly Accomplished or Lead Teachers maintain their accreditation?

As a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) you need to continue to demonstrate exemplary teaching practices that impact the learning of students/children and your colleagues.

You will maintain your accreditation by continuing to demonstrate, model, and lead innovative teaching and learning practices in relation to all of the applicable Standards.

## How long is an accreditation maintenance cycle?

<b>Full-time</b>	5 years
<b>Casual or part-time</b>	7 years

Teachers employed on a full-time basis have five years to complete maintenance requirements.

Teachers employed on a casual or part-time basis have seven years to complete maintenance requirements, in recognition of the nature of their employment. Teachers can provide evidence of employment to NESA to adjust their timeframe from five to seven years.

You are required to be engaged in the delivery of curriculum and assessment in a school/service for a period of time during your maintenance period. There is no requirement for a specified number of hours or teaching load.

All teachers must meet the conditions of accreditation set out in [Section 1 of the NSW Teacher Accreditation Manual](#) (the TA Manual) to become and remain accredited in NSW. Teachers accredited at HALT must also meet the conditions for maintaining HALT accreditation set out in [Section 7](#) of the TA Manual.

# Overview of the maintenance of Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher accreditation

## At a glance



## 1. Demonstrate consistent practice at Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher

Ensure your teaching practice continues to meet the Standards for [Highly Accomplished](#) or [Lead Teacher](#) by performing a range of professional activities and practices in the normal course of your work, such as:

- critical reflection of your own practice
- sharing of exemplary teaching practices and support of the professional growth of colleagues
- implementing evidence-based best practices that maximise learning opportunities for students/children
- ongoing engagement in professional development
- delivery of curriculum and assessment in a school/service.

### Casual teacher tips

If you are a casual teacher, you should approach the principal/service director at the school/service where you most often teach to seek support for meeting your maintenance requirements. You will need to actively participate in relevant professional activities.

You can download your [HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report](#) from the NESA website at any time to start recording how you continue to maintain the Standards.

## 2. Meet your professional development requirements

By the end of your maintenance period you must have completed a minimum of 100 hours of PD aligned to the Standards.

### Engage in a balance of PD activities aligned to the Standards

You are responsible for identifying your Professional Development (PD) needs and planning your learning throughout your maintenance period. Engaging in a wide range of PD activities will ensure a balanced approach towards your professional growth.

NESA has developed the NESA Professional Development Framework to help you identify types of PD activities that best suit your professional needs and context.

## Record your PD

You must retain a PD log for 12 months after the end of your maintenance period. You can log your PD in your NESA online account ([eTAMS](#)) or keep a personal record. An optional template for logging PD on NESA's website.

In your PD log you must record the following required information:

- date of PD activity
- Standard(s) addressed
- duration of activity
- PD activity type
- name of PD activity
- priority area (if applicable)
- provider name (if applicable)

As part of NESA's quality assurance processes NESA will conduct random audits of teachers' PD records after they have submitted their maintenance. If you are audited, you will need to provide your record within 28 days. Teachers who fail to provide the PD log within the required timeframe risk [suspension](#) of their accreditation. More details on NESA's auditing processes can be found on [our website](#).

## 3. Final steps in the last three months of each maintenance period

### Complete your HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report

- Download your [HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report](#) from the NESA website.
- Your HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report must be submitted to your principal/service director within the final three months of your maintenance period.

Your report needs to:

- include an overview of the context and background of your practice that demonstrates impact on student learning outcomes and the practice of your colleagues
- include at least three examples of impact on learning outcomes of students/children and impact on the practice of colleagues.

In your report you must make sure that you describe how your practice has been informed and improved by professional development activities over the maintenance period.

The maintenance report you write must be between 2500 and 5000 words in total.

You must sign, date, and keep a copy of the report.

### Include three to five referees in your report

You will need to include three to five referees with your report.

- The principal/service director you currently work with must be included as one of your referees.
- The other referees must be colleagues who can attest that you have applied current knowledge and depth of practice throughout your maintenance period. You should ensure that you have

sought their agreement to being a referee and that they understand what is required.

- NESAs will contact at least one of your referees before making the accreditation decision.

## Submit your report to your principal/service director

You can submit your maintenance to your principal/service director if you have met all the requirements.

You should submit the HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report to your principal/service director by email.

Your principal/service director must review the report and attest that:

- your maintenance report is an accurate reflection of your teaching practice and
- your ongoing performance is satisfactory.

Your principal/service director will email a signed copy of your report to NESAs at [HALEnquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au](mailto:HALEnquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au) for an accreditation decision.

## 4. NESAs make the accreditation decision

The final part of the process is the accreditation decision, which is made by NESAs, within 28 days of receiving your principal/service director's attestation. NESAs's decision will be based on:

- your completed HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report
- your principal/service director's attestation; and
- your declaration in your NESAs online account (eTAMS) that you have met the PD requirements.

### Starting a new maintenance period

You will be notified of the accreditation decision by email. Where NESAs decides that you have maintained your accreditation, you will start a new maintenance period the day after your current period ends.

# **‘What if’ scenarios for teachers**

## **What if I am a principal/service director maintaining accreditation at HALT?**

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You must still meet the requirements for maintenance and complete a HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Report. You cannot self-attest or act as a referee on your own behalf.

If your line manager is accredited at Proficient Teacher or above they can review the report and attest that:

- your maintenance report is an accurate reflection of your teaching practice and
- your ongoing performance is satisfactory.

They will also act as one of your referees and you should ensure they understand what may be asked of them.

Where your line manager is not accredited, [contact](#) NESA.

## **What if my principal/service director identifies an issue(s) with my practice that may impact my accreditation?**

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The principal/service director must inform you and your employer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any issue(s).

Work with your principal/service director to resolve the issue(s) they have identified.

The principal/service director can attest at any time during your maintenance period that your practice does not meet the Standards for Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher and advise NESA.

## **What if I am due to submit my maintenance and I have not met my PD requirements?**

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Refer to the NESA Professional Development Framework to help you select PD activities appropriate to your needs and context. Check the [NESA website](#) for PD courses.

You can apply to NESA for an extension to your timeframe in certain circumstances.

You can do this in the final six months before your due date, providing evidence of the grounds for your extension request.

Grounds for an extension of a teacher’s accreditation timeframe include:

- illness and misadventure
- carer responsibilities
- undertaking further study; or
- other applicable professional or individual circumstances.

## **What if my principal/service director intends to attest that my performance is unsatisfactory and/or my Report does not accurately reflect my practice at HALT?**

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If you have worked at the school/service for less than three months your principal/service director must contact your previous school/service (subject to your consent) before attesting that you have not

maintained your practice in relation to the Standards.

You will receive a written notification from your principal/service director outlining the reason(s) and any Standard Descriptors that you have not met. You have the right to respond to the written notice within 28 days and address the issues identified.

The principal/service director will review your written response and make an attestation.

NESA will review all relevant documentation and make an accreditation decision and advise you of its decision.

## **What if my principal/service director attests that my performance is unsatisfactory and/or my Report does not accurately reflect my practice at HALT?**

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If your principal/service director attests that your performance has been unsatisfactory and/or your Report does not reflect practice at the relevant career level of HALT:

- NESA will contact all of your nominated referees
- NESA will contact you and your principal/service director, requesting further information and documentation to inform their decision
- NESA will review all relevant documentation and make an accreditation decision within 28 days of the attestation and advise you of the decision.

## **What if NESA has made the decision that I have not maintained accreditation at HALT?**

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If NESA decides that you have not maintained your practice at HALT and you still have time left in your maintenance timeframe, you have a number of options:

- You may choose to stop maintaining accreditation at HALT and return to accreditation at Proficient Teacher. You must then meet the maintenance requirements at Proficient Teacher and you must notify NESA in writing of your decision. Your maintenance end date will not change.
- You can resubmit your HALT maintenance to a different principal/service director who you have worked with during your maintenance period to consider your report.
- If you are close to, or have reached, the end of your maximum timeframe you may have grounds to apply to NESA for an [extension](#).

If you have reached the end of your maintenance timeframe and NESA finds that you have failed to maintain your accreditation, NESA will issue a 14 days' written notice of an intention to suspend your HALT accreditation. (The 14 days' written notice period includes school holidays and employer shutdown periods.)

A NESA officer will provide you with further advice about next steps.

You can apply to NESA for an [internal review](#) of a decision that you have not maintained your accreditation.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for a review of NESA's decision.

## What if my principal/service director is unable to make an attestation about my practice at HALT?

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In limited circumstances your principal/service director will advise NESAs that they are unable to make an attestation about your HALT accreditation. The circumstances are:

- you have not worked in the school/service for long enough to allow the principal/service director to confidently make a judgement about your practice and/or
- information provided by your previous school/service (where applicable and subject to consent from you) has not assisted the principal/service director in making a valid and reliable judgement.

If you have worked at the school/service for less than three months your principal/service director must contact your previous school/service (subject to your consent) before recording that they are unable to make an attestation about your practice. If you do not give consent for your principal/service director to contact your previous principal/service director, your principal/service director is likely to make an attestation that they 'are unable to make an attestation'.

If the principal/service director is unable to make an accreditation attestation, they will send you a written notice about this.

You should read the comments and discuss how you can address the reasons the principal/service director has given for not being able to make an attestation.

You will be able to resubmit your report within your timeframe, or you can contact NESAs for further advice.

If you are close to, or have reached, the end of your maximum timeframe you may have grounds to apply to NESAs for an [extension](#).

## Can I nominate to return to a lower level of teacher accreditation?

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You can return to Proficient Teacher level at any stage, (or to Highly Accomplished Teacher in the case of Lead Teachers who were previously accredited at Highly Accomplished Teacher). To return to a lower level of accreditation, you must advise NESAs in writing.

When you return to a lower level of accreditation, your maintenance period end date will not change. You must continue to meet the maintenance of accreditation requirements for the relevant level of accreditation.



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# NSW Education Standards Authority

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