

Maintaining Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Accreditation Procedure

Information for early childhood and K-12 teachers

October 2024

Information for teachers

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 and 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.

To maintain HALT accreditation, teachers in a school/early childhood service will continue to engage in the delivery of NSW curriculum and assessment or the Early Years Learning Framework aligned with the Standards at the relevant level.

If you are in a non-school/service based role (including in a non-teaching role in a school/service), you may continue to maintain your HALT accreditation if your role allows you to continue to demonstrate your practice at the relevant HALT level, and your employer (or their delegate) can verify your practice during your maintenance period.

How long is an accreditation maintenance cycle?

Full-time	5 years
Casual or part-time	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.

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 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 NSW curriculum/Early Years Learning Framework and assessment in a school/service
- developing curriculum that is implemented in schools/services
- delivering professional development programs to teachers who can implement their learning into their teaching practice to enhance the learning of their students/children.

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.

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 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 personal record for the completed PD activities for 12 months after the end of your maintenance period. You can record your PD in any format you prefer, including in your NESA online account ([eTAMS](#)) or using the optional [template](#) for logging PD available on NESA's website.

Using the format of your choice, your PD record must include 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).

Audit of PD records

As part of NESA's quality assurance processes, NESA will conduct audits of randomly selected teachers' PD records after they have submitted their maintenance. If you are audited, you will need to provide your record to NESA 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

Finalise your HALT maintenance accreditation

- Download the [HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form](#) from the NESA website
- You must submit the form to your principal/service director/employer within the final three months of your maintenance period for their verification of your practice aligned with the relevant HALT Standards.

On your form, you must declare and sign that you have:

- met all the maintenance requirements during your current maintenance period
- kept a record of your completed PD activities, and are able to provide it to NESA within 28 days in the event that you are audited.

Submit your form to your principal/service director/employer

After you complete your part of the form, provide a copy of the form to your principal/service director/employer by email for their verification.

Your principal/service director/employer will verify either that:

- your practice continues to demonstrate the relevant Standards aligned with your level of accreditation

- your practice does not meet the relevant Standards aligned with your level of accreditation
- they cannot verify your practice.

Your principal/service director/employer must email the completed and signed form to NESA by the end of your current maintenance period at HALenquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au for an accreditation decision.

4. NESA makes the accreditation decision

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

- your declaration; and
- your principal/service director/employer's verification.

Starting a new maintenance period

You will be notified of the accreditation decision by email. Where NESA 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?

You must still meet the requirements for maintenance and complete a HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form.

If your line manager is accredited at Proficient Teacher or above they can verify your practice aligned with the relevant Standards of your level of accreditation.

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

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

At any time during your maintenance period, if your principal/service director/employer identifies an issue with your practice not meeting the Standards at HALT, they must inform you (and your employer, where relevant) in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any issue(s).

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

The principal/service director/employer is obligated to notify NESA if, following support and a formal performance process, it was determined that your practice does not meet the Standards for Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher.

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

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/employer intends to verify that my practice does not continue to meet the Standards at HALT?

If you have worked at the school/service/employer for less than three months your principal/service director/employer must contact your previous school/service/employer (subject to your consent) before verifying that you have not maintained your practice in relation to the Standards at Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher.

You will receive a written notification from your principal/service director/employer 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/employer will review your written response and make a verification.

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

What if my principal/service director/employer verifies that my practice does not meet the Standards at HALT?

If your principal/service director/employer verifies that your practice does not meet the Standards at the relevant career level of HALT, NESA will:

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

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

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
- resubmit your HALT maintenance of accreditation form to a different principal/service director/employer who you have worked with during your maintenance period to make the verification
- have grounds to apply to NESA for an [extension](#) if you need more time.

14-day notice to suspend HALT accreditation

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 excludes school holidays and employer shutdown periods.

Final notice to suspend HALT accreditation

If issues remain unresolved or you still have not met the maintenance requirements by the end of the 14-day notice, NESA will notify you and your employer of the suspension of your HALT accreditation.

If your accreditation is suspended you cannot be employed to teach in any registered school or approved centre-based early childhood service.

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/employer is unable to make a verification about my practice at HALT?

In limited circumstances your principal/service director/employer will advise NESAs that they are unable to make a verification about your HALT accreditation. These circumstances are:

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

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

If the principal/service director/employer is unable to make an accreditation verification, 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/employer has given for not being able to make a verification.

You will be able to resubmit your maintenance form if you have time left in your maintenance period or you can contact NESAs for further advice.

If you need more time, you may have grounds to apply to NESAs for an [extension](#).

Can I nominate to return to my previous level of accreditation?

You can return to Proficient Teacher level at any stage, (or return 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 your previous 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.

NSW Education Standards Authority

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