

Applying for Proficient Teacher Accreditation Procedure

Information for K-12 principals

May 2024

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Information for principals

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 achieving Proficient Teacher. The functions of NESA do not extend to industrial matters concerning teachers, such as the salaries or employment conditions of teachers.

This document outlines the procedures for principals supporting teachers working towards Proficient Teacher accreditation and making accreditation recommendations. Each of the steps is further described in the supporting resources which are linked to throughout this document. These procedures should be read in conjunction with your employer's internal procedures.

What is Proficient Teacher accreditation?

Teachers enter the profession provisionally or conditionally accredited and develop their teaching practice as they work towards achieving the mandatory accreditation level of Proficient Teacher.

Proficient Teacher accreditation is a school-based process that supports teachers to develop their practice aligned with [the Standards](#). It is a structured school-based process where teachers are supported by their colleagues, schools and the profession.

Provisionally and conditionally accredited teachers develop their practice throughout their daily work in a school by participating in a range of professional activities. Teachers engage in professional activities across the three domains of teaching: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement.

Principals play an important role in the accreditation process by supporting teachers and Accreditation Supervisors to meet NESA's requirements for accreditation at Proficient Teacher.

You can delegate your responsibility

Principals may delegate responsibility for making accreditation recommendations to a teacher(s) in the school who is accredited at Proficient Teacher or above. They cannot delegate this responsibility to a third party outside the school. They must advise NESA of the delegation at tsapincipalenquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

Key responsibilities

Principals are responsible for:

- allocating Accreditation Supervisors. NESA recommends allocating an Accreditation Supervisor as soon as possible after the teacher is employed at your school, regardless of whether the teacher is full time, part time or a regular casual.
- making a recommendation to NESA about accreditation at Proficient Teacher which forms the basis of NESA's accreditation decision.

Overview of the principal's role in Proficient Teacher accreditation

At a glance



1. Allocate an Accreditation Supervisor

Allocate an Accreditation Supervisor in eTAMS

Allocate an Accreditation Supervisor in your NESA online account (eTAMS) to support the Provisional or Conditional teacher. Once this has been done, the Accreditation Supervisor will see an 'Accreditation Supervisor' dashboard in their NESA online account (eTAMS) and a task to accept the allocation.

When the Accreditation Supervisor accepts the allocation in their NESA online account (eTAMS) the teacher will be notified.

An Accreditation Supervisor must:

- be accredited at Proficient Teacher or above
- have sound knowledge of the teacher's in-school/in-service daily practice in relation to the Standards, and
- provide ongoing support and feedback to the teacher on their practice throughout the accreditation period.

Guide to Accreditation Supervisor allocation

As a guide, a minimum of 160 days of teaching should give a provisionally or conditionally accredited teacher adequate opportunity to meet the accreditation requirements.

Principals play an important role to ensure teachers working towards Proficient Teacher are allocated an appropriate Accreditation Supervisor and are provided ongoing support and timely feedback about their practice.

Review your employer's internal procedures with your Accreditation Supervisors

Make sure you and your Accreditation Supervisors are familiar with your employer's internal procedures relating to implementing NESA's requirements for gaining Proficient Teacher accreditation.

2. Support teachers to develop their practice

Encourage completion of the online orientation course

Encourage Provisional or Conditional teachers who are new to your school to read NESAs welcome pack and complete NESAs mandatory online Proficient Teacher Orientation Course. This should be part of any induction program you have at your school.

Review NESAs online accreditation courses

Encourage your Accreditation Supervisors to complete NESAs [online courses](#) for Accreditation Supervisors and the Making Consistent Proficient Teacher Accreditation Decisions course to learn more about their role and responsibilities as an Accreditation Supervisor and to understand the characteristics of effective documentary evidence when supporting teachers through their accreditation process.

Show Accreditation Supervisors where to access guides and resources to help them on the [NESAs website](#).

Support the teacher and Accreditation Supervisor to address any readiness concerns

Work with your Accreditation Supervisor if they have questions about the readiness of the teacher to submit their application, or about their declaration.

3. Make your recommendation

Accreditation Supervisor makes a declaration

When the Accreditation Supervisor makes a holistic judgement that the teacher's practice aligns to all 37 Standard Descriptors at the Proficient Teacher level, they will make a declaration and you will be notified in your NESAs online account (eTAMS).

Make your accreditation recommendation

Make your recommendation in your NESAs online account (eTAMS) within 28 days of the Accreditation Supervisor's declaration, based on the:

- annotated documentary evidence
- observation report
- Accreditation Supervisor's declaration.

You may ask for revisions (more than once, if necessary) to the application through your NESAs online account (eTAMS) before you make your recommendation. This will notify the Accreditation Supervisor who should continue to support the teacher to meet the requirements and address the revisions you have requested.

If you ask for revisions, the Accreditation Supervisor will need to make a new declaration before you make your recommendation. You will have 28 days from that new declaration to make your recommendation.

You may wish to seek advice from a teacher with appropriate expertise in another school or who is employed by a third party outside the school to assist you to make a valid and reliable judgement about the teacher's practice against the Standards.

4. NESAs make the accreditation decision

NESA makes an accreditation decision

The final part of the process is the accreditation decision, which is made by NESA within 28 days of the principal's recommendation. The teacher will be notified of the accreditation decision by email.

The first maintenance of accreditation begins

If NESA accredits the teacher at Proficient Teacher, they will start their first [maintenance period](#) on the day the accreditation decision is made, and NESA will issue them a certificate.

You and your employer will receive an email advising you of the decision for the teacher's Proficient Teacher application.

You will be able to view their accreditation status in your NESA online account (eTAMS).

‘What if’ scenarios for principals

What if the Accreditation Supervisor advises me of issues with the teacher’s practice aligned to the Proficient Teacher Standards?

Support the Accreditation Supervisor to have ongoing discussions with the teacher to give feedback and develop a plan to specifically address the Standard Descriptors they are yet to demonstrate.

If a significant issue arises that may impact your accreditation recommendation, the Accreditation Supervisor must advise you and the teacher in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of the issue(s). Written notices cannot be sent in your NESAs online account (eTAMS) – refer to your employer’s internal procedures for how to do this.

Read the written notice and determine whether the issues will impact your accreditation recommendation.

Discuss with the Accreditation Supervisor a plan to continue supporting the teacher to meet the accreditation requirements.

What if the Accreditation Supervisor has made a declaration that the teacher does not meet the Proficient Teacher Standards?

If the Accreditation Supervisor makes a declaration that the teacher has not demonstrated the practice at the Proficient Teacher Standards, they must provide evaluative comments in their NESAs online account (eTAMS) which outline:

- the issues
- the Standard Descriptors not yet demonstrated
- the feedback and support offered to the teacher
- the teacher’s response to the feedback and support.

You should review:

- the Accreditation Supervisor’s declaration, including the evaluative comments
- the teacher’s annotated documentary evidence
- the observation report.

Within 28 days from receiving the declaration, you may:

- ask for revisions through your NESAs online account (eTAMS). (If you ask for revisions, the Accreditation Supervisor will need to make a new declaration and you will have 28 days from the new declaration to make a recommendation.)
- make a recommendation to accredit
- make a recommendation to not accredit
- record that you are unable to make an accreditation recommendation.

What if I determine that the teacher’s practice does not meet the Standards at Proficient Teacher?

If the teacher’s practice does not meet the Proficient Teacher Standards, you may decide to make a recommendation to not accredit the teacher at Proficient Teacher.

You will only be able to make a recommendation to not accredit if:

- the teacher has completed at least 160 days of teaching
- the Accreditation Supervisor has fulfilled their responsibilities
- you have contacted the teacher's previous school, where relevant
- you have given the teacher the opportunity to revise their evidence and meet the requirements for accreditation at Proficient Teacher and the teacher has failed to do so.

Give the teacher written notice of your intention to make a recommendation to not accredit at Proficient Teacher within 28 days of the Accreditation Supervisor making their declaration. Written notices cannot be sent in your NESA online account (eTAMS) – refer to your employer's internal procedures for how to do this.

Your notice needs to include specific reasons for the recommendation and the Standard Descriptor(s) that the teacher has not met and their right to respond to the notice.

Allow the teacher 28 days to respond to your written notice.

If the teacher has responded to your written notice, consider the response and determine whether there is reason to change your recommendation. You have 28 days from your notification to the teacher to make your recommendation in your NESA online account (eTAMS). If your recommendation is to not accredit, you will need to include your reasons for your recommendation and provide evidence to NESA that you have followed your employer's internal procedures in line with the [NSW Teacher Accreditation Manual](#).

If the teacher has not responded, 28 days after sending the written notice, make your recommendation in your NESA online account (eTAMS). If your recommendation is to not accredit, you will need to include your reasons for your recommendation and NESA may request evidence that you have followed your employer's internal procedures in line with the [NSW Teacher Accreditation Manual](#).

If NESA considers making a decision that does not align with the recommendation, NESA will contact the principal and, if necessary, the teacher, to discuss the recommendation before making a decision.

If NESA makes a decision to not accredit, the Proficient Teacher's application will be closed. The teacher will continue to be provisionally or conditionally accredited and can resubmit a new application at a later date as long as they are still within their accreditation timeframe.

Teachers who are close to, or have reached, the end of their maximum timeframe may have grounds to apply to NESA for an extension to their timeframe. If they reach the end of their timeframe without achieving Proficient Teacher they risk their accreditation being ceased by NESA.

What if I determine that I am unable to make an accreditation recommendation?

You can record in your NESA online account (eTAMS) that you are unable to make a recommendation about accreditation if:

- the teacher has not completed at least 160 days of teaching during their accreditation period
- the teacher has not worked in your school for long enough to allow you to confidently make a judgement about the teacher's practice and/or
- you have made enquiries of the teacher's previous school (if applicable, and if the teacher has given you their consent) and this has not helped you to make a valid and reliable judgement.

You must record that you are unable to make a recommendation within 28 days of the Accreditation Supervisor's declaration.

The teacher's application will be reopened. The teacher can respond to the reason(s) why you cannot make a recommendation or seek support to finalise their accreditation with the school or another school.

NSW Education Standards Authority

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