



Public submission made to the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools

Submitter: Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network Steering
Group
Submitting as a: Other (Steering Group)
State: NT

Summary

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- Nationally certified teachers have greater impact on student achievement
- National certification of teachers at the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher standards is a system enabler that can help drive student success
- The number of Highly Accomplished and Lead certified teachers across Australia needs to increase.

Strategies to help increase the number of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers are:

- Use the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) standards from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to define effective teaching
- Support education authorities in non-participating jurisdictions to make certification available, to create a consistent approach nationally to recognising expert teachers
- Support existing HALTs through the HALT network to build an evidence base to understand and share the impact of nationally certified teachers
- Support jurisdictions and the HALT network to ensure nationally certified teachers are being used effectively in schools and share models that best utilise these teachers.

Main submission

Submission for the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools
by the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network Steering Group

Contact: November 2017

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Lead teacher

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Response to two review themes:

- Teachers and school leadership
- Identifying, sharing and driving good practice and continuous improvement

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The Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Network

The Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Network is the first of its kind in Australia, bringing together all teachers nationally certified as being at the Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stage. This is a new professional network to enable certified teachers to develop expertise with like-minded professionals from across Australia and work together to share the collective expertise of the Network with the broader profession. The Network is an initiative of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) as the Australian Government looks to further improve and promote quality teaching across the country and support the retention of early career teachers in the profession. The HALT network steering

group brings together HALT teachers, principals and certifying authorities from across Australia to lead the way for the HALT network.

What is National Certification?

The Australian Professional Standards for teachers are used to underpin a national approach to initial teacher education, with teacher graduates needing to satisfy the graduate standards to enter the profession. Practising teachers use the Proficient standards to gain and renew full teacher registration, managed at a state/territory level. National Certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stage is a voluntary process aimed at developing, recognising and supporting excellent practitioners. The Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher career stages in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers represents increasing levels of professional knowledge, practice and engagement for teachers. Applicants closely examine their own practice and receive feedback on their practice against the career stage they have applied for. Each jurisdiction across Australia has one or more bodies managing the certification process known as the certifying authority. Certification is portable, allowing teachers to maintain their certification status as they move through jurisdictions. However, currently not all jurisdictions across Australia recognise the HALT career stages.

The Impact of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in schools

The biggest in school influence on student achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. Expert teachers are distinguished from experienced teachers and it is expert teachers who have the greatest impact. Certified teachers are expert classroom practitioners who have a greater impact on students, other teachers and school communities and students whose teacher is nationally certified make larger gains. Certified teachers are lifelong learners who exhibit expert characteristics and are seriously committed to improving teaching and learning. A group of certified teachers in a school can have a significant impact on the teaching community. They can change the professional culture of their schools and improve the climate of teachers' learning and reflection. Nationally certified teachers are more collaborative and collaborative cultures are powerful in terms of their impact on student achievement. They are also a predictor of collective teacher efficacy beliefs and the more robust the sense of collective efficacy the greater impact on student achievement. Collaboration that is frequent, formal and focused on instructional improvement makes the greatest impact, as it is these shared interactions that lay the foundations for collective efficacy. According to Hattie "all students deserve the best teaching because among school related factors, teachers have the greatest impact on student performance. We need a collective solution and having these highly accomplishing lead teachers working alongside principals is what's aimed to make a big difference to the quality of schooling".

How can the number of HALTs increase in schools?

Australian students need and want the best teachers in the classroom and national certification is an effective way to get them there. Currently there are approximately 370 Highly Accomplished or Lead teachers in schools across Australia and this number needs to increase. Strategies to help are:

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Conclusion

The key areas addressed by the HALT steering group are:

- Teachers and school leadership
- Identifying, sharing and driving good practice and continuous improvement

The HALT steering group believes that having nationally certified teachers in every school will achieve the best educational opportunities for all Australian students.

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