

Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALTs) can play an essential role in Initial Teacher Education including attracting and retaining high quality teachers and in building the overall status of the teaching profession.

National certification is a rigorous and nationally consistent process that recognises expertise in professional knowledge, practice and engagement. In attaining HALT certification, or accreditation as it's known in NSW, individuals have provided evidence of their impact on improving the classroom practice of practicum students, beginning teachers and their colleagues and in turn improving student outcomes.

HALTs can play three essential roles in ITE (and beyond).

1. **Supporting ITE supervisors and programs.** In attaining Certification HALTs have demonstrated expertise in the analysis, implementation and assessment of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). While it would be ideal to have a HALT in every school working alongside school-based and university employed ITE supervisors current numbers (around 800 across Australia) does not make this viable. HALTs can however contribute to the training and professional learning of ITE supervisors by sharing their expertise of the APSTs and coaching supervisors in hubs or co-horts, in partnership with universities. HALTs can lead system level professional learning for school-based supervisors and contribute to nationally consistent modules and resources to support teachers supervising ITE students. Some HALTs already contribute to ITE programs as guest lecturers or part-time tutors however a more systematic approach to utilising the expertise of HALTs during programming, not just in delivery, could be of benefit to ITE providers.
2. **Mentoring beginning teachers to stay in the classroom.** HALTs can play a formal role in supporting beginning teachers, and school-based mentors, through sharing their expertise in classroom focused/practice-based mentoring. Beginning teachers who have a quality mentoring program are more likely to stay in the profession beyond five years. While mentoring and/or coaching of beginning teachers occurs in many schools the expertise of the mentors and quality of programs vary greatly, the induction and mentoring of beginning teachers can't be left to chance. A system wide approach utilising HALT expertise across schools, that goes beyond induction, will assist in not only building quality teaching but also in retaining high performing teachers.
3. **Raising the status of the teaching profession.** The process of National Certification can play a role in attracting high performing students to teaching through the acknowledgement of expertise within the profession. The Australian public recognises 'top lawyers', 'top surgeons', 'top athletes' who are acknowledged, paid more and utilised to build the expertise/talents of others in their profession. Yet, systems are reluctant to acknowledge that some teachers have a greater impact than others. With the exception of some 'celebrity teachers' there is no public recognition for 'top teachers'. HALT certification identifies those teachers who demonstrate expertise in teaching. Through greater acknowledgment of HALTs, including expert teacher pathways with increased remuneration, the status of the teaching profession can be elevated to that of other professions and therefore make teaching more attractive to school leavers.

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