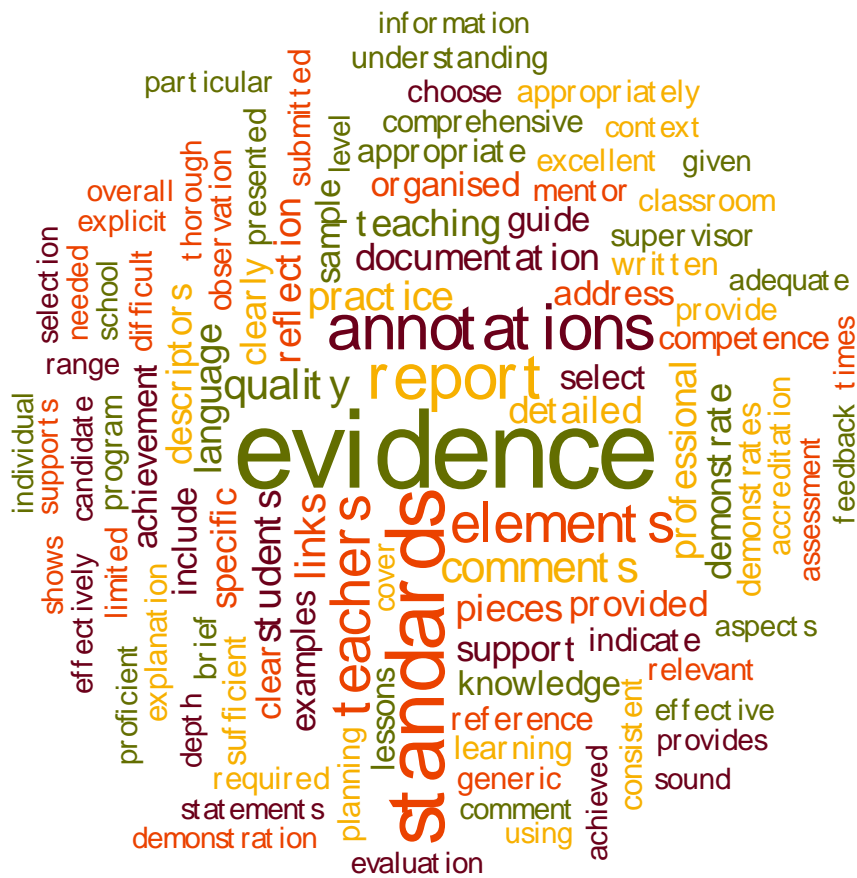


# The **BEST** They Can Be

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## Acknowledgements

The review is grateful to Matthew Glen and Katherine Haines for undertaking the many hours of tedious work needed to code the samples of evidence upon which many of the findings of this review are based.

The cover graphic is a 'Word cloud' constructed using nVivo indicating the words most frequently used by external assessors.

The **BEST** They Can Be.

Report prepared for the Quality Teaching Council, NSW Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards

Dr Bruce Mowbray  
February, 2016.





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## Executive summary

The contexts in which teaching occurs are almost infinitely variable being dependent upon the teacher's capacity; the learning environment; the content, skills and values being taught; and differences amongst students including differences in socio cultural and economic backgrounds, differences amongst students' personalities, general ability and prior learning experiences. Though no two classrooms are alike, the one constant in this milieu is the impact of teaching on learning.

While it is widely accepted that effective teachers impact positively on the futures of young people, less effective teachers also leave their indelible imprint on the young people they teach. Research has shown that poor teaching has insidious and long term consequences for students impacting on their ability to attain their full potential.

Although teachers work with groups of students, they are increasingly being held accountable for the progress of individuals. Consequently, the parameters and characteristics that define effective teaching practice are much more difficult to codify than in other professions. Nonetheless the establishment of an accreditation framework founded on professional standards that set out expectations of the knowledge, skills and values of effective practitioners provides a basis for making judgements about effective practice and fitness to practice.

This review has provided the opportunities to investigate current practices associated with judgements about fitness to practice and the nature of effective practice amongst early career teachers and returning teachers being accredited at Proficient<sup>1</sup> teacher level.

The data investigated was extensive involving 26 202 external assessor assessments of submissions of evidence and accreditation reports for candidates accredited at Proficient teacher over the period 2005-2014, and a sample of 2 513 submissions of evidence presented by candidates.

The main findings of the review are:

1. generally, teachers presenting for accreditation are well able to demonstrate achievement of the standards. Consistently, across the wide range of analysis reported, more than 80 per cent of candidates were judicious in their choice of a range of evidence forms and the descriptors they addressed.

External assessor commentary indicates candidates who first selected several descriptors and then high quality evidence demonstrating those descriptors appeared to mount a stronger case for accreditation than candidates who selected evidence and then ascribed descriptors to it.

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: The terminology Professional competence was introduced with the NSW Professional Teaching Standards in 2004. It was replaced by the term Proficient teacher when the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers were adopted in 2012. The terms Standards and Elements introduced in 2004 were replaced by the terms Descriptors and standards. For the purpose of this report the terms Proficient teacher, Descriptors and Standards are used throughout.

2. the majority of accreditation authorities appear also to be meeting their statutory obligations in their accreditation of early career and returning teachers. In the main, accreditation reports provide clear evidence of the candidate's practice against the standards.
3. External assessor ratings of evidence and accreditation vary across groups disaggregated by gender, geolocation, stage of schooling, school sector and year of accreditation. Importantly there has been a steady increase in external assessor ratings over time suggesting candidates and supervisors have become more familiar with the standards and how to address them in their practice.

An apparent three-way effect across primary and secondary settings, school sector and year of accreditation was investigated. This investigation found most variation occurred in the rating of primary candidates. These findings raise two issues for consideration:

- an apparent need for school authorities to review current accreditation practices in their schools
  - support materials need to be customised to reflect differences in teaching contexts, specifically differences in the practices of primary and secondary schools. The imminent implementation of requirements for accreditation of Early Childhood teachers is pertinent in this regard.
4. Significant numbers of candidates are providing more evidence than needed to demonstrate achievement of the standards, and as a consequence compromising their capacity to argue the case for their accreditation. Other candidates are attempting to link too many descriptors to individual items of evidence. In some cases, the linkage of descriptors to evidence appears largely unsubstantiated.

Revised requirements for presenting evidence are needed to direct candidates towards demonstrating more holistic understandings of practice, enabling them to further develop to the point where they are able to manage the multiple complexities of their role while maintaining the focus on student learning.

A discernible deficiency in many submissions of evidence was inadequate demonstration of impact on student learning. There may be a need for improved guidance for candidates in this area.

5. The mapping of evidence forms against descriptors provides guidance to future candidates about the forms of evidence that can be used best to demonstrate specific descriptors.
6. There is a need to review current quality assurance arrangements, including:
  - the criteria used to assess the quality and consistency of the judgements of evidence and accreditation reports against the standards. The criteria for rating accreditation reports do not discriminate sufficiently
  - undertaking a study of interrater reliability
  - changing the way external assessors are assigned to candidate's evidence and accreditation reports. Current policies require external assessors to be appointed from the same school sector, stage of schooling and teaching area. This practice has the potential to facilitate systematic bias in the rating of submissions of evidence and accreditation reports. Further, it acts against the dissemination of good practice across stages of schooling and school sectors
  - establishing an effective and timely feedback system to both candidates and Teacher Accreditation Authorities to improve current practice and militate against identified

deficiencies in the presentation of evidence, the writing of accreditation reports and the determination of accreditation decisions.

7. The most effective way of improving the capacity of candidates and consequently the learning that occurs in their classrooms is through improving the quality of supervision and supervisors. The review found little evidence amongst some submissions and accreditation reports of supervisor's involvement in the process including their support of candidates seeking accreditation. Policies adopted by some schools appear to have the effect of shifting the onus of responsibility for accreditation to the candidate.

There is an apparent need for explicit training of supervisors in accreditation and support requirements.

8. There is evidence that the original developmental intent of accreditation is being supplanted by a culture of compliance. The review of quality assurance arrangements outlined above should have at its core a refocusing of accreditation processes and outcomes on teacher development.

The findings above establish a basis for meaningful reform of current arrangements for accrediting and supporting teachers at Proficient teacher level. Such reforms need to be well considered and their nature and purpose effectively communicated to candidates and those in schools responsible for supporting them and determining accreditation decision.

Finally, the teaching profession cannot rely on happenstance for the quality of its members and although accreditation provides a framework for assuring and demonstrating the quality of teaching, real improvements in the quality of teaching require the support of school authorities and the profession. Both have a role to play in supporting the next generation of teachers to be the best they can be.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That the requirements for Proficient Teacher accreditation be made more explicit**, including:
  - A list of required items of evidence
  - A firm page limit, limitations to the number of items of evidence and the number of descriptors addressed by individual items of evidence
  - Suggestions as to which types of evidence are most appropriate for each Standard Descriptor, such as a summary table in the Evidence Guide and/or on the website
2. **That the process of accreditation be moved online**. The online system to include:
  - online templates to assist teachers in presenting their evidence and annotations
  - algorithms that ensure compliance with evidentiary requirements
  - capabilities that enable teachers to progressively develop, view and amend evidence
  - requirements for teachers and supervisors to certify that the evidence presented is their own work.
3. **That the External Assessor (EA) process be improved**, including:
  - Moving the EA process online and into eTAMS to improve efficiency and reporting capabilities
  - Reviewing and renewing the training, guidelines and resources to support EA analysis of and feedback on reviewed reports
  - A review of the EA Report template
  - Development of processes to monitor the consistency of EA Reports including conducting a sample of double blind assessments and a regular 'control' to be distributed to all EAs to assess consistency of EA judgements and training needs
  - Cross sectoral review of Reports and evidence to improve consistency and reliability.
4. **That lesson observations be specified as an accreditation requirement** in addition to the Supervisor's Report and the annotated items of evidence. A mandatory template should be

provided for the lesson observations to improve consistency and alignment of observations with the requirements of Proficient teacher standards.

5. **That the BOSTES credential Proficient Teacher Supervisors who meet pre-determined requirements.** Possibilities include:
  - A BOSTES developed online QTC registered training program for Supervisors
  - Professional development provided by QTC registered providers
  - Post graduate courses that include appropriate mentor/supervisor training.
6. **That regular feedback to TAAs is developed, in consultation with TAAs and their Authorised Persons,** including:
  - Annual reporting of EA feedback to TAAs
  - Direct communication of issues identified in Stage 2 of the BOSTES Policy Officer review
  - A review of the Guidelines for the Regulation of TAAs, as appropriate.

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**Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher:**

Japanese proverb

## 1 Introduction

Teaching is a complex undertaking bearing significant responsibility for delivering on what is considered to be a basic right of all young people in mature societies, that is, access to the knowledge and skills seen as fundamental to living, participating and prospering in increasingly complex societies and communities.

Teaching is not a static profession, rather it is required to respond continuously to changes in the knowledge and skills needed by people to live, work, communicate, collaborate and socialise in contemporary societies. Also impacting on teaching is an increasing knowledge base about teaching strategies that best support learning. The responsibility on teaching is increased further by research that has identified the quality of teaching as the school based factor with the most potential to improve student learning.

Professional standards, requirements for induction of new members, and for professional accreditation are the hallmarks of longstanding professions such as medicine, engineering, and accountancy. Unlike these professions teaching does not have a codified practice knowledge base and consequently, what constitutes accepted professional practice in teaching is contestable.

It is in this context that the current teacher accreditation system was established in NSW in 2004. The NSW Institute of Teachers Act 2004 introduced a legal framework for developing and regulating the quality of teachers and teaching in NSW. The Act established standards, processes and responsibilities for determining and recognising the quality of teachers at four career stages. Principally, amongst the Act's provisions were minimum standards for classroom teachers; operationalised through requirements for the formal accreditation of teachers entering teaching for the first time after October 1, 2004 or returning to teaching after that date following a break of 5 or more years.

The NSW Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards is currently responsible for managing the accreditation system. Accreditation at Proficient teacher level provides professional and legal recognition that teachers commencing teaching are competent to practice independently within classrooms. The introduction of these requirements has required teachers, schools and school systems to accept greater professional responsibility for determining that teachers are fit to practice independently. Accepting and operationalising this increased professional responsibility has challenged some teachers and schools.

The accreditation process was designed to balance the need for compliance with accreditation requirements against the potential for the process to improve the quality of teachers and teaching.

Consequently, the accreditation process was conceptualised as a collaborative improvement process with teachers being mentored over time by experienced colleagues to develop their practice and achieve the required standards.

The process requires schools to support teachers seeking accreditation to present annotated evidence of teaching practices that address the professional standards; and experienced teachers and school principals to make judgements about whether the quality of practice and the evidence presented is consistent with the expectations of the professional teaching standards. The accreditation decision is set out in an accreditation report that establishes the case for accreditation of the teacher against the professional standards.

The decision to accredit at Proficient teacher level is made by the Teacher Accreditation Authority (TAA) for the school in which the teacher is or was employed. Effective implementation of the process obliges schools and teachers to monitor and continuously review understandings about teaching practices that best support student learning.

This report sets out the findings of a review of accreditation processes at Proficient teacher level against the following terms of reference set out below.

## 1.1 Terms of reference

The terms of reference for this review are as follows,

*The Review is to analyse a sample of accreditation reports from 2005 to 2014 to determine and advise on:*

1. *the extent to which:*
  - a. *Teachers seeking accreditation are able to provide appropriate evidence of achievement of the standards/descriptors*
  - b. *Teacher Accreditation Authorities make consistent judgements of achievement of the standards/descriptors*
2. *the range and frequency of individual standards/descriptors used as evidence within accreditation reports*
3. *the efficacy and appropriateness of current quality control mechanisms*
4. *opportunities for enhancing the support provided to teachers seeking accreditation and to Teacher Accreditation Authorities determining accreditation.*

## 1.2 Evidence available to the review

The evidence available to the review comprised the following data sets:

- a sample of 2 513 submissions presented by applicants for accreditation with accompanying accreditation reports
- 26 202 external assessor's ratings and commentary relating to submissions for accreditation (the evidence) and supervisor accreditation reports over the period 2005-2014.

While the terms of reference required the review to sample evidence and accreditation reports over the 2005-2014 timeframe, the extent to which the review was able to sample annotated evidence and accreditation reports uniformly over the period was constrained by the availability of the data. Data available to the review comprised predominantly electronic records compiled by the former NSW Institute of Teachers and BOSTES. In general, annotated evidence and accreditation reports were

available in electronic form only for 2012, 2013 and 2014. External assessor ratings were available over the entire time frame of the review.

Cross referencing of external assessor ratings with annotated evidence and accreditation reports was not always possible as more recent annotated evidence and accreditation reports were yet to be assessed.

### 1.3 Organisation of this report

The organisation of this report reflects the terms of reference. Each section of the report responds to an individual term of reference.

## 2 The extent to which candidates are able to provide evidence of achievement of descriptors

The extent to which candidates are able to provide evidence of achievement of the descriptors was examined from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. External assessor ratings of the evidence provided data for quantitative analyses of the evidence of achievement of the standards. Qualitative evidence was obtained from external assessor commentary. The analysis of evidence sampled provided the means to confirm the observations arising from the external assessor commentary.

### 2.1 Analysis of external assessor ratings

Current quality assurance mechanisms require external assessors to assess each candidate's submission of evidence on the following criteria.

1. *The evidence is of sufficient quality to support the accreditation of the teacher at Professional Competence/Proficient Teacher*
2. *The Evidence supports the comments made in the report*
3. *Presentation of the evidence is effective for the purpose of the review by external assessors*
4. *The evidence has been appropriately selected to address the professional teaching standards*
5. *The evidence has been appropriately annotated to relate the document to the Elements/Standards of the Professional Teaching Standards.*

External assessors rate the evidence presented against each of the above criteria using the following scoring rubric:

- Highly Consistent
- Consistent
- Qualified
- NR.

The Review was provided with 26 202 external assessor ratings of evidence completed over the period 2004-2014. These data provide a basis for judging the extent to which candidates were able to provide evidence of achievement of descriptors. Figure 2.1 provides a summary of external assessor's ratings of evidence against each of the assessment criteria.

The data suggests that in general candidates are well able to present evidence of achievement of the standards. The percentage of candidate's evidence rated as *Highly consistent* or *Consistent* with regard to the first three criteria (sufficiency, alignment with the accreditation report, and presentation) was 92.1, 93.0 and 89.9 per cent respectively. Equivalent ratings of evidence on criteria concerned with appropriateness of the evidence and the quality of annotations were not as high being 85.1 and 82.0 per cent respectively.

The extent to which individual candidates were able to address all five criteria is examined in Table 2.1. These data indicate that the evidence of 72.6 per cent of candidates was rated *Highly consistent* or *Consistent* on all five criteria. The evidence of 84.5 per cent of candidates was awarded these ratings for at least four of the five criteria.



Conversely, only 2.7 per cent the evidence presented by candidates was rated *NR* or *Qualified* on all five criteria. Likewise, only 4.9 per cent of candidates received these ratings for their evidence on at least four of the five criteria.

These data suggest that at an individual level, the large majority of the 26 202 candidates presenting for accreditation over the period 2005 to 2014 were judged to have addressed the criteria at a high or acceptable level. A small proportion (4.8 per cent) but a significant number (1267) of candidates appear to have been awarded ratings that suggest the evidence they presented was problematic in some way.

The question of whether the evidence presented by these candidates was deficient or whether their practice was not at Proficient teacher standard is examined in later sections of this report.

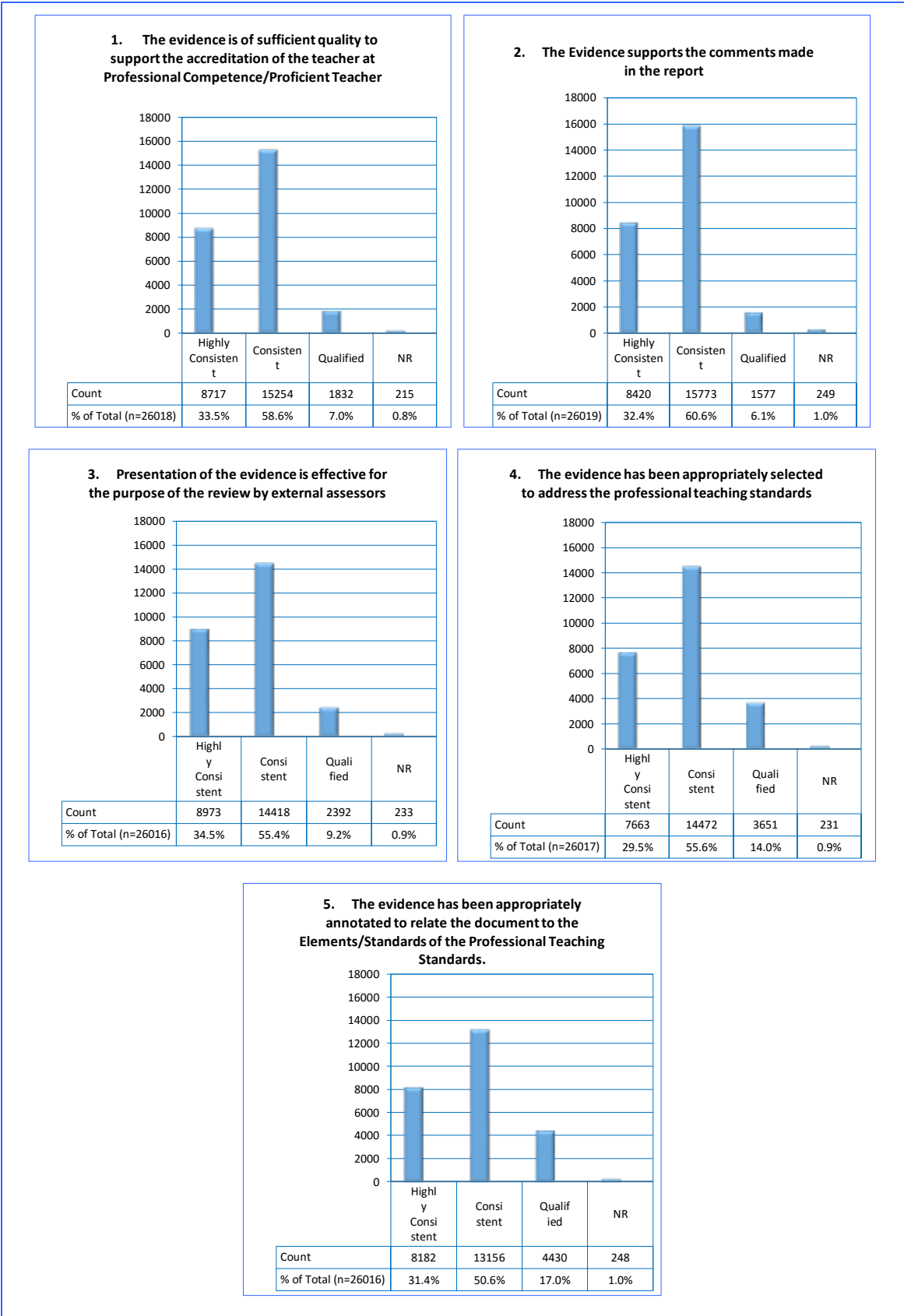


Figure 2.1 External Assessor ratings of evidence

**Table 2.1 Summary of External assessor ratings**

Count of Highly consistent and Consistent ratings	All Highly consistent or Consistent ratings	5 Highly Consistent or Consistent ratings	4 or 5 Highly Consistent or Consistent ratings	Count of NR and Qualified ratings	All NR or Qualified ratings	5 NR or Qualified ratings	4 or 5 NR or Qualified ratings
	Number				Number		
5 - Highly Consistent	5390	5390	5390	5 - NR	166	166	166
0 - Consistent	5390			0 - Qualified	166		
4 - Highly Consistent	1583	1402	1583	4 - NR	15	12	15
1 - Consistent	1402			1 - Qualified	12		
0 - Consistent	181			0 - Qualified	3		
3 - Highly Consistent	1430	1245	1394	3 - NR	14	3	4
2 - Consistent	1245			2 - Qualified	3		
1 - Consistent	149			1 - Qualified	3		
0 - Consistent	36			0 - Qualified	8		
2 - Highly Consistent	1451	1212	1386	2 - NR	35	6	9
3 - Consistent	1212			3 - Qualified	6		
2 - Consistent	174			2 - Qualified	3		
1 - Consistent	52			1 - Qualified	8		
0 - Consistent	13			0 - Qualified	18		
1 - Highly Consistent	1484	1080	1339	1 - NR	174	7	20
4 - Consistent	1080			4 - Qualified	7		
3 - Consistent	259			3 - Qualified	13		
2 - Consistent	114			2 - Qualified	31		
1 - Consistent	26			1 - Qualified	45		
0 - Consistent	5			0 - Qualified	78		
0 - Highly Consistent	14864	8690	11040	0 - NR	25798	516	1057
5 - Consistent	8690			5 - Qualified	516		
4 - Consistent	2350			4 - Qualified	541		
3 - Consistent	1491			3 - Qualified	873		
2 - Consistent	882			2 - Qualified	1630		
1 - Consistent	558			1 - Qualified	3032		
0 - Consistent	893			0 - Qualified	19206		
<b>Total</b>	<b>26202</b>	<b>19019</b>	<b>22132</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>26202</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>1271</b>
	<b>% All records</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>84.5%</b>		<b>% All records</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

## 2.2 Analysis of external assessor commentary and evidence sampled

In addition to rating the evidence against the five criteria, external assessors had the opportunity to comment on the evidence presented in each submission. While some external assessors made holistic comments about the submission, others made multiple comments justifying their rating of the evidence against the individual criteria.

There were no comments attached to 39.7 per cent of the submissions assessed. In general, the absence of comment for a submission correlated with ratings of *Highly consistent* and *Consistent*.

Nonetheless, the voluminous commentary associated with the remaining 60 per cent of submissions (almost 1000 pages of comments) provided a sound basis for analysis of the issues associated with candidates' capacity to provide evidence of achievement of the descriptors.

Although the submissions sampled were examined to corroborate and confirm the observations made from analysis of external assessor commentary, the discussion that follows focuses on the analysis of the external assessor commentary.

Given the large mass of comment a random sample of 750 comments was analysed to identify issues arising from the comments. As a first step the comments were categorised into three subsets for further analysis. The subsets were concerned with comments about:

- submissions of high quality
- the evidence
- the annotations.

### 2.2.1 Submissions of high quality

The first and most important observation is that many examples and comments about high quality teaching practice were identified amongst the samples of evidence and in external assessor comments. Many candidates for accreditation were able to present annotated evidence of practice that demonstrates high level understanding of the linkage between their knowledge, skills and values as described in descriptors, their teaching practice and student learning. These candidates displayed an holistic understanding of the standards, and discretion and skill in selecting, assembling, reflecting on and describing their evidence.

The following comments from external assessor's reports exemplify these observations.

- *The evidence is presented in a professional manner and is of sufficient scope and quantity. The use of an evidence map clearly linked evidence to [descriptors] and set the context of the submission. The evidence and annotations clearly demonstrate how the candidate has met standard descriptors in theory and practice. Annotations referenced specific examples from documentary evidence positively.*
- *The evidence is highly reflective and detailed which matches well to the report. All aspects of the standards have been met which has also been enhanced by photographs.*
- *The NST has provided excellent evidence, which is reflected upon in a very thorough and professional manner.*

The extracts below (Figures 2.2 and 2.3) taken from a submission with five *Highly consistent* ratings provide an example of evidence and annotations clearly related to achievement of descriptors.

While there are many such submissions, comments in this category are underrepresented because, as indicated above, external assessors chose largely not to comment on the majority of high quality submissions (There were no comments on 39.7 per cent of all submissions).

## Evidence D - Special Education Needs

This evidence page collates a range of strategies used to support a student with Autism. It includes copies of his personalised learning plan, rewards scheme, independent activities and communication diary for Term 1, 2013.

### Professional Competence Standards:

**2.2.5 3.2.1 3.2.10 5.2.3 7.2.1 7.2.3**

The personal learning plan highlights areas of focus using time bound targets. It has a balance between independent and supported tasks. I felt it was important for the student to develop independence and a 'can do' approach to his learning. It outlines strategies devised to support the areas of need. The development of a personalised learning plan in combination with independent activities, rewards schemes and teacher support demonstrates my ability to apply effective strategies for teaching students with Special Education Needs (2.2.5).

The assessment of the personalised learning plan demonstrates my ability to evaluate teaching and learning programs to inform planning (3.2.10). The student is now keen to participate in activities and has extended his ability to concentrate for longer periods of time. Supported work is now seen by the student as a positive activity. His independent activities have been extended to include writing - as task that he was previously reticent to complete without support (3.2.10).

The development of the Angry Birds activities and rewards scheme demonstrates my knowledge of the students needs and interest to support his effort and learning (5.2.3). The student has limited speech, low interest and needs support in all areas of the curriculum. I have used his interest in Angry Birds and repetitive nature of his Autism to develop a range of activities that he can access independently. In addition an Angry Birds rewards scheme supports his participation in teacher assisted activities. Each puzzle piece represents a component of the activity. When complete the student is able to access a toy of his choice for 10 minutes.

The communication diary demonstrates my ability to communicate with parents and care givers (7.2.1, 7.2.3). As the student has limited language, it acts as a prompt for the parent to engage in discussions with the student about his learning in school. I notify parents of significant achievements as well of upcoming calendar events. The parents record homework activities and family events to support and encourage the students use of speech at school.

Figure 2.2 Example of Highly Consistent annotations describing link between evidence and descriptor

## Evidence D - Special Education Needs

### Standard 2.2.5, 3.2.10

The positive evaluation demonstrates the ability to implement effective strategies for the teaching of special needs students. The review and inclusion of next steps will be used to inform future planning.

PUBLIC SCHOOL - PERSONALISED LEARNING PLAN		
STUDENT: [REDACTED]	CLASS: 1/2 B	
<b>LEARNER PROFILE</b> (strengths, areas of interest, learning style) James is diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. He has difficulties in social communication, social support to focus on activities outside his own interests. He requires support to access all aspects of the curriculum. He enjoys puzzles, ordering and sequencing numbers/letters. He has a keen interest in Angry Birds.		
<b>SUPPORT TYPE:</b> GAT / LD / SOCIAL / BEHAVIOUR <b>SUPPORT LEVEL:</b> 1 2 3 4		
START DATE: 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2013	REVIEW DATE: 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	
TARGETS	STRATEGIES	EVALUATION AND REVIEW
1. To write the date on his work independently every day. 2. To complete one fine motor skill activity independently. 2 times a week. 3. To complete one supported activity. 2 times a week. 4. To use appropriate behaviour during activities and routines - sitting (on his own) during carpet time every day.	1. Use stickers to reward effort and support independence. 2. A choice of two fine motor activities will be presented daily. To be accessed during longer carpet time / T&L activities. Sticker reward. 3. Select reward before activity commences. 4 part stage to support completion of activity. Use green/red card, and visual cue to support positive behaviour.	1. [REDACTED] will write his name / date on paper greater task (literacy/numeracy). He still requires prompting. He is beginning to write the date on his fine motor activities. 2. [REDACTED] able to complete 1 fine motor task each day. He is beginning to add part to the rug. Next steps: Create a word book to assist in writing. 1 cutting, 1 handwriting activity each day. 3. [REDACTED] completing at least 1 supported activity each day. He is able to complete a 7 part literacy activity twice a week with TS. 4. [REDACTED] has improved. He is able to sit appropriately in the morning session. He now has a carpet spot between two children which supports joint sitting.
SUPPORT STAFF: [REDACTED]		
SIGNATURES: PARENT: _____ TEACHER: _____		

### Standard 2.2.5

A range of strategies have been developed to support a student with Autism: PLP's, differentiation, rewards systems, explicit behaviour expectations, independent, supported learning activities and communication diary.

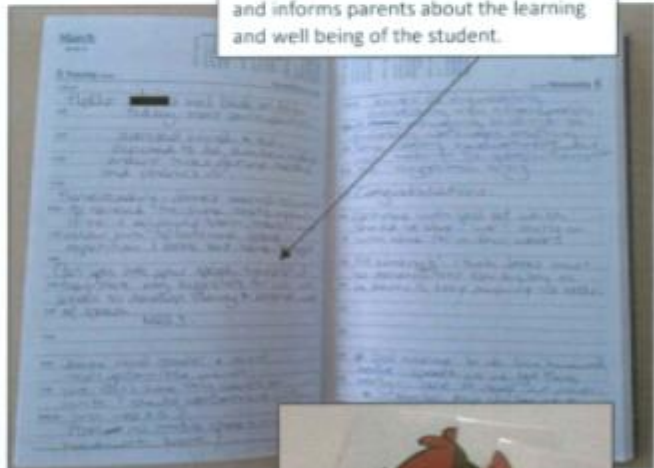


### Standard 5.2.3,

The use of rewards systems and achievable targets has supported the development of a 'can do' attitude. The student is now keen to write independently.

### Standard 7.2.1, 7.2.3

The daily communication diary records and informs parents about the learning and well being of the student.



Angry Birds rewards system.

Figure 2.3 Example of Highly consistent evidence

## 2.2.2 The evidence

A number of issues were identified in the commentary about the evidence presented by candidates. These included:

- selection of evidence
- demonstration of achievement of the descriptors
- alignment of evidence with descriptors
- sufficiency and appropriateness of the evidence.

### 2.2.2.1 *Appropriate selection of evidence*

The most significant area of external assessor comment concerned the ability or lack of ability of candidates to use their professional judgement to select evidence that demonstrates their capacity to address the descriptors. The following extracts are indicative of such comments.

- *Well selected evidence providing a good idea about what this teacher does in the classroom.*
- *The evidence is a valid demonstration that the teacher has reached Proficient teacher and is clearly annotated to link into the aspects addressed. Highly appropriate evidence.*
- *Outstandingly organised and annotated. A credit to the NST and a good advertisement for formal mentoring groups, and for the school's commitment to a temporary teacher.*

However, the quantity of evidence selected was an issue in many submissions.

- *Someone should say that this is a ridiculous amount of evidence.*
- *Evidence needs to be chosen more specifically. Too much evidence.*

The analysis of the submissions sampled identified what appeared to be a policy amongst some schools requiring candidates to submit evidence of achievement of all descriptors. Some candidates were able to work within this policy, for example:

- *... has taken time to ensure each individual [descriptor] has been addressed rather than one [descriptor] under each element heading! As a consequence, there is far too much information provided.*
- *Quite an exhaustive amount of evidence that more than satisfies the [descriptors].*
- *Whilst evidence is of a high standard, there is far more than necessary here.*

Seeking to address all descriptors confused some candidates about how to assemble their evidence.

- *Major problems - instead of choosing evidence and annotating to [descriptors] choose the 7 elements and then picked samples to illustrate one aspect of the element. Sometimes 2 or 3 more [descriptors] were referenced in the introduction to each element but it meant there were very few [descriptors] actually referred to or annotated in the evidence.*

For others the requirements compromised the quality of their submission and their demonstration of practice against the standards.

- *Too much evidence has been presented. Evidence is fractured/disjointed and has generally not been presented in an integrated way. More concerning the evidence generally does NOT demonstrate the teacher's practice (with the exception of the PD Certificates and the email correspondence).*
- *The teacher has submitted far more evidence than needed. A great deal of evidence is superfluous, such as a copy of professional learning plans, copies of resources and notes and a great deal of administrative documents. The evidence does not on the whole provide evidence of the teacher's practice.*



Further, as one external assessor noted linking each piece of evidence to an individual descriptor forgoes the opportunity to demonstrate a holistic and integrated understanding of the standards and consequently their teaching practice.

#### 2.2.2.2 *Demonstrating achievement of the descriptors*

A number of issues relating to the demonstration of achievement of the descriptors were identified in the commentary. The following were seen as necessary to the demonstration of achievement of the descriptors:

- evidence of impact on student learning
- a suite of evidence types
- evidence addressing all Standards

##### 2.2.2.2.1 Evidence of impact on student learning

External assessors identified student work samples as a means of demonstrating the effects of a teacher's practices on student learning. Consequently, the existence of the balance of teacher generated materials and student work samples were the subject of external assessors' comments. Some comments celebrated the existence of such a balance, for example:

- *There is a good balance between teacher generated and student work samples.*
- *Good use of teacher generated and student work samples found in the evidence.*

Other commentary identified the lack of student work samples as a weakness in the claims for accreditation.

- *A wider variety of evidence, especially the inclusion of student work samples, would have enabled the teacher to more comprehensively demonstrate achievement of the standards.*
- *There are no student work samples to validate the evidence provided. There is no indication of Student participation in activities to substantiate the evidence.*
- *There are no student work samples to validate the evidence given. There is a reliance of units of work and proforma that do not necessarily validate the evidence given, or the teacher's involvement in the classroom*

##### 2.2.2.2.2 A variety of evidence types

A variety of evidence types from across the range of teaching activities was seen also as important to the demonstration of achievement of the descriptors.

- *Whilst there are five evidence pieces, they tend to be similar in nature e.g. plan, log, observation. When only five evidence pieces are included, they need variety.*
- *More variety of evidence required to demonstrate competence.*
- *A wider selection and variety of evidence could have been included to support and address the standards.*

##### 2.2.2.2.3 Evidence addressing all standards

Some commentary indicated that the evidence provided did not demonstrate achievement of all standards, for example:

- *Documents support 1, 2, 3 and 4 [standards] but no evidence for 5, 6 and 7.*
- *There is only evidence produced for [Standards] 2, 3, 5 and 7. Very basic and insufficient in number and quality.*



- *I could find no evidence for [Standard] 6 or 7.*

### 2.2.2.3 Alignment of evidence with descriptors

External Assessors commented upon candidate's approach towards identifying evidence that addressed the descriptors. There were two approaches evident. The first relied on a judicious selection of descriptors across the standards followed by the selection of relevant evidence from their practice. The second relied on selecting what appeared to be a good sample of the teacher's work as evidence of achievement of the standards and then identifying relevant descriptors.

The problem with the second approach is that in some cases, it prioritised the evidence to a level beyond what it actually demonstrated. Therefore, there was significant commentary concerned with the alignment of descriptors to the evidence. The most common issue raised was that too many descriptors were identified as being demonstrated by individual pieces of evidence, for example:

- *Whilst the evidence indicates a range of [descriptors] being met within [standards], the examples seem to be overt. For example, sample 1 - a lesson plan - attempts to justify meeting no less than 18 [descriptors] in 3 different [standards]. Similarly, sample 4 - a workshop given - attempts to justify 20 [descriptors] in 3 [standards] without sufficient evidence and examples to back up these claims.*
- *Seven documents were submitted as evidence. Most of these claimed to relate to multiple teaching [descriptors] (up to 13 in some cases!).*
- *It would be better not to assign too many indicators to one piece of evidence, e.g. lesson plan had 25.*

In many such instances the link between the evidence and descriptors was tenuous. One example identified in the submissions sampled saw a reference to the word *curriculum* being annotated as a demonstration of the descriptor related to knowledge of curriculum. Another saw a reference to *parents* being linked to any descriptor containing the word *parent*.

A further issue identified in commentary was the misalignment of evidence and descriptors. There were a number of comments about evidence being related to the wrong descriptor, such as:

- *Some evidence doesn't relate to the [descriptors] - self-evaluation of lesson doesn't address [descriptors for Standard] 1 - this would be [descriptors for Standard] 6.*
- *Evidence for Standard 7 does not match standard.*

### 2.2.2.4 Sufficiency and appropriateness of the evidence

External assessors raised two issues concerned with the sufficiency and appropriateness of evidence. These were the need for evidence to be drawn directly from the teacher's own work and for explicit demonstration of impact on student learning.

#### 2.2.2.4.1 Evidence drawn directly from the teacher's own work

There was a significant number of instances identified in the commentary of candidates submitting work which was not their own. These include commentary concerning the existence of school policies, faculty documentation and commercial products being submitted as evidence. For example:

- *Much of the evidence is "faculty" produced with little that the teacher has developed.*
- *A large proportion of the evidence was the pages from the program - English Program - the pages lacked annotation or reflection.*
- *A number of pieces of evidence appear to be general school documents and not evidence of the teacher's own work, rather their following of school processes.*

- *Official BOS documents are inappropriate for evidence.*
- *It is difficult to identify which parts of the evidence were actually developed by the teacher. e.g. Evidence 3 Simply contained duplicated sheets from the Thinking science program!!*

Such documentation is appropriate for use as evidence only if the candidate can demonstrate how and why it has led to changes in teaching practice. The commentary above indicates that such demonstrations were uncommon.

Two specific types of evidence raised in the commentary are worthy of further discussion.

The first concerns the provision of evidence of engagement in professional learning. A number of external assessors noted that evidence of attendance at a professional learning course did not provide evidence of professional learning. The evidence is the candidate's articulation of how engagement in the activity has impacted on their teaching and learning.

The second, more problematic case involves the use of supervisor's observation notes. Many external assessors indicated that the use of such notes do not constitute evidence of the teacher's practice as the notes were not the teacher's work, for example:

- *Lesson observations are more appropriate for the supervisor report.*
- *Observation report is supervisor's rather than NST's work.*
- *Observation notes require annotation to be evidence of teacher's rather than supervisor's practice.*

This is a contentious position, as on the one hand, supervising teacher's lesson observation notes may provide important indicators of the teacher's readiness for accreditation. On the other, the quality of the observation notes can be problematic, as not all supervisors are capable of detailed analysis of teaching. Further, supervisors apply a range of proforma and rubrics to report on the teaching they observe. Some proforma and rubrics do not reference the descriptors of the APST, for example:

- *The evidence is brief & sketchy. It is not sufficient to support [accreditation]. The lesson observation included in the evidence does not relate to any teaching standards - it simply provides a general commentary on the lesson.*

The relevance and quality of lesson observations are important issues needing to be resolved. The *Evidence Guide for the Proficient Teacher Standards*<sup>2</sup> indicates that

*Evidence ....*

*.... must include:*

- *observation of the teacher's teaching.*

One way forward on this issue may be for BOSTES to:

1. provide support to supervisors to increase their capacity to analyse practice
2. develop sample lesson observation proforma that reference the descriptors
3. determine that the supervisor's lesson observation notes and the candidate's submission of evidence comprise separate sources of information to be considered by the Teacher Accreditation Authority when determining the accreditation decision.

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<sup>2</sup> BOSTES, 2014. *Evidence Guide for the Proficient Teacher Standards*. BOSTES, June 2014, Sydney

#### 2.2.2.4.2 Demonstrate impact on student learning

There were many instances identified in external assessor commentary and amongst the evidence sampled of candidates submitting blank work sheets and student assessment documents as evidence. Such documents in themselves do not present evidence of achievement of the descriptors. It is students' responses to such activities and the candidate's interpretation of these responses that comprise evidence.

The absence of students' responses to the task or activity removes the capacity of Teacher Accreditation Authorities to determine the appropriateness of the activity to the students and their stage of learning, and the teacher's capacity to use student's responses to the activity to reflect on and evaluate the learning that has occurred and to scaffold future learning.

#### 2.2.2.4.3 Adequacy of evidence

The extent to which candidate's presented adequate evidence of practice was another area of comment. Some external assessors' comments were concerned with the overall quality and scope of evidence, for instance:

- *It is unclear whether the teacher has any knowledge of the standards through the selection of evidence as the standards are non-existent.*
- *The evidence selected is limited and of a general nature. Accordingly, it does not fully substantiate achievement of the Teaching Standards e.g. an annotated student work sample would have added to the quality of the evidence submitted. Evidence is of poor quality and of insufficient scope.*
- *Evidence was superficial particularly in relation to elements 5-7.*
- *The evidence submitted showed a minimal amount of scope and quantity.*
- *Whilst the annotation was sound, the evidence itself was mostly superficial.*
- *More evidence required to demonstrate scope of teacher's practice.*

### 2.2.3 Candidates' reflection on the evidence

Annotation of evidence provides opportunities for candidates to reflect on and enunciate understandings of their practice; in particular, how and why the evidence they have presented demonstrates that they have addressed the descriptors. Effective annotation should provide sufficient detail so that the evidence addressing the descriptors, the candidates understanding of practice and its impact on student learning is clear to others outside of the teacher's immediate context. Two forms of annotation were evident in the submissions presented by candidates.

The first comprised a summary or narrative of how the piece of evidence met specific descriptors. Summaries or narratives were placed either collectively at the beginning of the submission or individually preceding the relevant sample(s) of evidence.

The second form of annotation comprised more limited comment placed directly on the evidence. The majority of candidates used both forms of annotation. Figures 2 and 3 above demonstrate both forms of annotation.

External assessors' commentary provided a range of viewpoints about the quality of the annotation and its efficacy in linking the evidence to the standards. There was also comment about the absence of annotations and a perceived disconnect between the annotations and evidence.

### 2.2.3.1 *The quality of annotations*

Commentary included a broad range of generalised observations about the quality of the annotations. Many external assessors noted the presence of high quality annotations with the following being typical of their comments.

- *The annotations are detailed and provide great insight into the teacher's practice and understanding of the professional standards.*
- *The samples submitted by this teacher were comprehensively annotated at the front of each piece of documentary evidence with evidence of reflection.*
- *Excellent annotations to this evidence provided a clear indication of teacher's work in this area.*
- *The summary of the evidence with annotations is outstanding and clearly indicates the teacher is able to identify and meet the standards for accreditation.*
- *The annotations are very well done and exhaustive - wow!*

At the other end of the quality spectrum were comments about the low quality of some annotations.

- *The annotations are ineffective, as they are just the [descriptors] copied out.*
- *Annotations are brief and give limited insight to the teaching procedure and processes.*
- *Annotation were "basic" and showed little thought as to how the standards were being met.*
- *[Descriptors] have been identified through practice but annotation does not clearly demonstrate effective practice of teaching to meet the [descriptors]. Low-level compliance with the teaching standards.*

### 2.2.3.2 *Link to descriptors*

Another substantial area of commentary concerned the extent to which the annotations link the evidence to the descriptors. For example:

- *Annotations accurately reflect the link between the evidence provided and the [descriptors] to which they are linked.*
- *The annotations provide clear links between the evidence and the [descriptors], with explanatory notes at the end of each piece complementing the identification of specific [descriptors] written on the actual evidence*
- *Extremely well organised and professional annotations that use consistent technical language and understanding of the [standards] and evidence guide.*

However, not all external observers reported that annotations demonstrated a link between evidence and the descriptors. There were many comments indicating weak linkage of practice to the standards.

- *In some cases, the annotations do not make clear links between the teaching practice and the [descriptors].*
- *There are annotations at the beginning of the submission albeit brief. At times it is difficult to determine exactly where the annotations are referring to in the evidence.*
- *The evidence is not substantial and the annotations are very brief. The links (and claims) made in the annotations are not supported in the selected evidence. The evidence and the annotations are not a valid demonstration of teacher practice.*
- *There was limited annotation. The evidence was linked to a [descriptor] but not explained how the [descriptor] was achieved.*
- *Many of the annotations describes the document rather how the NST achieved the [descriptor].*

### 2.2.3.3 Perceived disconnect with the evidence

Other commentary pointed to a disconnect between the annotations and evidence, for example:

- *The annotation frequently is not supported by the accompanying evidence ... the overviews often purport that [Standard] 6 is being addressed but there is no sign of this on the evidence itself.*

### 2.2.3.4 Absence of Annotations

Despite candidates being required to annotate their evidence, there were significant numbers of comments concerned with the absence of annotation either on the evidence itself

- *No specific coding of [descriptors] onto artefacts at all!!*
- *There has been no annotation of [descriptors] on the evidence provided.*
- *Annotation are all separate with no indication on the evidence of what is what.*

or altogether.

- *There is no evidence of any annotations or reflection of the pieces of work collected and presented as evidence.*
- *Many pages of programs and lesson plans but no annotation or comments relating to the lesson outcomes, how students reacted etc.*
- *There are no annotations by the teacher.*
- *No evidence of annotations on individual document or summatively.*

Some assessors commented that the practice of providing a summary or narrative statement separate from the evidence made it difficult to assess the evidence.

- *Although each unit of work is prefaced with a detailed annotation it would be easier to read if each piece of evidence had the [Descriptor] it was addressing noted on it somewhere.*
- *There is a need to search through the work samples to determine which one links to the explanations. e.g. Explanations appear at the front of the document pages 1-11 but the first piece of evidence is page 34.*
- *The presentation required considerable flicking from evidence to justification/ annotation in different parts of the evidence.*

## 2.3 Discussion of findings in relation to candidate's selection of evidence

Over the period under review, the majority of candidates for accreditation have been judged by external assessors to have provided evidence of meeting the professional standards at Proficient teacher level at a *Highly consistent* or *Consistent* level. Characteristic of these submissions of evidence are discretion and professional judgement in the selection and annotation of evidence, and demonstrated high levels of practice consistent with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. However, the analysis of the external assessor commentary identified a number of issues needing consideration by candidates for accreditation and the school personnel who support them.

The external assessor commentary indicates that more capable candidates appear to be selecting a focused range of descriptors across the standards and then applying discretion in the selection and annotation of evidence to address these descriptors. On the other hand, many of the candidates who provided less compelling cases for accreditation appear first to select their evidence and then try to match descriptors. This approach can compromise their ability to adequately address the descriptors by selecting too much evidence for effective annotation or applying too many descriptors with unsubstantiated links to the evidence.

Another area identified in the commentary that requires attention is the need for candidates to validate assertions about their practice through evidence of its impact on student learning. While the submission of blank student worksheets, student assessments and report proforma and faculty, school and departmental materials is widespread, these documents do not constitute evidence of practice as described in the guidelines for accreditation. It is the demonstration of how such materials are used by students and the subsequent analysis of evidence of impact on learning that constitutes evidence of addressing the descriptors.

On the surface these findings point to the need for candidates to be supported better to select and appropriately annotate evidence. However, a number of observations can be made about current approaches to selection of evidence and their implications for teacher development.

There are two perspectives relevant to this discussion. The first focuses on two related issues raised in early debates about the implementation of professional standards, namely, (i) the risk of atomising practice into discrete aspects of teaching, and (ii) the need to ensure practitioners develop holistic views of the standards.

In some respect the findings above reflect these two perspectives. Candidates who feel that they need to address every descriptor either through individual samples of evidence or applying too many descriptors remain locked into atomistic understandings of the standards. Candidates who are more selective in choice of evidence are exhibiting more holistic views of the descriptors within the standards.

The second perspective concerns the issue of teacher development. The SOLO Taxonomy<sup>3</sup> describes levels of developing understanding in a five level Taxonomy. While a range of sub levels have been identified within the individual levels, the five original levels described in simple terms are:

- 1 *Prestructural: here students are simply acquiring bits of unconnected information, which have no organisation and make no sense.*
- 2 *Unistructural: simple and obvious connections are made, but their overall significance is not grasped.*
- 3 *Multistructural: a number of connections are made, but the meta connections between them are missed, as is their significance for the whole.*
- 4 *Relational level: the student is now able to appreciate the significance of the parts in relation to the whole.*
- 5 *At the extended abstract level, the student is making connections not only within the given subject area, but also beyond it, able to generalise and transfer the principles and ideas underlying the specific instance.*

In general, new graduates entering the profession are operating at a multistructural level, being able to recognise and attend to discrete aspects of practice such as management of student behaviour, engagement with students and lesson planning. Increasing confidence and capacity that comes with time and experience (about five years) enables some to move to the relational level. At the relational level they are able to make connections between the quality of their teaching, their engagement of students in learning, their management of students and the classroom while continuing to maintain a focus on student learning.

Given that teaching and teachers have developed understandings about and strive to develop higher-level thinking capacities in students, should we not seek also to apply similar priorities in the

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<sup>3</sup> BIGGS J and COLLIS K (1982) *Evaluating the Quality of Learning: the SOLO taxonomy*. New York: Academic Press.  
BIGGS J and TANG C (2007) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. (3rd edn) Buckingham: SRHE and Open University Press.

development of teachers? The development of higher-level thinking capacities, and relational more holistic views about teaching and in particular the professional standards ought to be the hallmarks of development within the profession.

## 3 The consistency of Teacher Accreditation Authorities' judgements of achievement of the descriptors

Given that decisions of Teacher Accreditation Authorities are entirely consistent in their judgement of achievement of the APST, this term of reference has been interpreted as:

*To what extent is the quality of evidence and accreditation reports consistent across Teacher Accreditation Authorities?*

### 3.1 The data for analysis

The data used to address this question consisted of scores (logit scores) for each submission calculated by subjecting the 26 202 external assessor ratings to Rasch<sup>4</sup> analysis. The purpose of creating these scores was to convert categorical ratings scores into interval measures that can be subjected to more sophisticated forms of analysis.

Two sets of logit scores were created. The first utilised all ratings, that is, ratings of the ten criteria for the report and evidence. The second used only ratings of the evidence. The logit scores effectively reduce the ten ratings (or five ratings depending on the analysis) to a single score. For the purpose of simplifying the discussion to follow, these scores are referred to as *all criteria scores* and *evidence criteria scores*. Note that Rasch analysis did not reliably separate accreditation report criteria ratings on a unidimensional continuum, consequently logit scores were not calculated for each accreditation report.

### 3.2 Differences amongst the ratings of submissions

The difference amongst all criteria scores and evidence criteria scores were investigated for submissions and reports disaggregated on the basis of the applicant's gender, stage of schooling, geolocation, school sector, and year of accreditation. The discussion of difference within and across groups is framed around the outcomes of analyses of variance (ANOVA) and Differential Item Functioning (DIF) undertaken as part of the Rasch analysis.

The findings of these analyses are reported in the following discussion. Although the discussions are framed around differences amongst all criteria and evidence criteria scores it should be remembered that these scores are constructed from the rankings upon which they are based. Therefore, differences amongst groups in the all criteria and evidence criteria scores represent differences in the external assessor rankings applied to submissions and reports from these groups.

#### 3.2.1 Main effects

The initial analyses of difference amongst groups found significant differences in groups of submissions disaggregated on the basis of gender, stage of schooling, school sector, geolocation and year of accreditation. The mean scores of these groups are reported schematically in Figure 3.1. The results of the analyses are summarised below.

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<sup>4</sup>The Rasch model produces an interval scale that determines item difficulties and person measures on a unidimensional scale. The scale units are logits (log odds units), which are linear and therefore suitable for use in simple statistical procedures.



- Gender
 

The analysis indicates all criteria scores and evidence criteria scores for female candidates were significantly<sup>5</sup> higher than for male candidates.
- Stage of schooling
 

The mean evidence criteria score of primary teacher submission was significantly higher than that of teachers from secondary schools. However, there was no significant difference in the all criteria scores of candidates from primary and secondary teachers.
- Geolocation
 

The mean all criteria scores for candidates in metropolitan locations were significantly higher than those of candidates from regional and remote areas. However, similar differences in mean evidence criteria scores were significant only for submissions from teachers in metropolitan and regional schools.
- School sector
 

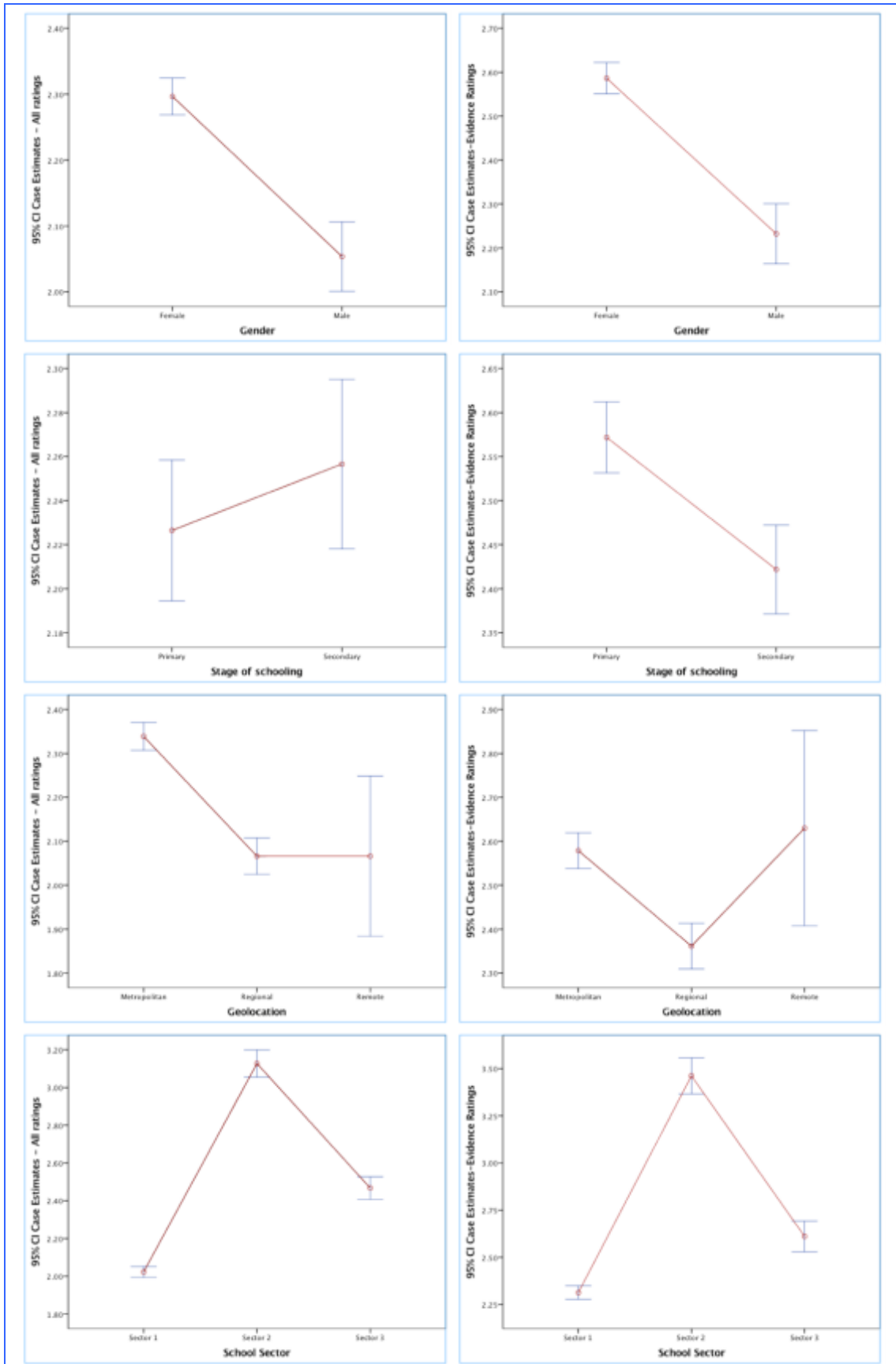
There were significant differences in the mean all criteria and evidence criteria scores amongst candidates disaggregated on the basis of school sector. Mean scores for Sector 2 candidates were higher than for sector 3 which were themselves higher than those from Sector 1.
- Year of accreditation
 

Of particular interest from a policy perspective is whether the all criteria and evidence criteria scores and hence the underlying ratings of submissions and reports has increased over time. The data reported in Figure 3.1 show a steady increase in mean all criteria and evidence criteria scores over the period 2006 to 2014. The mean criteria scores for 2012, 2013 and 2014 were significantly higher than those for 2006, 2007 and 2008 on both scales. This suggests an increasing capacity amongst candidates and supervisors to address accreditation requirements.

These data point to differences in the ratings of accreditation reports and submissions and hence potentially the quality of evidence and accreditation reports considered by Teacher Accreditation Authorities. However, these apparent trends and differences amongst the criteria scores were not uniform across the categories examined. For example, the apparent differences in primary and secondary criteria scores were not consistent when the data was further disaggregated by school sector and year of accreditation. These issues are discussed in section 3.2.2.

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<sup>5</sup> Note where indicated differences in mean scores were significant at the 95 per cent level. That is the probability that the differences were not significant is less than 5 per cent ( $p < 0.05$ )



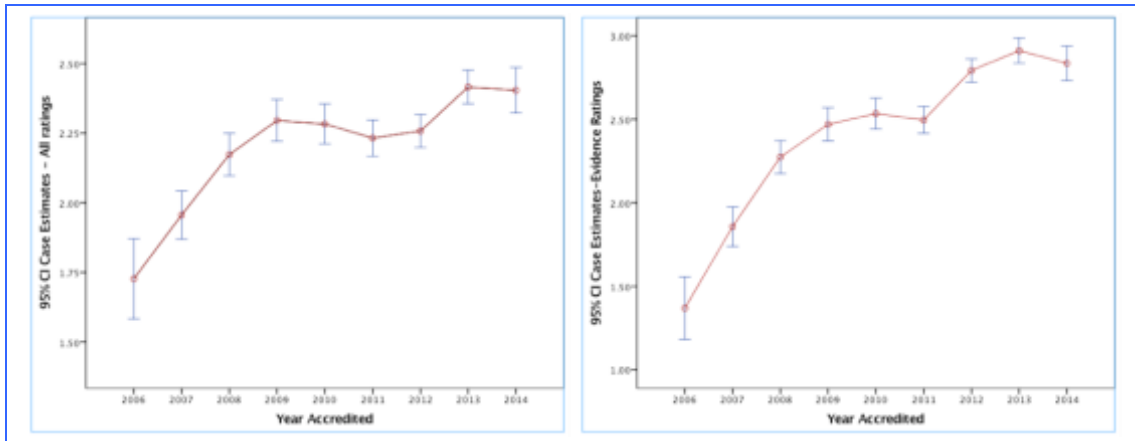


Figure 3.1 Mean Criteria scores disaggregated on the basis of gender, stage of schooling, geolocation, school sector and year of accreditation

### 3.2.2 Interaction amongst stage of schooling, year of accreditation and school sector

Further analyses of the data indicated a three-way interaction between stage of schooling, year of accreditation and school sector. This interaction is represented schematically in Figure 3.2.

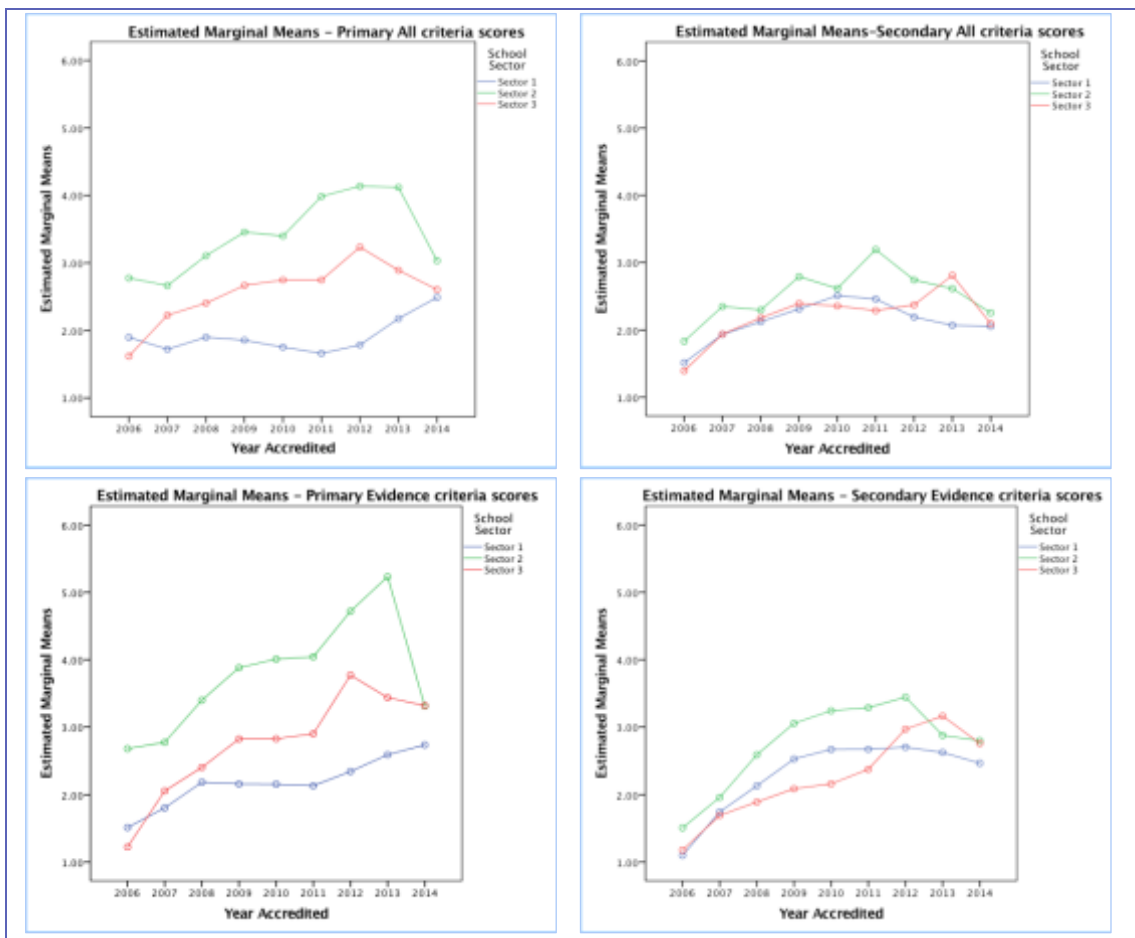


Figure 3.2 Estimated marginal means all criteria & evidence criteria scores for primary and secondary candidates by sector and year of accreditation

Significant differences amongst mean scores are summarised below:

- All criteria Scores

- Primary Candidates

With the exception of 2006 and 2014 the mean all criteria scores of the three sectors were significantly different from each other across the period 2007-2013. Sector 1 mean scores were higher than those of Sector 3 which were higher than those of Sector 2.

In 2006 the mean all criteria score for sector 2 was significantly higher than those of Sectors 1 and 3. The mean all criteria scores of Sectors 1 and 3 were not significantly different.

In 2014 the mean all criteria score of Sector 2 was significantly higher than Sectors 1 and 3.

- Secondary candidates

The mean all criteria scores of Sector 2 were significantly higher than those for Sector 1 in 2007, 2009 and 2012.

In 2011 the mean all criteria score for Sector 2 were significantly lower than those of Sector 1 but higher than Sector 3.

In 2013 the mean all criteria score for Sector 1 was significantly lower than those of Sectors 2 and 3.

- Evidence criteria Scores

- Primary Candidates

In 2006, 2007 and 2008 the mean evidence score for Sector 2 was significantly higher than those of Sectors 1 and 3.

Over the period 2008 to 2013 the mean evidence score for Sector 1 was significantly lower than that for Sectors 3 which is itself lower than that for Sector 2.

In 2014 the mean evidence score for Sector 1 was significantly lower than those of Sectors 2 and 3.

- Secondary candidates

There were no significant differences between the mean evidence criteria scores of Sectors 1, 2 and 3 in 2006 and 2007.

The mean evidence criteria score of Sector 3 was significantly lower than that of Sector 2 in 2008. In 2009 the mean all evidence criteria of sector 3 was significantly lower than those of Sectors 1 and 2.

In 2011 the mean evidence criteria score of Sector 2 was higher than that of Sector 3, and in 2012 the mean evidence criteria score for Sector 2 was higher than that of Sector 1.

In 2013 the mean evidence criteria score for Sector 1 was lower than that for Sector 3.

There were no significant differences in mean evidence criteria scores across the Sectors in 2014.

These data indicate that the majority of difference in the all criteria and evidence criteria scores for each sector across the years of accreditation can be attributed to differences across the sectors in the scores of primary candidates.

While these analyses point to significant variation in the rating of evidence and accreditation reports considered by Teacher Accreditation Authorities, they do not point to the sources of difference in the ratings. Analyses of Differential Item Functioning undertaken as part of the initial Rasch analysis go part way to identifying sources of difference amongst the ratings. These analyses are described in the following section.

### 3.2.3 Analyses of Differential Item Functioning

Analyses of Differential Item Functioning enable identification of differences in the rating of dichotomous data, for example female and male respondents or respondents from primary and secondary schools.

Table 3.1 shows difference in the rating of questions on the all criteria scale for gender, geolocation (metropolitan/regional) and stage of schooling within each of the school sectors. This latter analysis was undertaken to develop further understandings about the differences in sectoral responses identified in Figure 3.2. Marked cells indicate criteria rated higher by one or other of the pairing.

The analyses identified apparent trends in the way that evidence and reports are rated across the groups.

1. The evidence of female candidates was rated higher than male candidates in relation to the quality of the evidence (E1). The reports of male candidates were rated more highly than female candidates with respect to ensuring the comments under each standard are appropriate to the descriptors (R5).
2. Candidates from metropolitan schools were rated more highly than their regional counterparts on criteria related to their evidence (E1, E3 and E5). Candidates from regional schools were rated more highly than metropolitan candidates on criteria related to their reports (R2, R4 and R5).
3. There were significant differences in the way secondary and primary candidates' evidence and reports were rated across the school sectors:
  - Sector 1
    - Primary candidates were rated more highly than secondary candidates on evidence criteria (E2, E3, E4 and E5). Secondary candidates were rated more highly than primary candidates on their report criteria (R1, R2 and R4).

**Table 3.1 Differences in the rating of criteria across dichotomous groups**

		Gender	Geolocation	Sector 1	Sector 2	Sector 3
		Female	Metro	Prim	Prim	Prim
		Male	Region	Sec	Sec	Sec
<b>EVIDENCE CRITERIA</b>	E1 The evidence is of sufficient quality to support the accreditation of the teacher at Proficient Teacher	F	M			P
	E2 The Evidence supports the comments made in the report			P		
	E3 Presentation of the evidence is effective for the purpose of the review by external assessors		M	P	S	
	E4 The evidence has been appropriately selected to address the professional teaching standards			P	S	S
	E5 The evidence has been appropriately annotated to relate the document to the Standards of the APST		M	P		
<b>REPORT CRITERIA</b>	R1 The report gives sufficient detail to indicate that the teacher has achieved Proficient Teacher			S		P
	R2 The report gives specific details of the teachers' practice		R	S		
	R3 The language of the reports reflects the Professional Teaching Standards				P	S
	R4 The Language of the report reflects the evidence guide		R	S		P
	R5 The comments under each Standard are appropriate to the Descriptors contained within the Standard.	M	R		P	

- Sector 2
  - The pattern of rating the evidence and criteria of primary and secondary candidates in Sector 2 is the opposite Sector 1. Secondary candidates were rated more highly than primary candidates on the rating of evidence (E3 and E4). Primary candidates were rated higher than secondary candidates in relation to report criteria (R3 and R5).
- Sector 3
  - Primary candidates were rated more highly than secondary candidates in relation to the quality of their evidence (E1), the detail of their report (R1) and alignment of the language of their report with the professional standards (R4).

- Secondary candidates were rated more highly on the selection of appropriate evidence (E4) and alignment of the language of their report with the evidence guide (R3).

### 3.3 Discussion of findings in relation to consistency in the quality of evidence and reports

The findings reported above indicate significant differences in external assessors' rating of the quality of evidence and reports across groups disaggregated on the basis of gender, geolocation, stage of schooling, school sector and year of accreditation. A feature of these findings is the increase in the rating of evidence and reports over the period 2006-2014.

It is important, however at this stage, to qualify these findings in the context of their relationship to the consistency and quality of evidence and reports considered by Teacher Accreditation Authorities. In the absence of studies into the validity and reliability of external assessor ratings and in particular studies on interrater reliability, it is not possible to be conclusive about the strength of the relationship found between the external assessor ratings and the quality of evidence and reports.

Given that external assessors work within their own sectors, it is possible that some of the differences in ratings across the sectors are due to systematic and chronic under or over-rating. However, other factors may also be at play given the differences in the ratings of primary and secondary candidates over time and within each sector.

With these questions in mind, an attempt was made in the course of analysing the sample of submissions to monitor their quality across different geolocations, stages of schooling and school sectors. This monitoring was inconclusive, identifying high quality submissions and reports across all stages of schooling, geolocations and school sectors. However, the sufficiency of the monitoring as a means of validating the relationship between external assessor ratings and the quality of reports was problematic from a number of perspectives, including the representativeness of the sample, given the quantum of evidence and reports over the years that accreditation has been in place.

Putting issues of reliability and validity to one side and accepting that the mapping of ratings in Figures 3.1 and 3.2 represent evidence of differences amongst the groups studied several observations are pertinent.

The first is that the decline in all criteria scores and evidence scores (i.e. ratings) around 2013 (see Figure 3.2) accords with the transition from the NSW standards to the Australian standards. This suggests that for some candidates and schools the transition was not a smooth one. The decline in ratings was most obvious in Sectors 2 and 3 and points to the need to support better future transitions of this kind.

The second observation concerns difference in the ratings of evidence and reports of candidates from metropolitan, regional and remote areas. Figure 3.1 shows the overall ratings of evidence and reports of candidates from regional areas is lower than candidates from metropolitan areas. Table 3.1 indicates however, that although the evidence ratings of these candidates are lower than those of their metropolitan colleagues, their reports are rated higher than those of the metropolitan colleagues.

Taken on face value, these findings appear contradictory. They suggest that while supervisors in regional areas are more familiar with the standards, and consequently better able to write reports consistent with the standards, this level of familiarity with the standards has not translated into regional candidates' capacity to select and present evidence.

Furthermore, the higher ratings applied to the evidence provided by candidates from metropolitan areas (assuming higher ratings equate to better quality evidence) may result from better access to peer support networks rather than from their supervisors who appear to be less able to write reports against the standards (and therefore less familiar with the standards) than their regional counterparts. Issues around supervision and support will be addressed further in later sections of this report.

The third observation concerns apparent differences in the capacities of candidates in primary and secondary schools to select and provide evidence of achievement of the standards and of supervisors in primary and secondary schools to write reports that describe practice against the standards. These differences suggest uneven outcomes from universal or generic approaches to program implementation. Accordingly, consideration may need to be given to support that addresses the needs of supervisors and candidates in a range of situations.

The fourth observation arises from the data in Table 3.1. The obverse of higher ratings is lower ratings. Consequently, when Differential Item Functioning identifies one group as having higher ratings, the ratings of the other group are at least 2 standard deviations below that of the named group. Consequently, the results of the Differential Item Functioning indicate potential areas in need of support.

The apparent differences in ratings across groups disaggregated on the basis of gender, stage of schooling, geolocation and school sector are predominantly consequences of situational differences, including for example, support provisions, school structures, the capacity of personnel, and policy differences. Accordingly, it is not open to this review to speculate beyond the observations above on the causes of these differences. Such deliberations and subsequent ameliorations are the purview of teachers, schools and school authorities that have the responsibility implement accreditation requirements, including supporting candidates to achieve accreditation.



## 4 The range and frequency of individual descriptors used as evidence within accreditation reports

A representative stratified sample of 2 513 submissions of evidence was analysed by mapping the form of evidence presented in each submission against the standards referenced. The mapping consisted of coding each submission to determine the:

- forms of evidence used and their frequency of use
- descriptors referenced against each form of evidence.

Two data sets were developed: representing mappings of submissions against the relevant NSW PTS and the APST. In total there were 2 513 submissions sampled: 1 479 against the NSW PST and 1 034 against the APST.

### 4.1 Number of documents presented as evidence

The number of documents or items of evidence presented by each candidate is reported in Table 4.1. The median number of documents presented by candidates is eight. The data indicates that 9.7 percent or 241 candidates from the sample submitted five or fewer items of evidence and 9.8 per cent or 244 candidates presented 15 or more documents. Using common practice as a guide it appears that the optimum number of items presented as evidence is from 6 to 14 items.

A small sample of five submissions presenting four items of evidence was examined to see if candidates were able to present a case for their accreditation using only four samples of evidence. Amongst the 25 possible ratings were 7 Highly consistent, 14 Consistent and 3 Qualified ratings. These data suggest that from the perspective of external assessors, candidates are able to present evidence for accreditation using four items of evidence.

A similar examination of a sample of eight submissions presenting more than 22 items of evidence, including one with 56 items found 5 Highly consistent, 30 Consistent and 5 Qualified ratings. However, the analysis of sampled submissions found many submissions with more than 22 items of evidence to be disorganised and at times lacking in coherence and clarity. The coding of such submissions was difficult as the link between evidence and standards was often obscure. Nevertheless, external assessors rated such submissions as complying with requirements for accreditation.

### 4.2 Form of evidence presented by candidates

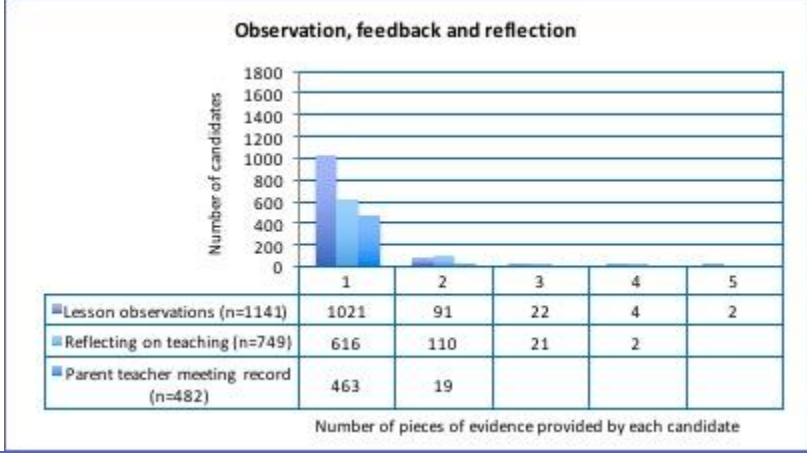
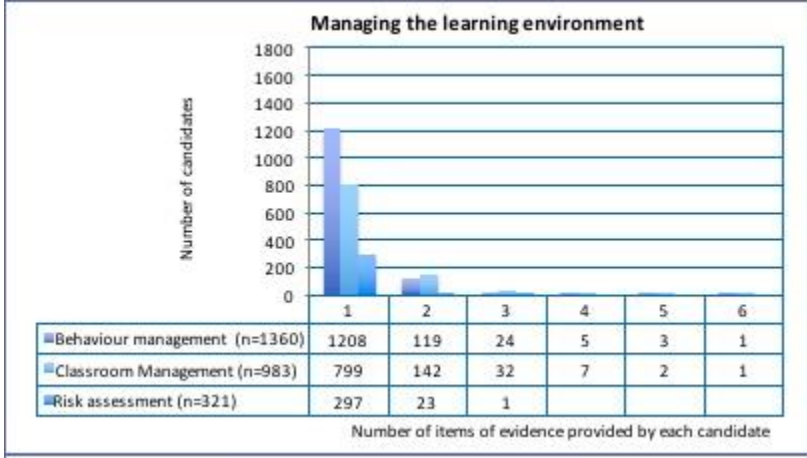
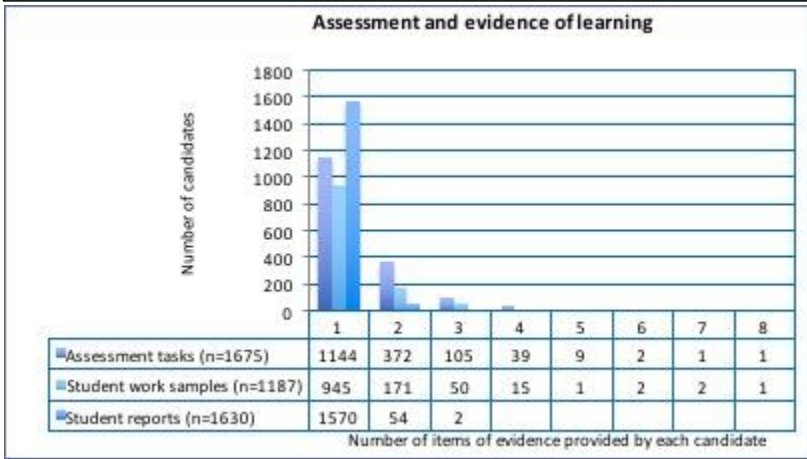
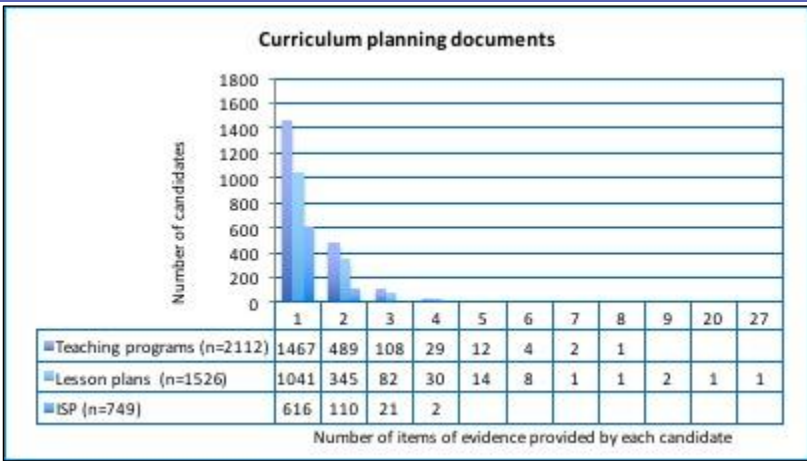
The number of items of each form of evidence presented by candidates is reported in Figure 4.1. To simplify presentation of the data, the different forms of evidence were categorised and reported in individual charts.

The data indicates that the great majority of candidates presented fewer than three examples of the same form of evidence. However, a small proportion of candidates presented significantly more than three examples of the same form of evidence.

**Table 4.1 Analysis of numbers of items of evidence presented by candidates**

Number of items of evidence	Frequency	% Frequency	Cumulative frequency	% cumulative frequency
1	7	0.28%	7	0.28%
2	6	0.24%	13	0.52%
3	7	0.28%	20	0.80%
4	45	1.81%	65	2.61%
5	176	7.08%	241	9.69%
6	336	13.52%	577	23.21%
7	434	17.46%	1011	40.67%
8	387	15.57%	1398	56.23%
9	250	10.06%	1648	66.29%
10	189	7.60%	1837	73.89%
11	147	5.91%	1984	79.81%
12	111	4.47%	2095	84.27%
13	82	3.30%	2177	87.57%
14	65	2.61%	2242	90.19%
15	49	1.97%	2291	92.16%
16	39	1.57%	2330	93.72%
17	35	1.41%	2365	95.13%
18	17	0.68%	2382	95.82%
19	18	0.72%	2400	96.54%
20	14	0.56%	2414	97.10%
21	10	0.40%	2424	97.51%
22	16	0.64%	2440	98.15%
23	13	0.52%	2453	98.67%
24	8	0.32%	2461	98.99%
25	5	0.20%	2466	99.20%
26	1	0.04%	2467	99.24%
27	4	0.16%	2471	99.40%
28	1	0.04%	2472	99.44%
29	2	0.08%	2474	99.52%
31	6	0.24%	2480	99.76%
33	1	0.04%	2481	99.80%
34	1	0.04%	2482	99.84%
39	1	0.04%	2483	99.88%
40	1	0.04%	2484	99.92%
51	1	0.04%	2485	99.96%
55	1	0.04%	2486	100.00%

Table 4.2 reports the mean number of items of evidence across the different forms of evidence. The mean scores provide a measure of the tendency of candidates to present samples of each form of evidence. Records of professional development records are the most commonly cited evidence, followed by teaching programs and student work samples.



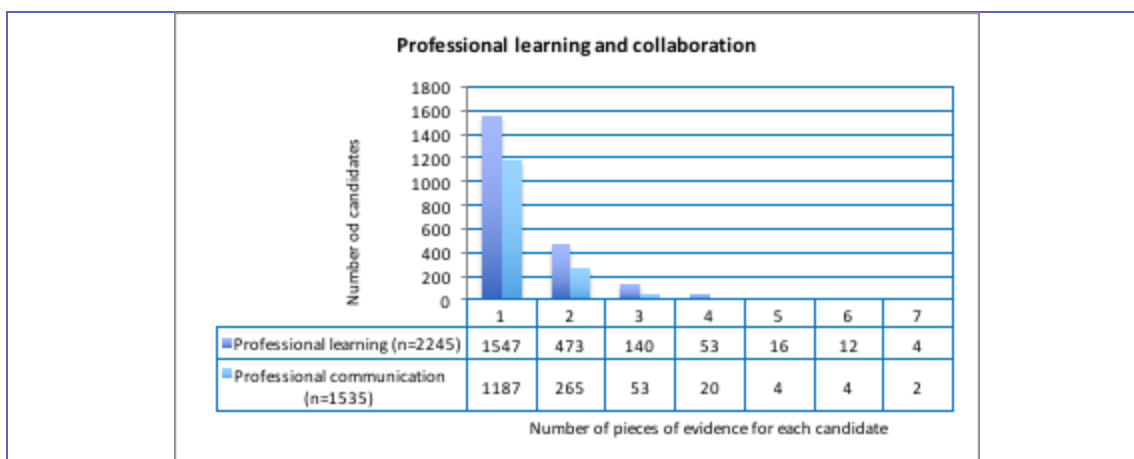


Figure 4.1 Number of times evidence forms are referenced to descriptors

Amongst those cited least (in increasing order) were risk assessment policies, records of parent teacher meetings, lesson or program evaluations and individual student plans.

The following observations were made with respect to the number of references to descriptors for each category of evidence.

- Curriculum planning documents

Across all forms of evidence teaching programs had the second highest level of referencing across all forms of evidence (2 112) and lesson plans were the form of evidence with the widest distribution in terms of the number of references (27).
- Assessment and evidence of learning

Student reports was the most common form where only one example was presented by candidates. However, in this category, assessment tasks were the form of evidence with the greatest number (1 674) of references.
- Managing the learning environment

Within this category of evidence behaviour management plans and strategies were the most commonly referenced forms of evidence (1 360 references).
- Observation, feedback and reflection

Lesson observations were the most common form of evidence in this category. Teacher parent meeting records were the least referenced.
- Professional leaning and collaboration

Professional learning records were the form of evidence that had the greatest number of references overall (2 245). Professional communications were also amongst the forms of evidence with significant numbers of references (1 535).

Table 4.2 Mean number of items of each form of evidence presented by each candidate

Evidence category	Form of evidence	Mean
Curriculum planning documents	Teaching Program	1.19
	Lesson Plan	0.91
	Individual Student Plan	0.37
Assessment and evidence of student learning	Assessment Record or Task	0.98
	Student Work Sample	0.61
	Student Report	0.67
Managing the learning environment	Behaviour Management Strategy	0.62
	Classroom Management Strategy	0.49
	Risk Assessment/Policy	0.14
Observation, feedback and reflection	Lesson Observation	0.52
	Lesson or Program Evaluation	0.36
	Parent Teacher Meeting Record	0.20
Professional learning and collaboration	Record of Professional Development Participation	1.32
	Professional Communication	0.80

### 4.3 Analysis of evidence by descriptors referenced

The coding of the samples of evidence was used also to identify the forms of evidence used by candidates to provide evidence of meeting standards in the case of the NSW PST or descriptors in the case of the APST. The outcomes of these analyses are presented graphically and in table form in this section of the report.

Note that although the terms standard and element, and descriptor, and standard are used in the figures and tables to accurately report the different nomenclature used in the NSW PTS and APST for simplicity the discussion of these findings uses only the terms of descriptor and standards. The protocol used for reporting descriptors in the table required minimum frequencies of 150 in the case of the NSW PTS and 100 in the case of the APST.

The data that is reported is both informative and extensive. Generally, the descriptors reported in the tables for the NSW PTS and APST represent the same aspects of teaching practice.

#### 4.3.1 Teaching programs

Candidates referenced teaching programs as evidence of achievement of a wide range of descriptors. The areas of practice most commonly referenced by candidates against teaching programs concerned standards relating to knowing students and how they learn, knowledge of content and how to teach it, planning and implementing effective teaching and learning, creating and maintaining supportive and safe learning environments, assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning.

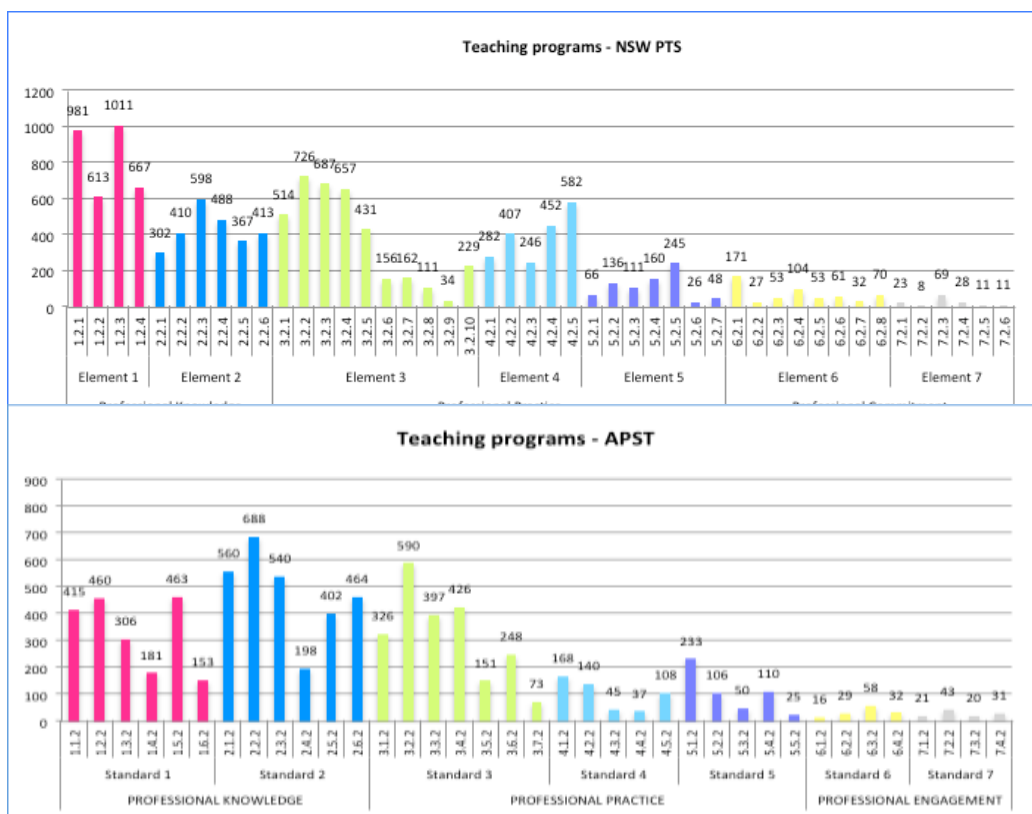


Figure 4.2 Descriptors referenced to Teaching programs

Table 4.3 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Teaching programs

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>2 Teachers know their students and how they learn</b></p> <p>2.2.1 Apply knowledge of the impact of social, ethnic, cultural and religious background factors to meet the learning needs of all students.</p> <p>2.2.2 Apply knowledge of the typical stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development as well as an awareness of exceptions to general patterns.</p> <p>2.2.3 Apply practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the different approaches to learning to enhance student outcomes.</p> <p>2.2.4 Apply knowledge and understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements and their impact on learning.</p> <p>2.2.5 Demonstrate the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul> <p>2.2.6 Apply a range of literacy strategies to meet the needs of all students including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.1.2 Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.</p> <p>1.2.2 Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn.</p> <p>1.3.2 Design and implement teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>1.4.2 Design and implement effective teaching strategies that are responsive to the local community and cultural setting, linguistic background and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</p> <p>1.5.2 Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.</p> <p>1.6.2 Design and implement teaching activities that support the participation and learning of students with disability and address relevant policy and legislative requirements.</p>

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>1 Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students</b></p> <p>1.2.1 Apply and use knowledge of the content/discipline(s) through effective, content-rich, teaching activities and programs relevant to the stage.</p> <p>1.2.2 Apply research-based, practical and theoretical knowledge of the pedagogies of the content/discipline(s) taught to meet learning needs of students.</p> <p>1.2.3 Design and implement contextually relevant teaching and learning sequences using knowledge of the NSW syllabus documents or other curriculum requirements of the Education Act.</p> <p>1.2.4 Apply current knowledge and skills in the use of ICT in the classroom to meet syllabus outcomes in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic operational skills</li> <li>• Information technology skills</li> <li>• Software evaluation skills</li> <li>• Effective use of the internet</li> <li>• Pedagogical skills for classroom management.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 Know the content and how to teach it</b></p> <p>2.1.2 Apply knowledge of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area to develop engaging teaching activities.</p> <p>2.2.2 Organise content into coherent, well-sequenced learning and teaching programs.</p> <p>2.3.2 Design and implement learning and teaching programs using knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.</p> <p>2.4.2 Provide opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</p> <p>2.5.2 Apply knowledge and understanding of effective teaching strategies to support students' literacy and numeracy achievement.</p> <p>2.6.2 Use effective teaching strategies to integrate ICT into learning and teaching programs to make selected content relevant and meaningful.</p>
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Identify and articulate clear learning goals that reflect important conceptual understandings of the content/discipline(s) taught.</p> <p>3.2.2 Design and implement coherent, well structured lessons and lesson sequences that engage students and enhance student learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.3 Select and organise subject/content in structured teaching and learning programs that reflect sound knowledge of subject content/ discipline(s) taught.</p> <p>3.2.4 Select, develop and use a variety of appropriate resources and materials that engage students and support their learning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.1.2 Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.</p> <p>3.2.2 Plan and implement well-structured learning and teaching programs or lesson sequences that engage students and promote learning.</p> <p>3.3.2 Select and use relevant teaching strategies to develop knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.</p> <p>3.4.2 Select and/or create and use a range of resources, including ICT, to engage students in their learning.</p> <p>3.5.2 Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student understanding, participation, engagement and achievement.</p> <p>3.6.2 Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.</p>
<p><b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b></p> <p>5.2.4 Establish orderly and workable learning routines that ensure substantial student time on learning tasks.</p> <p>5.2.5 Manage student behaviour through engaging students in purposeful and worthwhile learning activities.</p>	<p><b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b></p> <p>4.1.2 Establish and implement positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.</p> <p>4.2.2 Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.</p> <p>4.5.2 Incorporate strategies to promote the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.</p>
<p>3.2.5 Use a broad range of effective strategies to assess student achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.6 Communicate to students the link between their achievement and the outcomes set out in the syllabus.</p> <p>3.2.7 Provide timely, effective and consistent oral and written feedback to students to encourage them to reflect on and monitor their learning.</p> <p>3.2.10 Use student assessment results to evaluate teaching and learning programs and inform further planning.</p>	<p><b>5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</b></p> <p>5.1.2 Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.</p> <p>5.5.2 Report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records.</p> <p>5.4.2 Use student assessment data to analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice</p>
<p><b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b></p> <p>4.2.1 Explain goals, content, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately to students.</p> <p>4.2.2 Use questions and classroom discussion effectively to probe students' understanding of the content.</p> <p>4.2.3 Respond to student discussion to promote learning and encourage other students to contribute.</p> <p>4.2.4 Design and facilitate a variety of purposeful group</p>	

NSW PTS	APST
<p><i>structures that facilitate student engagement to make content meaningful.</i></p> <p>4.2.5 <i>Create, select and use a variety of appropriate teaching strategies and resources including ICT and other technologies to make content meaningful to students.</i></p>	
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>Element 6 Teachers Continually Improve Their Professional Knowledge And Practice</b></p> <p>6.2.1 <i>Reflect critically on teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes.</i></p>	

### 4.3.2 Lesson plans

Lesson plans were used primarily as evidence of meeting a range of knowledge and practice descriptors. These are concerned with:

- knowledge of students and student learning
- knowledge of content and pedagogy
- planning and assessing
- communication
- maintaining safe learning environments.

There are few references to descriptors in Standards 6 and 7, which are concerned with professional values and commitment.

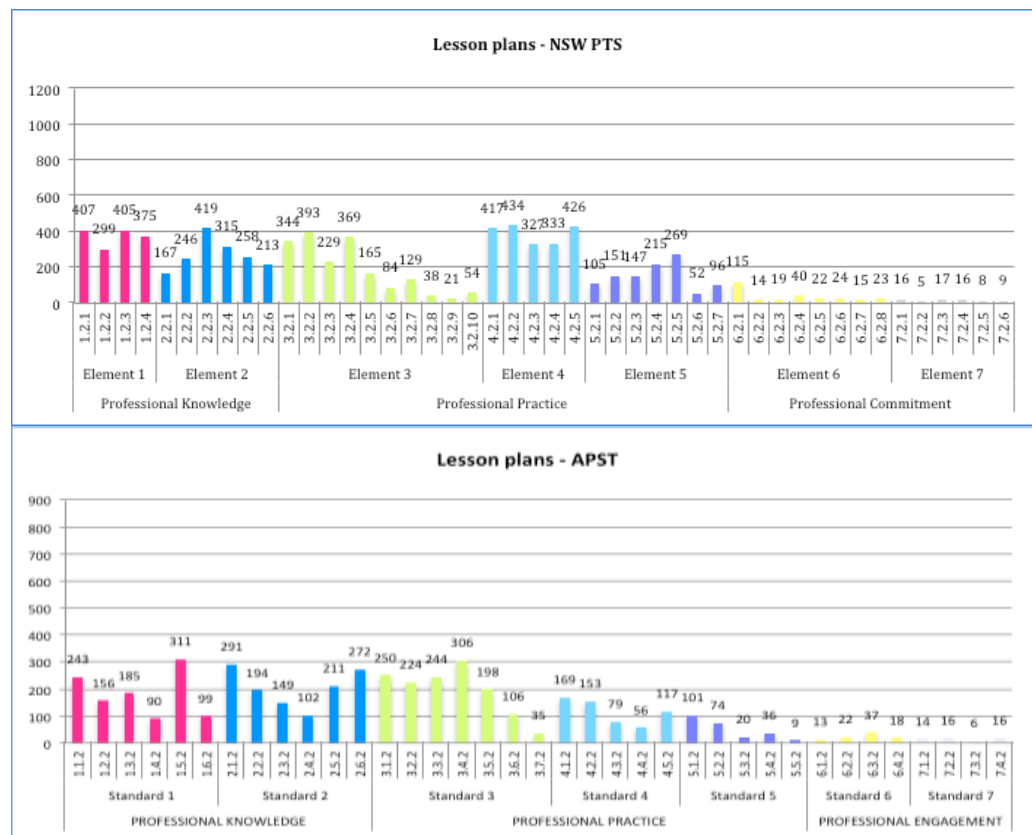


Figure 4.3 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Lesson Plans

Table 4.4 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Lesson Plans

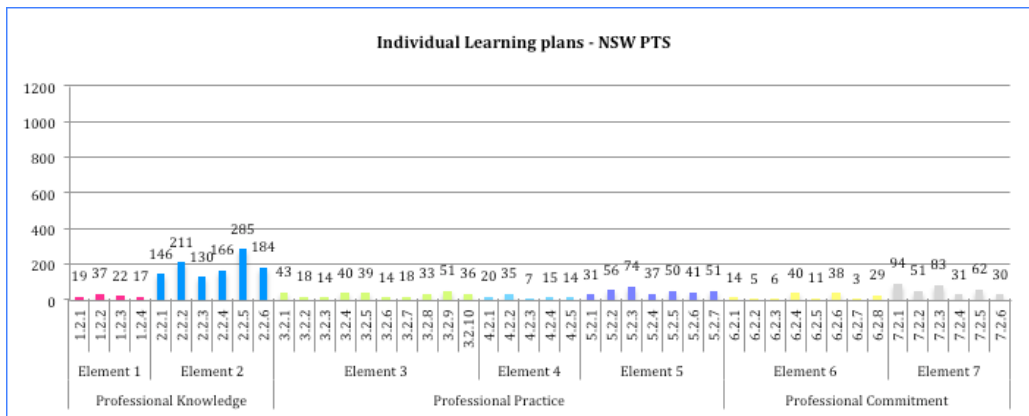


NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>2 Teachers know their students and how they learn</b></p> <p>2.2.1 Apply knowledge of the impact of social, ethnic, cultural and religious background factors to meet the learning needs of all students.</p> <p>2.2.2 Apply knowledge of the typical stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development as well as an awareness of exceptions to general patterns.</p> <p>2.2.3 Apply practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the different approaches to learning to enhance student outcomes.</p> <p>2.2.4 Apply knowledge and understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements and their impact on learning.</p> <p>2.2.5 Demonstrate the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>• Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>• Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul> <p>2.2.6 Apply a range of literacy strategies to meet the needs of all students including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>• Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>• Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>• Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.1.2 Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.</p> <p>1.2.2 Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn.</p> <p>1.3.2 Design and implement teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>1.5.2 Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.</p>
<p><b>1 Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students</b></p> <p>1.2.1 Apply and use knowledge of the content/discipline(s) through effective, content-rich, teaching activities and programs relevant to the stage.</p> <p>1.2.2 Apply research-based, practical and theoretical knowledge of the pedagogies of the content/discipline(s) taught to meet learning needs of students.</p> <p>1.2.3 Design and implement contextually relevant teaching and learning sequences using knowledge of the NSW syllabus documents or other curriculum requirements of the Education Act.</p> <p>1.2.4 Apply current knowledge and skills in the use of ICT in the classroom to meet syllabus outcomes in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic operational skills</li> <li>• Information technology skills</li> <li>• Software evaluation skills</li> <li>• Effective use of the internet</li> <li>• Pedagogical skills for classroom management.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 Know the content and how to teach it</b></p> <p>2.1.2 Apply knowledge of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area to develop engaging teaching activities.</p> <p>2.2.2 Organise content into coherent, well-sequenced learning and teaching programs.</p> <p>2.3.2 Design and implement learning and teaching programs using knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.</p> <p>2.5.2 Apply knowledge and understanding of effective teaching strategies to support students' literacy and numeracy achievement.</p> <p>2.6.2 Use effective teaching strategies to integrate ICT into learning and teaching programs to make selected content relevant and meaningful.</p>
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Identify and articulate clear learning goals that reflect important conceptual understandings of the content/discipline(s) taught.</p> <p>3.2.2 Design and implement coherent, well structured lessons and lesson sequences that engage students and enhance student learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.3 Select and organise subject/content in structured teaching and learning programs that reflect sound knowledge of subject content/ discipline(s) taught.</p> <p>3.2.4 Select, develop and use a variety of appropriate resources and materials that engage students and support their learning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.1.2 Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.</p> <p>3.2.2 Plan and implement well-structured learning and teaching programs or lesson sequences that engage students and promote learning.</p> <p>3.3.2 Select and use relevant teaching strategies to develop knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.</p> <p>3.4.2 Select and/or create and use a range of resources, including ICT, to engage students in their learning.</p> <p>3.5.2 Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student understanding, participation, engagement and achievement.</p> <p>3.6.2 Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.</p>
<p><b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b></p>	

NSW PTS	APST
<p>4.2.1 Explain goals, content, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately to students.</p> <p>4.2.2 Use questions and classroom discussion effectively to probe students' understanding of the content.</p> <p>4.2.3 Respond to student discussion to promote learning and encourage other students to contribute.</p> <p>4.2.4 Design and facilitate a variety of purposeful group structures that facilitate student engagement to make content meaningful.</p> <p>4.2.5 Create, select and use a variety of appropriate teaching strategies and resources including ICT and other technologies to make content meaningful to students.</p>	
<p><b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b></p> <p>5.2.2 Ensure equitable student participation in classroom activities by establishing safe and supportive learning environments.</p> <p>5.2.4 Establish orderly and workable learning routines that ensure substantial student time on learning tasks.</p> <p>5.2.5 Manage student behaviour through engaging students in purposeful and worthwhile learning activities.</p>	<p><b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b></p> <p>4.1.2 Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.</p> <p>4.2.2 Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.</p> <p>4.5.2 Incorporate strategies to promote the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.</p>
	<p><b>5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</b></p> <p>5.1.2 Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.</p>

### 4.3.3 Individual learning plans

Most commonly, individual learning plans were used to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of students and how they learn. The low frequencies recorded against each descriptor reflect the fact that fewer Individual learning plans were presented as evidence in candidate submissions.



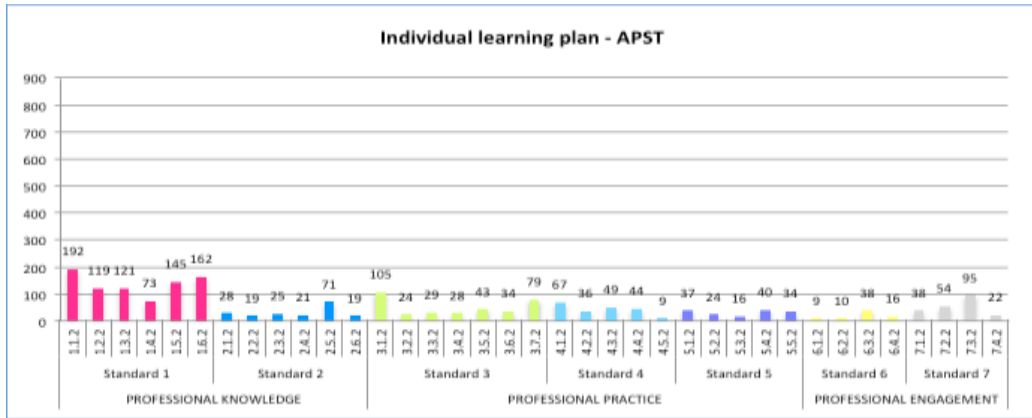


Figure 4.4 Descriptors referenced to Individual Learning Plans

Table 4.5 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Individual Learning Plans

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>2 Teachers know their students and how they learn</b></p> <p>2.2.1 Apply knowledge of the impact of social, ethnic, cultural and religious background factors to meet the learning needs of all students.</p> <p>2.2.2 Apply knowledge of the typical stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development as well as an awareness of exceptions to general patterns.</p> <p>2.2.4 Apply knowledge and understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements and their impact on learning.</p> <p>2.2.5 Demonstrate the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul> <p>2.2.6 Apply a range of literacy strategies to meet the needs of all students including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.1.2 Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.</p> <p>1.2.2 Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn.</p> <p>1.3.2 Design and implement teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>1.5.2 Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.</p> <p>1.6.2 Design and implement teaching activities that support the participation and learning of students with disability and address relevant policy and legislative requirements.</p>
	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.1.2 Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.</p>

#### 4.3.4 Assessment tasks & records

Assessment tasks and records were used primarily as evidence of addressing areas of practice associated with assessment of student learning. However, they were also seen as relevant to demonstration of knowledge of students and how they learn, knowledge of content and how to teach it, planning for and implement effective teaching and learning and assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning.

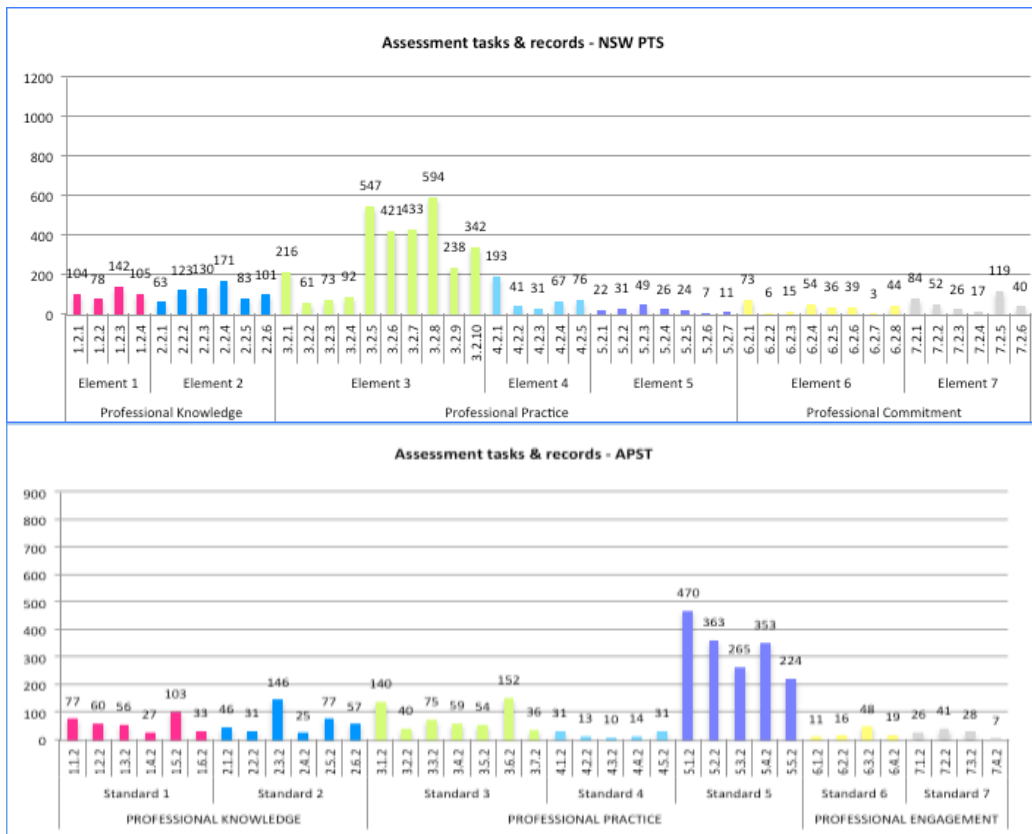


Figure 4.5 Descriptors referenced to Assessment tasks and records

Table 4.6 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Assessment tasks and records

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>2 Teachers know their students and how they learn</b></p> <p>2.2.4 Apply knowledge and understanding of students' skills, interests and prior achievements and their impact on learning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.5.2 Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.</p>
	<p><b>2 Know the content and how to teach it</b></p> <p>2.3.2 Design and implement learning and teaching programs using knowledge of curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements.</p>
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.1 Identify and articulate clear learning goals that reflect important conceptual understandings of the content/discipline(s) taught.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.1.2 Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.</p> <p>3.6.2 Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.</p>
<p>3.2.5 Use a broad range of effective strategies to assess student achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.6 Communicate to students the link between their achievement and the outcomes set out in the syllabus.</p> <p>3.2.7 Provide timely, effective and consistent oral and written feedback to students to encourage them to reflect on and monitor their learning.</p> <p>3.2.8 Use and maintain effective and efficient record-keeping systems to monitor students' learning progress.</p> <p>3.2.9 Report effectively to students, parents and caregivers about student learning.</p> <p>3.2.10 Use student assessment results to evaluate teaching and learning programs and inform further planning.</p>	<p><b>5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</b></p> <p>5.1.2 Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.</p> <p>5.2.2 Provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals.</p> <p>5.3.2 Understand and participate in assessment moderation activities to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.</p> <p>5.4.2 Use student assessment data to analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice.</p>

NSW PTS	APST
	5.5.2 Report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records.
<b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b> 4.2.1 Explain goals, content, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately to students.	

### 4.3.5 Student reports

Most commonly, student reports were to address descriptors related to assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning. Some candidates saw student reports demonstrating engaging professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

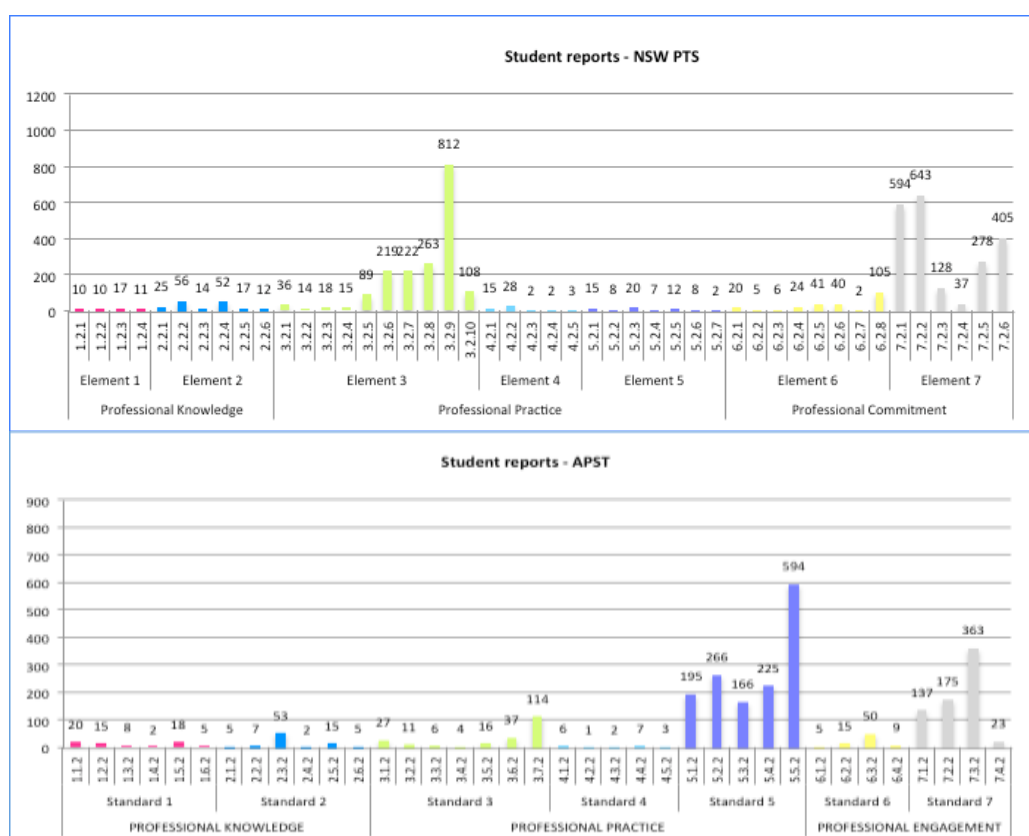


Figure 4.6 Descriptors referenced to Student reports

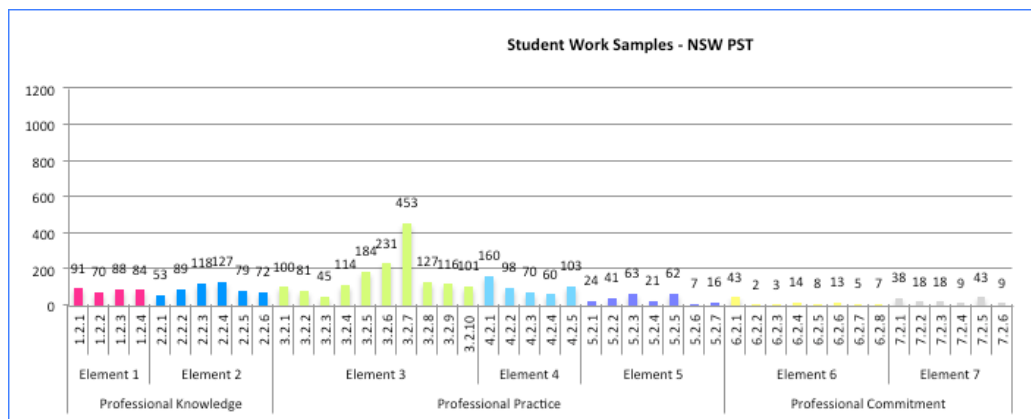
Table 4.7 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Student reports

NSW PTS	APST
<b>Professional Practice</b>	<b>Professional Practice</b>
<b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b> 3.2.6 Communicate to students the link between their achievement and the outcomes set out in the syllabus. 3.2.7 Provide timely, effective and consistent oral and written feedback to students to encourage them to reflect on and monitor their learning. 3.2.8 Use and maintain effective and efficient record-keeping	<b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b> 3.7.2 Plan for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning. <b>5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</b> 5.1.2 Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning. 5.2.2 Provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals.

NSW PTS	APST
<p><i>systems to monitor students' learning progress.</i></p> <p>3.2.9 <i>Report effectively to students, parents and caregivers about student learning.</i></p>	<p>5.3.2 <i>Understand and participate in assessment moderation activities to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.</i></p> <p>5.4.2 <i>Use student assessment data to analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice.</i></p> <p>5.5.2 <i>Report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records.</i></p>
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>7 Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community</b></p> <p>7.2.1 <i>Communicate regularly and effectively with parents and caregivers, and other colleagues about students' learning and wellbeing.</i></p> <p>7.2.2 <i>Demonstrate empathy and understanding in all communication including reporting student achievement to parents and caregivers.</i></p> <p>7.2.5 <i>Demonstrate ethical behaviour by respecting the privacy of students and confidentiality of student information.</i></p> <p>7.2.6 <i>Present a professional image in all communication and interactions with parents, caregivers, colleagues, industry and the local community.</i></p>	<p><b>Professional Engagement</b></p> <p><b>7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</b></p> <p>7.1.2 <i>Meet codes of ethics and conduct established by regulatory authorities, systems and schools.</i></p> <p>7.2.2 <i>Understand the implications of and comply with relevant legislative, administrative, organisational and professional requirements, policies and processes.</i></p> <p>7.3.2 <i>Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/ carers regarding their children's learning and wellbeing.</i></p>

#### 4.3.6 Student work samples

Although student work samples were used mainly as a means of demonstrating achievement of descriptors concerned with assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning, some saw student work samples being relevant to demonstrating practice in other areas, namely, knowledge of students and how they learn, and planning for and implement effective teaching and learning.



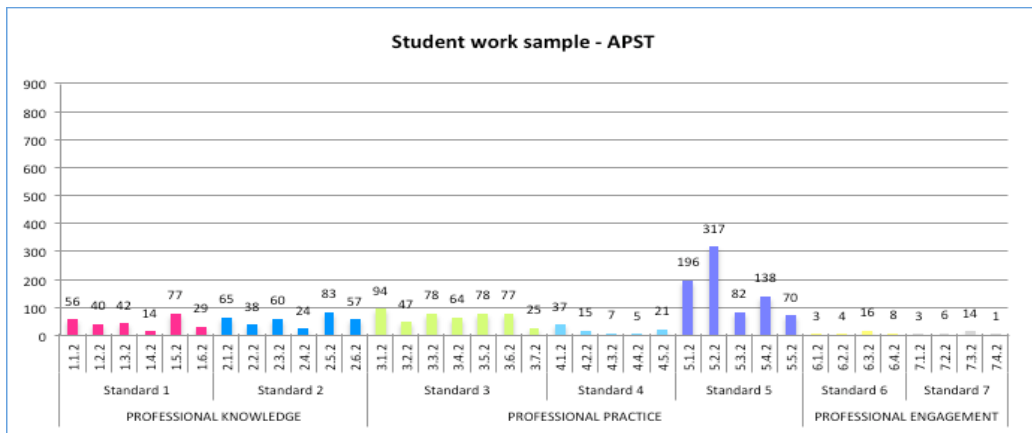


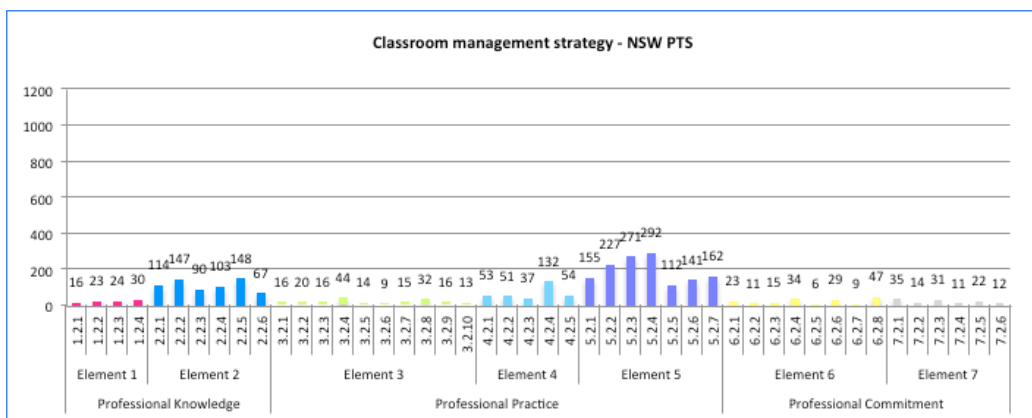
Figure 4.7 Descriptors referenced to Student work samples

Table 4.8 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Student work samples

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.5 Use a broad range of effective strategies to assess student achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.6 Communicate to students the link between their achievement and the outcomes set out in the syllabus.</p> <p>3.2.7 Provide timely, effective and consistent oral and written feedback to students to encourage them to reflect on and monitor their learning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>5 Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning</b></p> <p>5.1.2 Develop, select and use informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment strategies to assess student learning.</p> <p>5.2.2 Provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals.</p> <p>5.4.2 Use student assessment data to analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content, identifying interventions and modifying teaching practice.</p>
<p><b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b></p> <p>4.2.1 Explain goals, content, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately to students.</p>	

### 4.3.7 Classroom management strategy

Descriptors referenced against classroom management strategies predominantly comprise those concerned with the standard *Create and maintaining supportive and safe learning environments* and the descriptor *Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students’ physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning*.





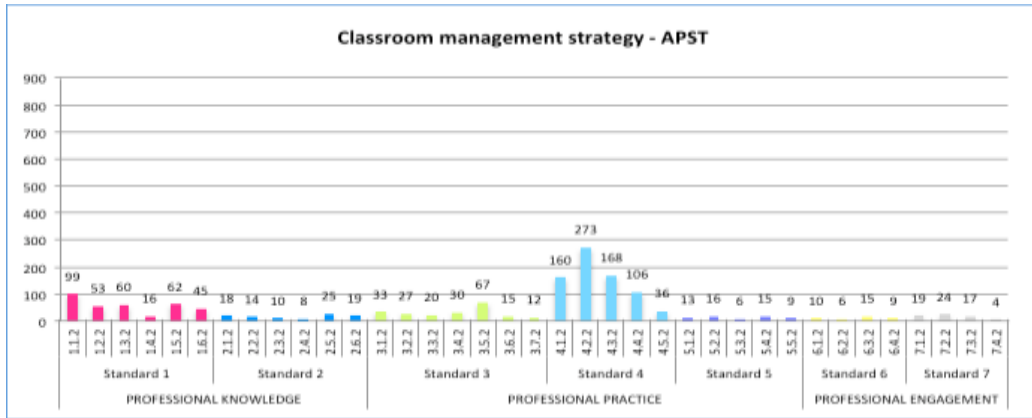


Figure 4.8 Descriptors referenced to Classroom management strategies

Table 4.9 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Classroom management strategies

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>2 Teachers know their students and how they learn</b></p> <p>2.2.2 Apply knowledge of the typical stages of students' physical, social and intellectual development as well as an awareness of exceptions to general patterns.</p> <p>2.2.5 Demonstrate the capacity to apply effective strategies for teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Students with Special Education Needs</li> <li>Non-English Speaking Background students</li> <li>Students with Challenging Behaviours.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.1.2 Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.</p>
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b></p> <p>4.2.4 Design and facilitate a variety of purposeful group structures that facilitate student engagement to make content meaningful.</p>	
<p><b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b></p> <p>5.2.1 Maintain consistent, fair and equitable interactions with students to establish rapport and lead them to display these same characteristics in their interactions with one another.</p> <p>5.2.2 Ensure equitable student participation in classroom activities by establishing safe and supportive learning environments.</p> <p>5.2.3 Implement strategies to establish a positive environment supporting student effort and learning.</p> <p>5.2.4 Establish orderly and workable learning routines that ensure substantial student time on learning tasks.</p> <p>5.2.7 Apply specific requirements to ensure student safety in classrooms.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b></p> <p>4.1.2 Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.</p> <p>4.2.2 Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.</p> <p>4.3.2 Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully.</p> <p>4.4.2 Ensure students' wellbeing and safety within school by implementing school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.</p>

#### 4.3.8 Behaviour management strategies

Candidates who presented evidence of behaviour management strategies were predominantly concerned with demonstrating achievement of descriptors related to creating and maintaining supportive and safe learning environments.



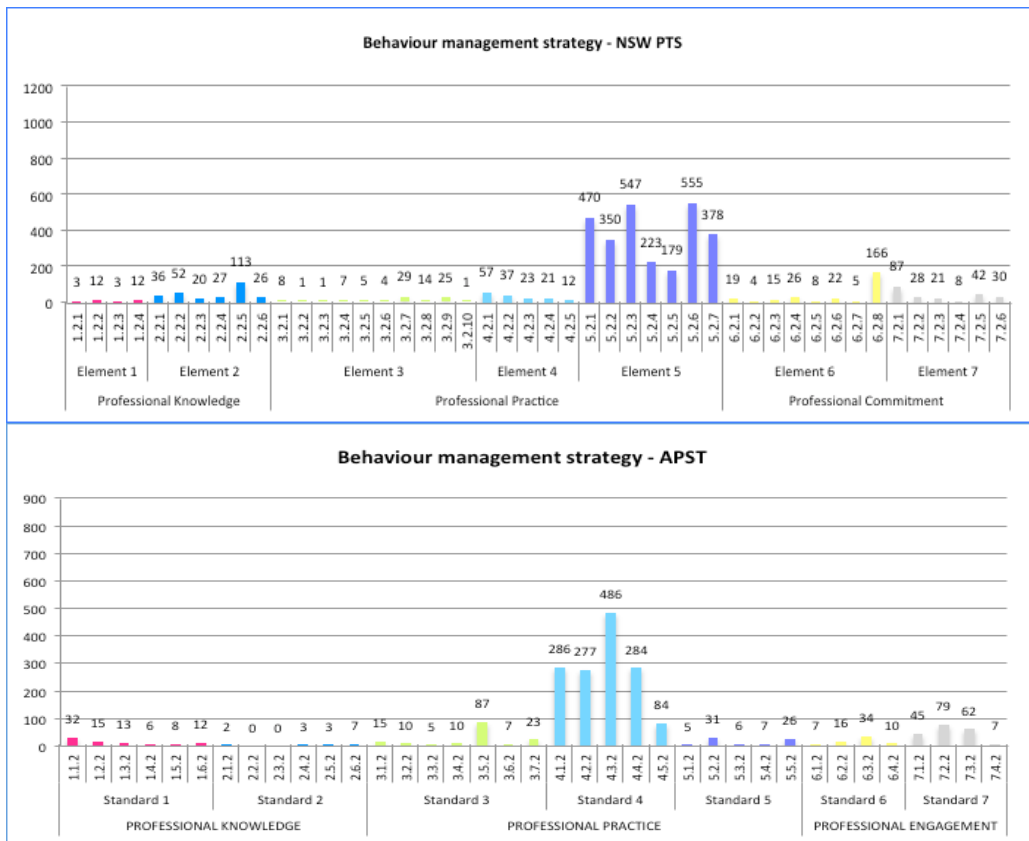


Figure 4.9 Descriptors referenced to Behaviour management strategies

Table 4.10 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Behaviour management strategies

NSW PTS	APST
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b></p> <p>5.2.1 Maintain consistent, fair and equitable interactions with students to establish rapport and lead them to display these same characteristics in their interactions with one another.</p> <p>5.2.2 Ensure equitable student participation in classroom activities by establishing safe and supportive learning environments.</p> <p>5.2.3 Implement strategies to establish a positive environment supporting student effort and learning.</p> <p>5.2.4 Establish orderly and workable learning routines that ensure substantial student time on learning tasks.</p> <p>5.2.5 Manage student behaviour through engaging students in purposeful and worthwhile learning activities.</p> <p>5.2.6 Handle classroom discipline problems quickly, fairly and respectfully.</p> <p>5.2.7 Apply specific requirements to ensure student safety in classrooms.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b></p> <p>4.1.2 Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.</p> <p>4.2.2 Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.</p> <p>4.3.2 Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully.</p> <p>4.4.2 Ensure students' wellbeing and safety within school by implementing school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.</p>

NSW PTS	APST
<b>Professional commitment</b> <b>6 Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice</b> 6.2.8 Demonstrate knowledge of the application of relevant policy documents in schools.	

### 4.3.9 Risk assessment

Over all fewer candidates submitted evidence of risk assessment policies and documents, consequently few descriptors met the minimum reporting requirements set out earlier in the reporting protocol. Nonetheless, candidates submitting risk assessment policies saw them as providing evidence of descriptors concerned with creating and maintaining safe and supportive learning environments.

Some candidates saw them also as presenting evidence of addressing descriptors related to engaging professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

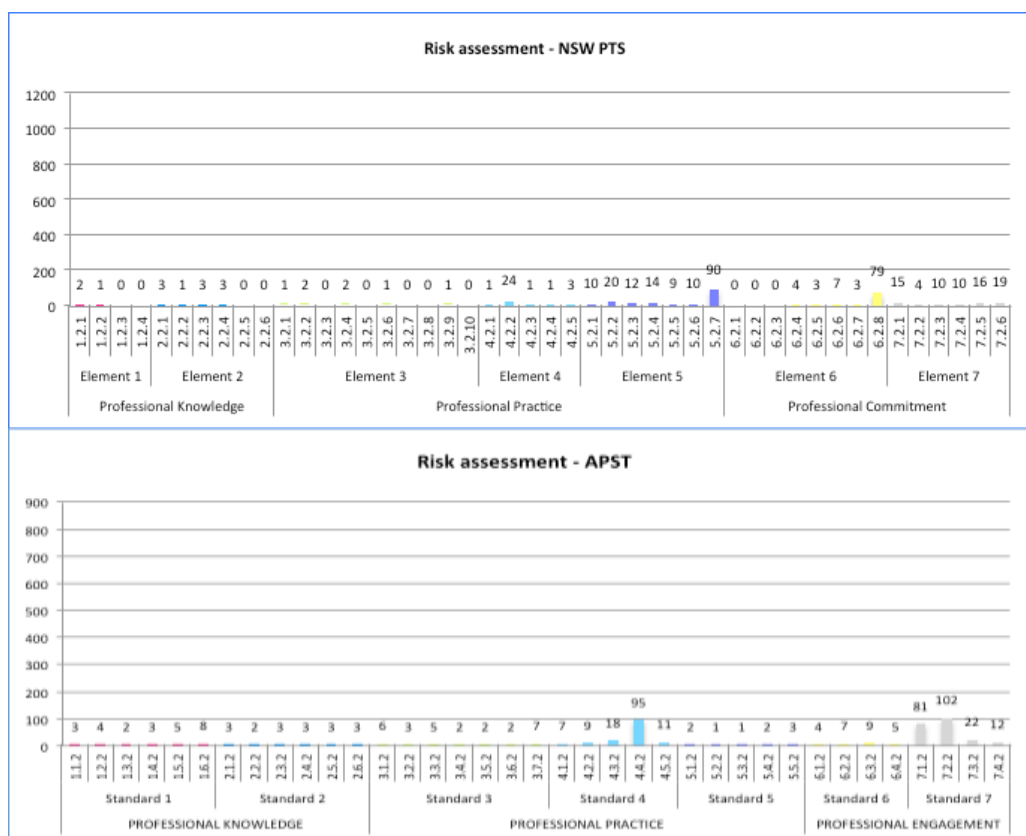


Figure 4.10 Descriptors referenced to Risk assessment

Table 4.11 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Risk assessment

NSW PTS	APST
<b>Professional Practice</b> <b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b>	<b>Professional Practice</b> <b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b> 4.4.2 Ensure students' wellbeing and safety within school by

NSW PTS	APST
5.2.7 Apply specific requirements to ensure student safety in classrooms.	implementing school and/ or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.
<b>Professional commitment</b> <b>6 Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge And practice</b> 6.2.8 Demonstrate knowledge of the application of relevant policy documents in schools.	<b>Professional Engagement</b> <b>7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</b> 7.1.2 Meet codes of ethics and conduct established by regulatory authorities, systems and schools. 7.2.2 Understand the implications of and comply with relevant legislative, administrative, organisational and professional requirements, policies and processes.

### 4.3.10 Lesson observation record

Lesson observation records submitted by candidates referenced a wide range of descriptors. These include descriptors related to standards:

- Know students and how they learn
- Know content and how to teach it
- Plan for and implement effective teaching
- Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
- Engage in professional learning.

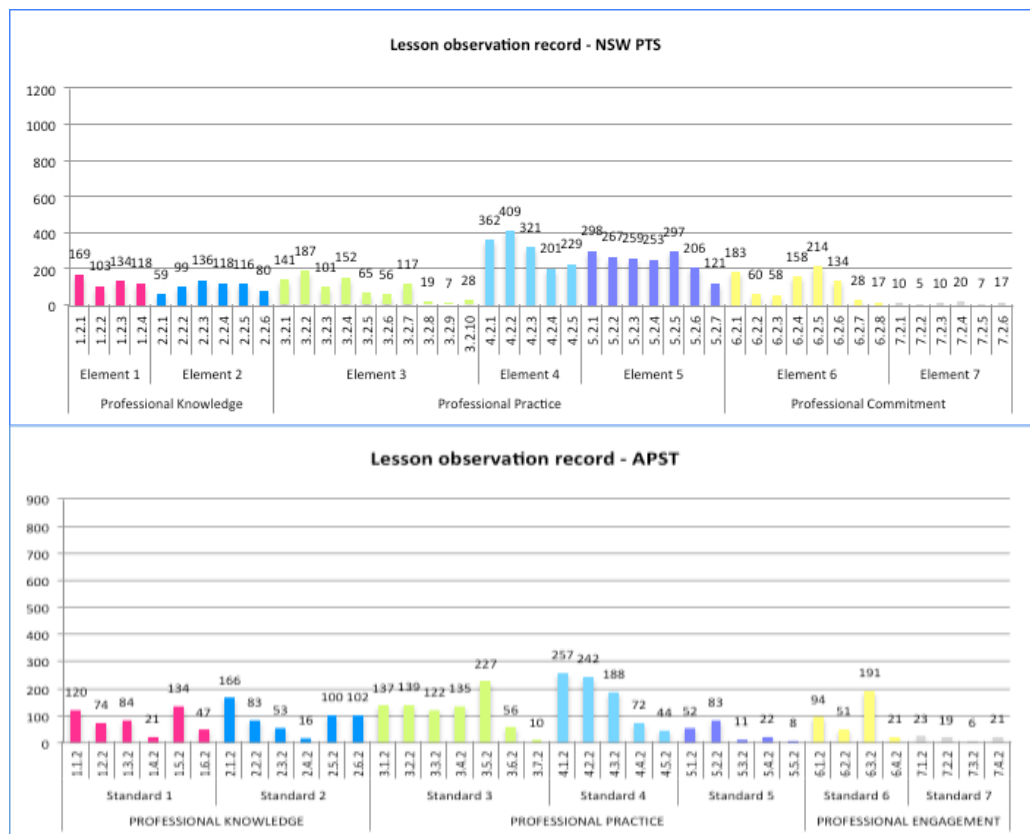


Figure 4.11 Descriptors referenced to Lesson observation records

**Table 4.12 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Lesson observation records**

NSW PTS	APTS
<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p>	<p><b>Professional Knowledge</b></p> <p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.1.2 Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning.</p> <p>1.5.2 Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.</p>
<p><b>1 Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students</b></p> <p>1.2.1 Apply and use knowledge of the content/discipline(s) through effective, content-rich, teaching activities and programs relevant to the stage.</p>	<p><b>2 Know the content and how to teach it</b></p> <p>2.1.2 Apply knowledge of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area to develop engaging teaching activities.</p> <p>2.5.2 Apply knowledge and understanding of effective teaching strategies to support students' literacy and numeracy achievement.</p> <p>2.6.2 Use effective teaching strategies to integrate ICT into learning and teaching programs to make selected content relevant and meaningful.</p>
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.2 Design and implement coherent, well structured lessons and lesson sequences that engage students and enhance student learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.2.4 Select, develop and use a variety of appropriate resources and materials that engage students and support their learning.</p>	<p><b>1 Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.1.2 Set explicit, challenging and achievable learning goals for all students.</p> <p>3.2.2 Plan and implement well-structured learning and teaching programs or lesson sequences that engage students and promote learning.</p> <p>3.3.2 Select and use relevant teaching strategies to develop knowledge, skills, problem solving and critical and creative thinking.</p> <p>3.4.2 Select and/or create and use a range of resources, including ICT, to engage students in their learning.</p> <p>3.5.2 Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student understanding, participation, engagement and achievement.</p>
<p><b>5 Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills</b></p> <p>5.2.1 Maintain consistent, fair and equitable interactions with students to establish rapport and lead them to display these same characteristics in their interactions with one another.</p> <p>5.2.2 Ensure equitable student participation in classroom activities by establishing safe and supportive learning environments.</p> <p>5.2.3 Implement strategies to establish a positive environment supporting student effort and learning.</p> <p>5.2.4 Establish orderly and workable learning routines that ensure substantial student time on learning tasks.</p> <p>5.2.5 Manage student behaviour through engaging students in purposeful and worthwhile learning activities.</p> <p>5.2.6 Handle classroom discipline problems quickly, fairly and respectfully.</p>	<p><b>4 Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments</b></p> <p>4.1.2 Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.</p> <p>4.2.2 Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.</p> <p>4.3.2 Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully.</p>
<p><b>4 Teachers communicate effectively with their students</b></p> <p>4.2.1 Explain goals, content, concepts and ideas clearly and accurately to students.</p> <p>4.2.2 Use questions and classroom discussion effectively to probe students' understanding of the content.</p> <p>4.2.3 Respond to student discussion to promote learning and encourage other students to contribute.</p>	

NSW PTS	APTS
<p>4.2.4 <i>Design and facilitate a variety of purposeful group structures that facilitate student engagement to make content meaningful.</i></p> <p>4.2.5 <i>Create, select and use a variety of appropriate teaching strategies and resources including ICT and other technologies to make content meaningful to students.</i></p>	
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>6 Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice</b></p> <p>6.2.1 <i>Reflect critically on teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes.</i></p> <p>6.2.4 <i>Work productively and openly with colleagues in reviewing teaching strategies and refining professional knowledge and practice.</i></p> <p>6.2.5 <i>Accept and offer constructive feedback to support a professional learning community.</i></p>	<p><b>Professional Engagement</b></p> <p><b>6 Engage in professional learning</b></p> <p>6.3.2 <i>Contribute to collegial discussions and apply constructive feedback from colleagues to improve professional knowledge and practice.</i></p>

### 4.3.11 Parent-teacher meeting record

Parent-teacher meeting records were used to demonstrate a limited number of descriptors concerned with the standard *Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community*. A smaller number of respondents saw parent teacher meeting records as contributing to achievement of the descriptor *Report clearly, accurately and respectfully to students and parents/carers about student achievement, making use of accurate and reliable records*.

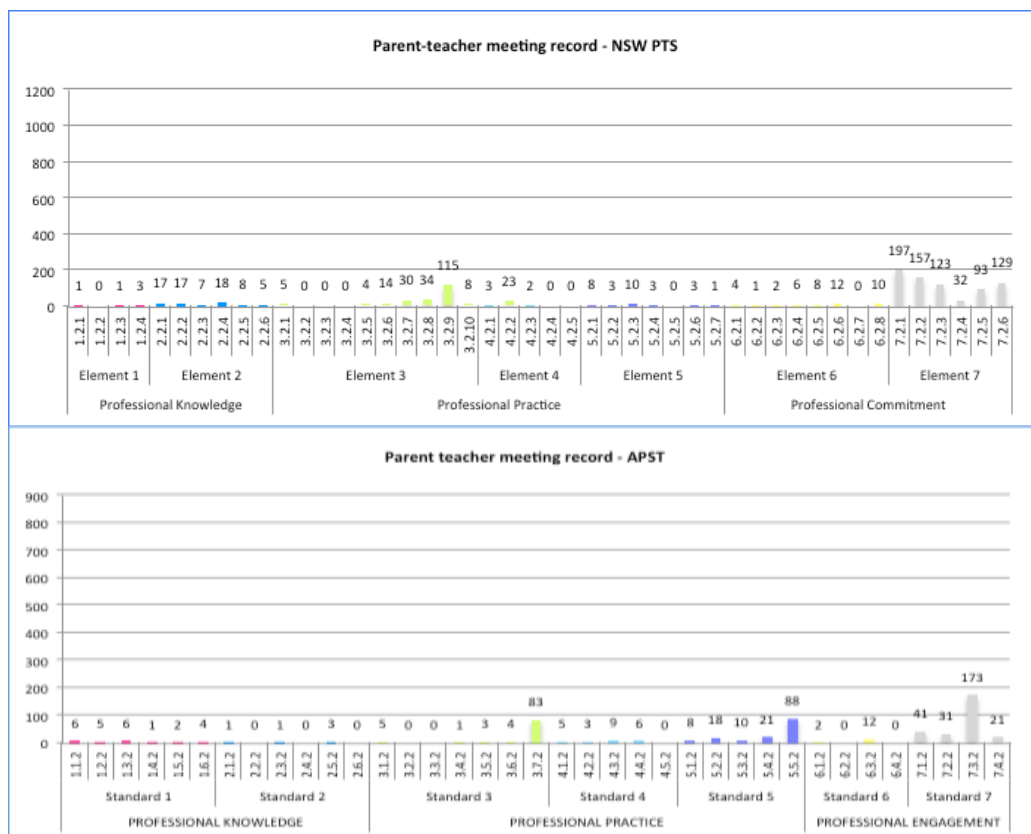


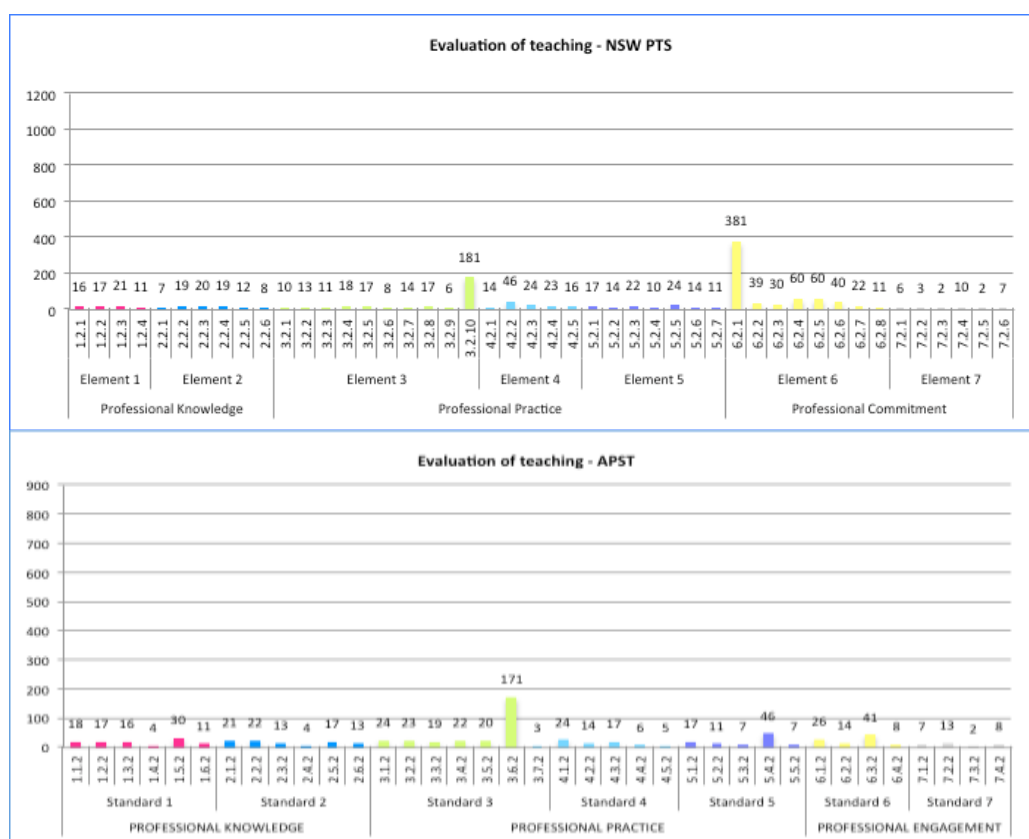
Figure 4.12 Descriptors referenced to Parent-teacher meeting records

**Table 4.13 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Parent-teacher meeting records**

NSW PTS	APTS
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>7 Teachers Are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community</b></p> <p>7.2.1 Communicate regularly and effectively with parents and caregivers, and other colleagues about students' learning and wellbeing.</p> <p>7.2.2 Demonstrate empathy and understanding in all communication including reporting student achievement to parents and caregivers.</p>	<p><b>Professional Engagement</b></p> <p><b>7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</b></p> <p>7.3.2 Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/ carers regarding their children's learning and wellbeing.</p>

### 4.3.12 Evaluation of Teaching

Evidence demonstrating evaluation of teaching was used as a means of demonstrating the descriptor *Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.*



**Figure 4.13 Descriptors referenced to Evaluation of teaching**

**Table 4.14 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Evaluation of teaching**

NSW PTS	APTS
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.10 Use student assessment results to evaluate teaching and learning programs and inform further planning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.6.2 Evaluate personal teaching and learning programs using evidence, including feedback from students and student assessment data, to inform planning.</p>

<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>6 Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge And practice</b></p> <p>6.2.1 Reflect critically on teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes.</p>	
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### 4.3.13 Professional learning records

Professional learning records were mainly used to demonstrate achievement of descriptors associated with the two standards: *Engage in professional learning* and *Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community*. To a lesser extent they was used to demonstrate achievement of the descriptor *Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn*.

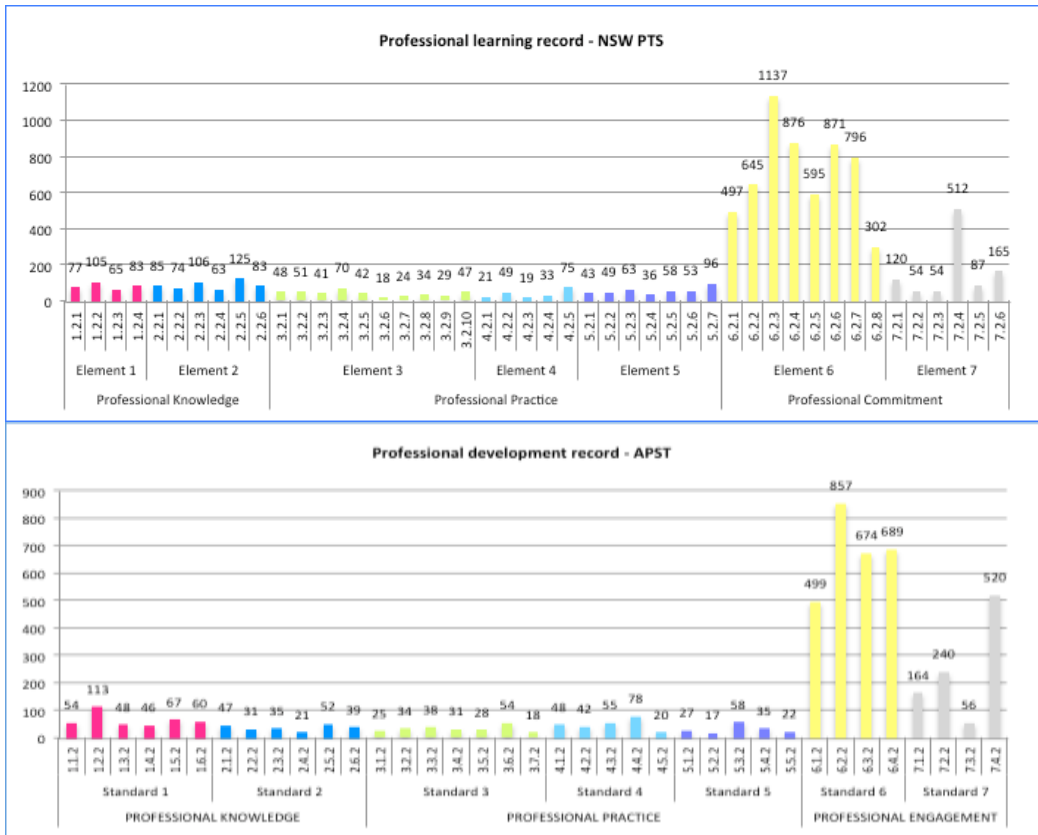


Figure 4.14 Descriptors referenced to Professional development records

Table 4.15 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Professional development records

NSW PTS	APTS
	<p><b>1 Know students and how they learn</b></p> <p>1.2.2 Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn.</p>
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>6 Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge And practice</b></p> <p>6.2.1 Reflect critically on teaching and learning practice to enhance student learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.2.2 Use the professional standards to identify personal</p>	<p><b>Professional Engagement</b></p> <p><b>6 Engage in professional learning</b></p> <p>6.1.2 Use the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and advice from colleagues to identify and plan professional learning needs.</p> <p>6.2.2 Participate in learning to update knowledge and practice,</p>

<p><i>professional development needs and plan accordingly.</i></p> <p>6.2.3 <i>Engage in professional development to extend and refine teaching and learning practices.</i></p> <p>6.2.4 <i>Work productively and openly with colleagues in reviewing teaching strategies and refining professional knowledge and practice.</i></p> <p>6.2.5 <i>Accept and offer constructive feedback to support a professional learning community.</i></p> <p>6.2.6 <i>Participate constructively in formal and informal professional discussions with colleagues.</i></p> <p>6.2.7 <i>Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional learning by exploring educational ideas, issues and research.</i></p>	<p><i>targeted to professional needs and school and/or system priorities.</i></p> <p>6.3.2 <i>Contribute to collegial discussions and apply constructive feedback from colleagues to improve professional knowledge and practice.</i></p> <p>6.4.2 <i>Undertake professional learning programs designed to address identified student learning needs.</i></p>
<p><b>7 Teachers Are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community</b></p> <p>7.2.4 <i>Interact and network with colleagues and community stakeholders in educational forums.</i></p> <p>7.2.6 <i>Present a professional image in all communication and interactions with parents, caregivers, colleagues, industry and the local community.</i></p>	<p><b>7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</b></p> <p>7.1.2 <i>Meet codes of ethics and conduct established by regulatory authorities, systems and schools.</i></p> <p>7.2.2 <i>Understand the implications of and comply with relevant legislative, administrative, organisational and professional requirements, policies and processes.</i></p> <p>7.4.2 <i>Participate in professional and community networks and forums to broaden knowledge and improve practice.</i></p>

#### 4.3.14 Professional communications

Candidates for accreditation submitted evidence of Professional communications to address descriptors associated with the standard *Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community* and also the descriptor *Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning*.

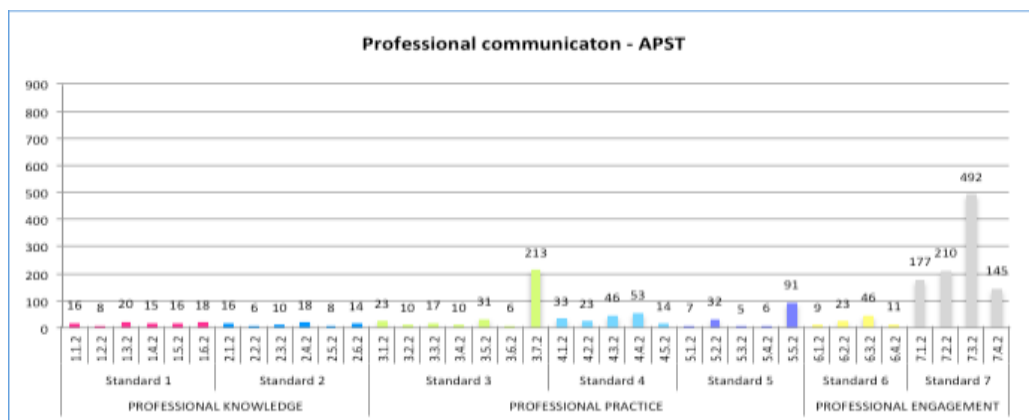
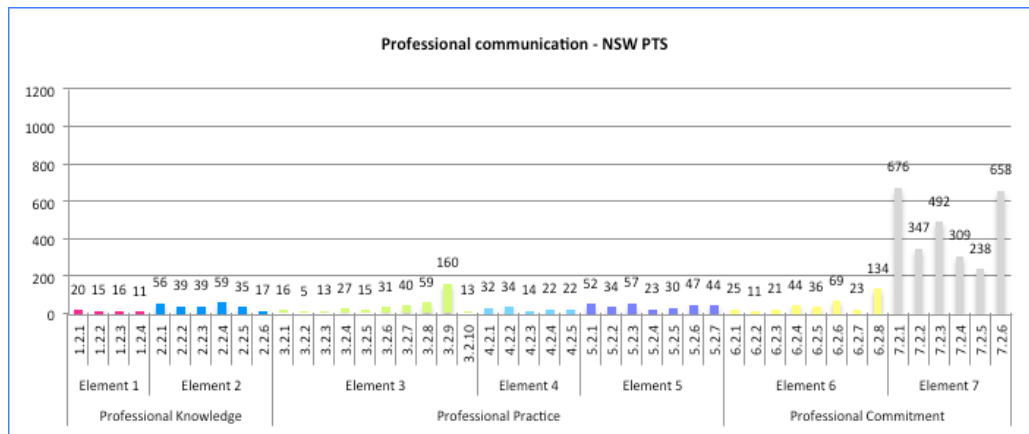


Figure 4.15 Descriptors referenced to Professional communications

Table 4.16 Descriptors most commonly referenced to Professional communications



NSW PTS	APTS
<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning</b></p> <p>3.2.9 Report effectively to students, parents and caregivers about student learning.</p>	<p><b>Professional Practice</b></p> <p><b>3 Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</b></p> <p>3.7.2 Plan for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/ carers to be involved in their children’s learning.</p>
<p><b>Professional commitment</b></p> <p><b>7 Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community</b></p> <p>7.2.1 Communicate regularly and effectively with parents and caregivers, and other colleagues about students’ learning and wellbeing.</p> <p>7.2.2 Demonstrate empathy and understanding in all communication including reporting student achievement to parents and caregivers.</p> <p>7.2.3 Provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to be involved in the teaching program where appropriate.</p> <p>7.2.4 Interact and network with colleagues and community stakeholders in educational forums.</p> <p>7.2.5 Demonstrate ethical behaviour by respecting the privacy of students and confidentiality of student information.</p> <p>7.2.6 Present a professional image in all communication and interactions with parents, caregivers, colleagues, industry and the local community.</p>	<p><b>Professional Engagement</b></p> <p><b>7 Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</b></p> <p>7.1.2 Meet codes of ethics and conduct established by regulatory authorities, systems and schools.</p> <p>7.2.2 Understand the implications of and comply with relevant legislative, administrative, organisational and professional requirements, policies and processes.</p> <p>7.3.2 Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/ carers regarding their children’s learning and wellbeing.</p>

#### 4.4 Discussion of findings in relation to the range and frequency of individual descriptors used as evidence

There are three aspects to the discussion of the findings reported above. The first concerns the forms of evidence and the frequency with which candidates presented the various forms of evidence. The second concerns the use of these forms of evidence to present evidence of meeting descriptors. The third concerns the need to argue a case for making a link between evidence and descriptors within annotations.

##### 4.4.1 Form and number of items of evidence presented

The forms of evidence presented by candidates were largely consistent with the example forms of evidence set out in the *Evidence Guide* for candidates. There were issues, however with the number of items of evidence presented by some candidates: both too few or too many items of evidence.

Candidates presenting too few items of evidence run the risk that their evidence does not provide sufficient demonstration of their practice across the standards. Candidates presenting too much evidence are unnecessarily increasing their workload, and while increasing the complexity of their demonstration of the standards. Nevertheless, although external assessors raised concerns about submissions with too few or too many items of evidence they generally rated such evidence as Highly consistent or Consistent with the ratings criteria.

However, the analysis of the sample of submissions found many submissions with large numbers of evidence items were often relatively incoherent, poorly organised and displayed poor connections between annotations and evidence. Such submissions generally took two to three times longer to analyse than submissions with moderate numbers of items of evidence.

Further, it is difficult to perceive what the 25<sup>th</sup> lesson plan submitted by one candidate in the sample of submissions showed that was not evident amongst earlier lesson plans they submitted.

While for some candidates it appears that submitting a large number of items of evidence is a personal choice, anecdotal evidence available to the review suggests that other candidates with a large number of items were responding to school policies requiring candidates to demonstrate achievement of all descriptors. While such policies contradict the advice that BOSTES provides to candidates, their potential effect is to shift responsibility for ensuring candidates address the standards from school supervisors to candidates.

#### 4.4.2 The range and frequency of individual descriptors referenced against items of evidence

The second aspect under discussion concerns analysis of the range and frequency of individual descriptors against the forms of evidence. The analysis reported above identified descriptors most commonly referenced by each form of evidence. These data provide direction for future candidates aligning evidence and descriptors.

While the graphs (Figures 4.2 – 4.15) indicate most common linkages between evidence forms and descriptors, they show also many instances where there were few candidates referencing a particular descriptor to each form of evidence. For example, Figure 4.15 shows there were 16 instances where candidates used professional communications to demonstrate *Use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students' physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning* and 8 instances where they were used to demonstrate *Structure teaching programs using research and collegial advice about how students learn*.

Clearly, an argument linking professional communications to the latter descriptor could easily be made. However, arguing the case for professional communication to provide evidence of using teaching strategies may be more problematic.

#### 4.4.3 Arguing the case for linking descriptors to evidence

Despite the comment expressed above about the potential to link evidence to descriptors it was apparent from the analysis of submissions that many candidates had failed to argue adequately within their annotations a case for the stated link between items of evidence and descriptors.

Consequently, some links between forms of evidence and descriptors appear very tenuous. For example, the use of specific words in evidence, such as 'parents' led to the evidence being linked to any descriptor containing the word 'parent'. Similarly, the use of the word curriculum was used to indicate knowledge of BOSTES curriculum.

Equally, many candidates appear to ascribe too many descriptors to single items of evidence. Figure 4.16 below shows the number of descriptors referenced to evidence of professional learning. Even though candidates presented up to seven professional development records (see Figure 4.1), these data suggest the legitimacy of arguments justifying links to more than ten descriptors may be debatable.

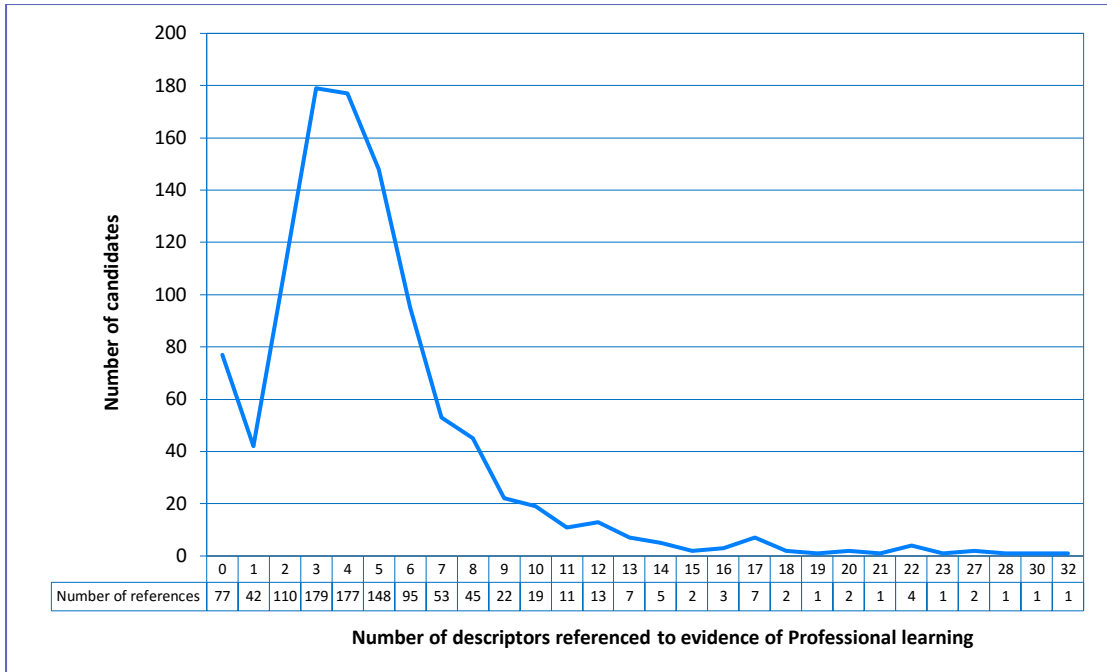


Figure 4.16 Number of descriptors referenced to evidence of Professional Learning (APST)

## 5 The efficacy and appropriateness of current quality control mechanisms

Current quality control mechanisms aimed at assuring the quality and consistency of accreditation decisions at Proficient teacher level are focused around external assessors' review and assessment of determined submissions and accreditation reports. To date external assessors have reviewed more than 26 000 accreditation decisions.

Quality assurance related issues have been threaded throughout earlier reporting of findings and discussions in this report. These issues remain manifest and contribute to prescriptions for reforming quality assurance mechanisms outlined later in this chapter.

This chapter is in two parts. The first reports on issues identified in external assessor commentary and in the analysis of sampled submissions. The second identifies issues needing attention in any review of current quality assurance arrangements.

### 5.1 Issues identified in commentary.

In addition to issues arising from external assessor's analysis of evidence commentary (see Chapter 2) a random sample of some five hundred report comments was analysed in relation to the nature of the comments. The issues identified in commentary were:

- the sufficiency of practice identified in reports
- the relationship between the report and the descriptors
- the use of conditional language
- process issues identified in commentary
- supervisors and supervision.

Prior to the analysis of commentary, reports were ordered in terms of all criteria scores and allocated decile scores. The decile scores represent proxies for the quality of external assessor ratings and were used to investigate the relationship between the quality of the report and issues raised in commentary.

#### 5.1.1 Sufficiency of detail amongst report comments

A recurring theme amongst commentary about reports sampled concerned the sufficiency of detail about practice. These comments provided indications of whether there was sufficient or insufficient commentary. In total there were 145 comments about insufficient detail and 170 comments indicating sufficient detail. Figure 5.1 reports on the mapping of comments about the sufficiency of comments.

The mapping indicates a relationship between the sufficiency of detail and all criteria score deciles. The lower the decile the higher the proportion of insufficient comment and lower the proportion of comment about sufficient detail. Conversely, the higher the decile, the lower the proportion of insufficient detail and higher the proportion of sufficient detail.

Figure 5.2 reports on the pattern of commentary concerned with insufficient detail over the period 2006 to 2014. The graph indicates an apparent increase in the proportion of reports with insufficient

comment up to 2011 and a decrease over 2012 to 2014. Correspondingly, comments indicating sufficient comment increased in 2013-14.

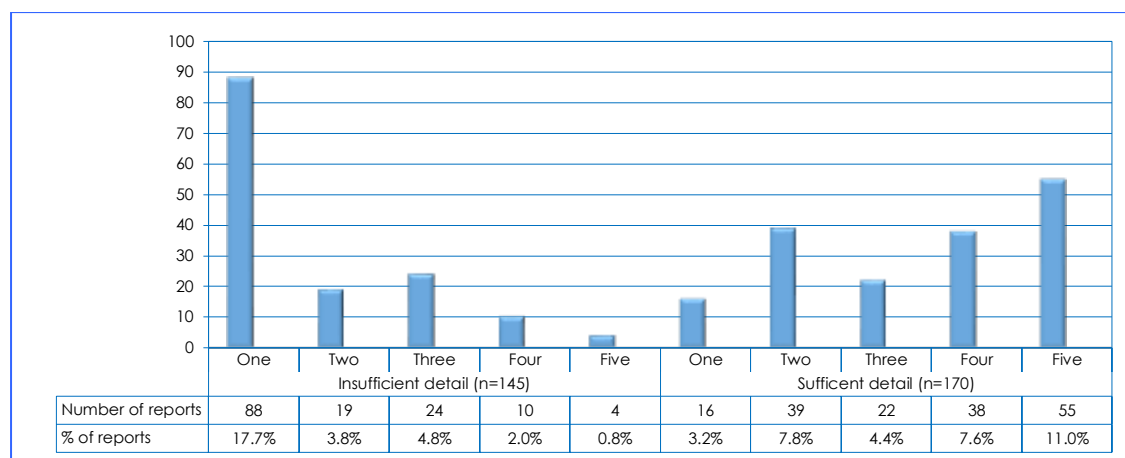


Figure 5.1 External assessor reports with comments about extent of practice detailed in reports by decile

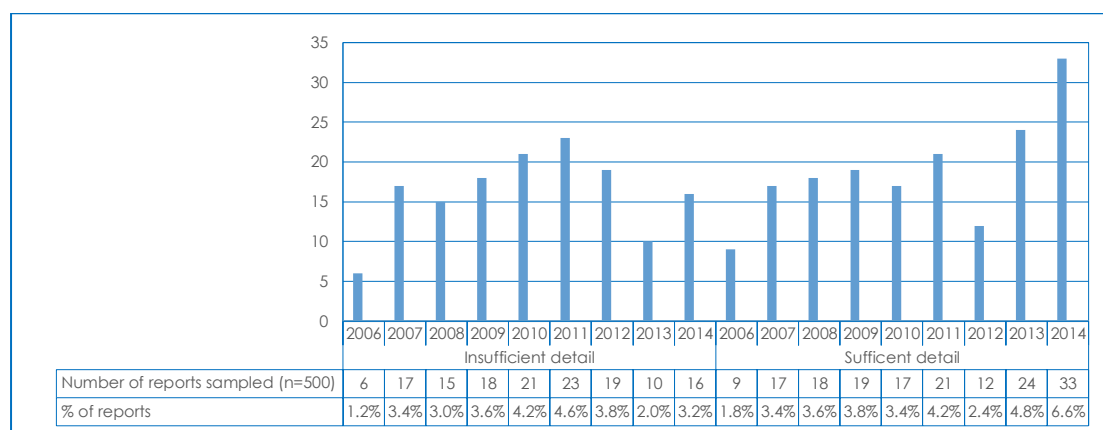


Figure 5.2 External assessor reports with comments indicating the level of detail in reports by year accredited

The following comprise examples of external assessor comments about reports identified as providing sufficient and insufficient detail about the candidates teaching practices.

#### 5.1.1.1 Comments about sufficient detail about the teachers practice in the report

- *The report elaborates very clearly the attainment of professional competency through ... extensively referencing specific details of the teacher's practice.*
- *The report provides enough detail to indicate that the teacher has reached [Proficient teacher].*
- *Report comments provide explicit references to the teacher's practice and are highly supportive of PT achievement.*
- *The report is detailed and provides sufficient information to determine that the teacher has achieved [PT].*
- *Highly comprehensive report supported with extensive examples demonstrating the achievement of [Proficient teacher].*
- *The report provides sufficient detail to determine that the teacher has reached [PT].*

- *This report strongly supports this application using specific examples and the language of the standard descriptors.*

#### 5.1.1.2 *Comments indicating insufficient detail in the report*

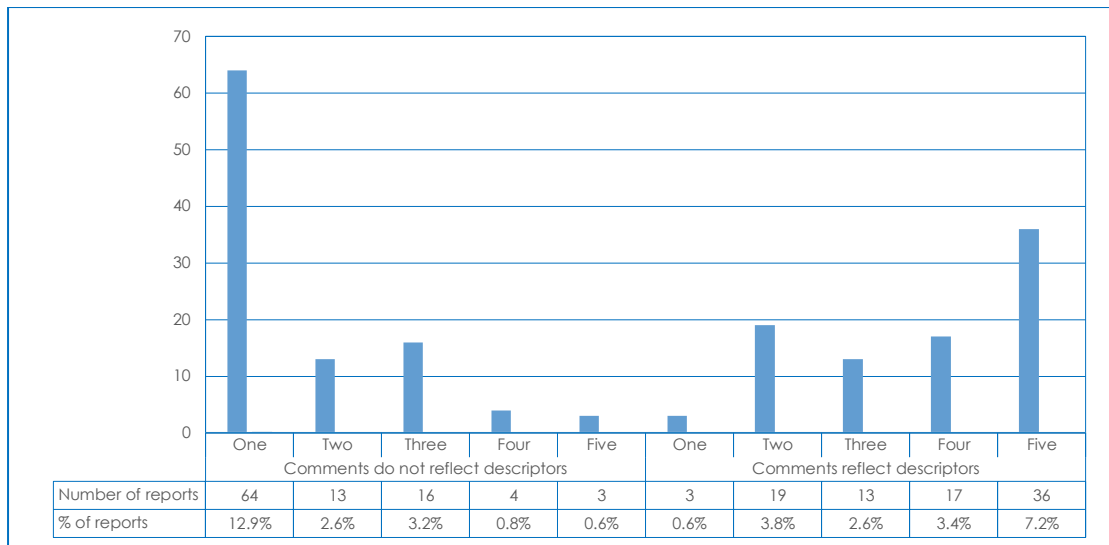
- *Evaluative comments about teacher's practice is made, but specific detail of this practice is often absent, indicating a lack of relationship between the teacher and report writer. The language used contains few references to the [standards] of the teaching standards and evidence guide. The references to the evidence are 'numbered' rather than identified.*
- *A very poorly written report, which is not specifically related to the teaching standards. This report barely indicates that the teacher has achieved [Proficient teacher].*
- *Limited information provided with respect to the teacher's classroom practice. Language used should be reflective of the standards and the teacher not a copy/paste directly from the evidence guide. This demonstrates a lack of knowledge about the individual classroom practice.*
- *The report lacks specific detail of the teacher's practice and speaks more to the evidence provided than ways the teacher actually demonstrated each [descriptor].*
- *The report does not reflect the teacher's practice. It is extremely generalised and not [aligned with] with the evidence.*
- *The report is just the element rewritten. It contains no detail or information regarding the teacher's practice.*
- *The report has taken the evidence guide and selected one statement out of each standard. There are no specific details of the teacher's practice. There is no evidence of a relationship between the report writer and the new scheme teacher. The report provides no personal insight into the teacher's work.*

#### 5.1.2 *Relationship between the report and the descriptors*

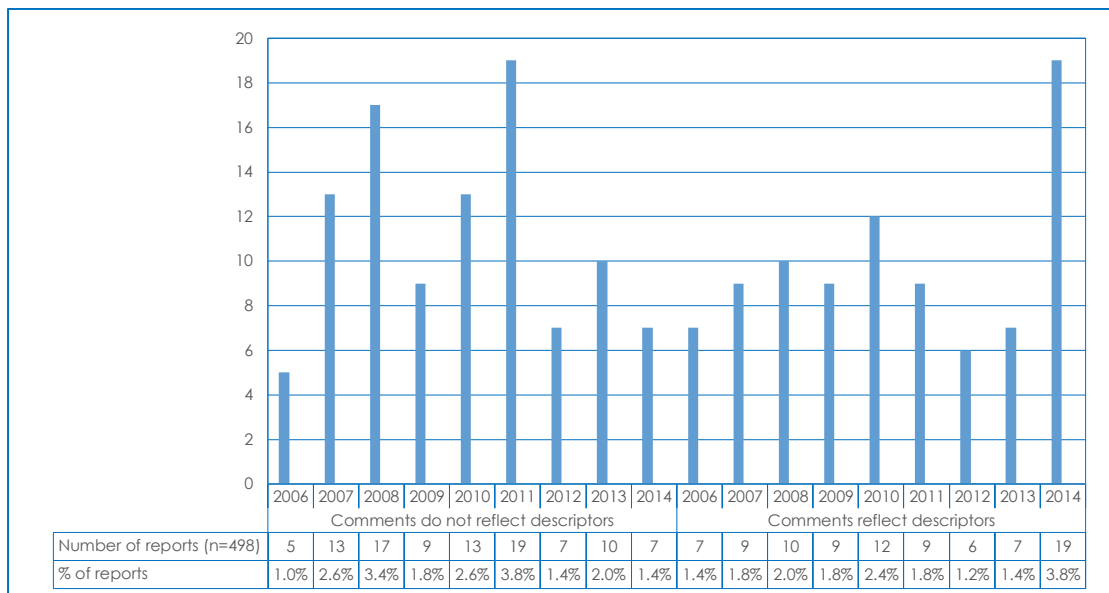
The second issue identified in the reports was the relationship between the report comments and the descriptors. Comments not reflecting the descriptors were most prevalent in reports with decile ranking 1. Comments with the highest proportion of comments reflecting the standards had a decile rank of 5 (See Figure 5.3).

Analysis of the distribution of reports with comments not reflecting descriptors by year of accreditation (Figure 5.4) indicates that the proportion of such reports has declined since 2012. This suggests that supervisors may be better able to describe practice using the descriptors of the APST than the standards of the NSW PTS.

The following sections provide examples of external assessor commentary demonstrating the presence or absence of comments related to descriptors in accreditation reports.



**Figure 5.3 Reports with external assessor comments about relationship of report to the descriptors by decile**



**Figure 5.4 Reports with external assessor comments about relationship of report to the descriptors by year accredited**

#### 5.1.2.1 Comments reflect the descriptors

- *The report elaborates very clearly the attainment of [Proficient teacher] through comprehensive use of the language of the Teaching Standards and extensively referencing specific details of the teacher's practice.*
- *The language of the report strongly supports the New Scheme Teacher's competence, displays a thorough understanding of the teacher's practice and exudes confidence in the performance and achievements of the staff member. The language within the report mirrors the evidence guide.*
- *This report strongly supports this application using specific examples and the language of the standard descriptors.*

- *The report is very detailed and indicates that the teacher has achieved [Proficient teacher]. The language used is appropriate and specific.*
- *The report comments are thorough, and demonstrate good knowledge of the standards.*

#### 5.1.2.2 *Comments do not reflect the descriptors*

- *The language of the report needs to more clearly reflect both the Australian Professional Standards and the Evidence Guide.*
- *Report comments are brief and do not include language from the indicators in the evidence guide or the standards under each element.*
- *The language is not strongly reflective of the terminology of the APSTS and some of the annotation does not reflect that Standard.*
- *Some comments [are] quite brief so don't give many details of the Teacher's competence in the Standards. Use of the Evidence Guide would bring focus to the report and allow for greater discussion of Elements and Standards.*
- *More use of the evidence guide is needed to ensure [the] report specifically addresses the elements and standards rather than being like a student's half yearly report, saying she can do this or that quite well.*
- *The language and comments reflect a strong connection between the report and evidence. In some areas over emphasis on the evidence has resulted in limited reference to the standard descriptors in some standards and the language of the standards.*
- *The report basically took the statements from each of the elements and put [Name deleted]'s name at the beginning of each statement. Virtually no specific details of the teacher's practice.*

#### 5.1.3 *Standardised reports*

There were numerous examples identified within external assessor commentary where supervisors had used standardised accreditation reports for a number of candidates from their school. There were 92 examples of identified in the commentary of reports assessed being the same or identical to other reports viewed by the external assessor. This number possibly underestimates the occurrence of supervisors using standardised reports, as their identification is reliant on the same external assessor observing the reports from individual supervisors.

The following comments are characteristic of reports identifying the use of standardised reports.

- *The report was exactly the same as a report for another teacher at the same school. Only name and subject [were] changed.*
- *NB This report is nearly word for word the same as reports # [accreditation number deleted] and # [accreditation number deleted].*
- *At times the NST is referred to as "he", then "she", in the report. Comments in report are identical to the comments in report for NST Acc. No. [accreditation number deleted].*
- *The report is inadequate in detail, does not use the language of the [APST] and does not make specific reference to the Evidence Guide. It reads as though it is a compilation of cut and pastes from previous reports. This appears to be evident particularly in the comment under Element 7 when another teacher by the name of [name deleted] is mentioned.*
- *Report reads as a 'generic stage one teacher' proforma, with little specific detail of the teacher's practice. (Another teacher's name appears to have been inadvertently left in the Element 3 comment).*



- *It is noted that the comments made are identical (except for 2-3 sentences overall) to the comments for another teacher at the same school. The supervisor has reproduced, practically verbatim, the same report for two teachers.*
- *The report is an exact replica of report written for [Name deleted] at the same school.*
- *I see patterns emerging from this Teacher Accreditation Authority. "Paste" is heavily used on his reports. Some comments are word for word identical in a number of his reports.*
- *However, I am concerned that the comments under elements 1-4 of this report are very similar at times identical to another report from the same school.*

#### 5.1.4 Reports using conditional language

External assessors identified and commented upon the use of conditional language in reports. For some of external assessors, the use of conditional language indicated that the candidate's practice was not at the level required for achievement of Proficient teacher status. For example:

- [Standard 2] - *'developing knowledge' 'would benefit from taking time to prepare lessons based on the learning needs of each class, rather than just using the same existing unit resources for each of her classes. This would allow her, to better cater to the individual learning needs of students'.*

*These comments are damning & reflect that the teacher, HAS NOT achieved professional competence.*

[Standard] 1 - *'developing' not consistently designed. Question - How did this report get through??*

- [Standard] 3 *Ms X. is demonstrating [Standard] 1 Ms X has demonstrated [Standard] 5 It has been noted [Standard] 6 Ms X is a participant [Standard] 7 Ms X has demonstrated language of teacher not at Professional competency. By this stage the teacher should "Demonstrate" and evidence be given as to How!*
- *Use of 1 language – [Standard] 1 "is becoming more aware of individual needs". [Standard] 3 "Her T&L activities are increasingly reflecting a more thorough knowledge..." Contradicts statement in [Standard] 1 [Standard] 6 "[Name deleted] is still developing her understanding of the many facets....." [Standard] 7 [Name deleted] is becoming more aware of the innumerable tasks.....*
- *Refer to [Standard] 2 - "[Name deleted] is developing her ability...". The report should not use conditional language. Rather it should indicate attainment. Other examples of this language are evidence in [Standard] 1, 4, 5 and 6.*
- *... In the report the supervisor suggests areas to be developed throughout the year suggesting the teaching is not at the [Proficient teacher] Stage.*
- *The report for some [Standards] (especially 2 and 3) indicate that future improvement will be made, rather than support [Proficient teacher].*

#### 5.1.5 Process issues

In addition to commenting on the substance of the report and the legitimacy of its use to indicate achievement of Proficient teacher status, external assessors commented on a range of process issues. The following comments typify such comments.

- *The principal's name has not been inserted nor has he/she signed off on the report.*
- *Certified copy of completed qualifications not included.*
- *[Standard] 2: checking and editing of punctuation required.*

- *Titles for attached documentary evidence need to be whole word - not abbreviations.*
- *No indication of [Name deleted] employment status.*
- *Information about teacher and school not fully identified.*

While these comments are indicative of concerns about process issues, perhaps the most significant process issue was identified in the analysis of submissions sampled. There were a number of instances where candidates presented evidence against the APST and the report addressed the NSW PST and vice versa.

More problematic from the perspective of meeting accreditation requirements were a number of instances identified in the commentary where teachers presented evidence against the graduate standards, for example:

- *While the report suggests that the teacher has reached [Proficient teacher], the supporting evidence does not. I believe that this should be sent back to the teacher! This report and evidence is for [Proficient teacher] NOT GRADUATE TEACHER!!*
- *Report comments made bland statements about some aspects of teaching but few are really specific. Teacher has "addressed" the graduate standards by adding numbers to the evidence - perhaps the report is only looking at that level too.*
- *The report consistently refers to the Graduate Teacher Standards rather than the [Proficient teacher] Standards. Discrepant report.*
- *The report reflects the [APST] but at 'Graduate Teacher' level and does not indicate the teacher's practice as to how this is achieved in any event. It is simply a rehash of the standards in each element at Graduate Teacher level. This would need to be referred to the Teacher Accreditation Authority as it is a good example of an ineffective report.*

In other cases, candidates presented evidence against descriptors for higher-level standards. That supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authority's accepted such submissions of evidence says more about the level of supervision and exercise of responsibility than it does about the candidate's presentation of evidence.

### 5.1.6 Supervisors and supervision

However, the last word on the efficacy of current quality assurance arrangements flows from the following external assessor comment.

- *This is one of the very few where the principal actually comments in detail about a specific standard. It gives the impression of really knowing the teacher - it could be copied, usefully, by others elsewhere.*

Laudable sentiments that prompted closer examination of the report. Clearly, the report was different. It was written in the first person, that is, written by the candidate. A much closer relationship between the author and subject of the report than contemplated by the external assessor responsible for the comment.

The extent to which this practice is commonplace is unknown, yet anecdotal evidence suggests that like job applicants being asked by referees to write their own reference some candidates are being asked to write their own accreditation report. Good referees however, take the material provided and rewrite it to highlight their own particular perspectives on the job applicant. While good supervisors might also adopt such an approach, in the case highlighted above, the supervisor and Teacher Accreditation Authority eschewed their responsibility.

Although an extreme example, this comment highlights a deeper issue evident from the analysis of sampled submissions, that is, the role of supervisors in the process. In many instances, the supervisor's hand in the process was not obvious. Many candidates appear to have received little guidance in the selection and presentation of evidence. Conversely, their supervisor's knowledge of their practice is often generalised and nonspecific suggesting an indifferent relationship between supervisor and candidate.

## 5.2 Discussion and findings related to the efficacy and appropriateness of current quality control mechanisms

In their most limited conceptualisation quality assurance processes associated with accreditation are designed to ensure consistency of judgements about teachers' practice against the standards. The findings of this report suggest that this in itself is a significant responsibility, identifying three issues requiring attention. These are concerned with:

- the need to establish the validity and reliability of current measures
- lack of consequences
- a compliance based culture.

### 5.2.1 The validity and reliability of measures

There are two aspects to this issue. The first concerns the criteria used to quality assure evidence and reports. The second concerns reliable assessment of evidence and reports.

#### 5.2.1.1 The quality assurance criteria

The Rasch analysis of external assessor ratings of reports found that there was no unifying construct underpinning the report criteria ratings below.

1. *The report gives sufficient detail to indicate that the teacher has achieved Professional Competence/Proficient Teacher*
2. *The report gives specific details of the teachers' practice*
3. *The language of the reports reflects the Professional Teaching Standards/Elements*
4. *The Language of the report reflects the evidence guide*
5. *The comments under each Element/Standard are appropriate to the Standards/Descriptors contained within the Element/Standard.*

This finding raises the following questions about the criteria:

- What is the difference between sufficient detail indicating that the teacher has achieved Proficient teacher and specific details of the teachers' practice? Should not the detail that the teacher has achieved Proficient teacher be examples of their practice?
- What is the difference between language reflecting the Standards, language reflecting the evidence guide and comments being appropriate to the descriptors? Are these not all related concepts?

A similar review of the criteria for assessing evidence may also be appropriate. For example, criterion 2 states: *The Evidence supports the comments made in the report.* Should not the report reflect the evidence, given that the evidence comes first? This question may be more appropriately asked of the report than the evidence.

### 5.2.1.2 *Reliable assessment of evidence and reports*

The findings of significant differences between external assessor ratings of evidence and accreditation reports of groups disaggregated on the basis of gender, stage of schooling, geolocation, school sector and year of accreditation need further investigation by BOSTES and school authorities.

A prior step needed in these investigations is a study to determine the interrater reliability of external assessors rating of criteria. A small double blind study would provide the necessary confidence in the findings reported in Chapter 3.

Nonetheless, the findings point to the need for the monitoring of future external assessor ratings, and investigation by school authorities into the cause of the differences identified earlier.

#### 5.2.1.2.1 Needed policy change

The current policy regarding the allocation of external assessors to the rating of candidate's evidence and accreditation report requires the external assessor to be from the same school sector, stage of schooling and teaching area.

This policy needs to change from two perspectives. First it provides an environment with the potential to nurture systematic bias in the rating of criteria. Second, it is a regressive policy that denies the potential for moderation of external assessor assessments and for sharing of ideas about effective teaching practices across different stages of teaching, school sectors and teaching areas.

This review would endorse changing this policy to remove restrictions on the allocation of candidate's evidence and accreditation report to external assessors so that any external assessor can assess the evidence and report from any candidate. Such a change would be in the best interest of quality assurance arrangements surrounding accreditation at Proficient teacher specifically and the quality of teaching more generally.

#### 5.2.1.2.2 Monitoring of external assessor ratings and investigation of difference

The apparent differences amongst external assessor ratings of evidence and reports indicate the need for ongoing monitoring of such differences and investigation into the potential causes and effects of such differences. If such differences continue to be evident in external assessor ratings against a revised quality assurance framework, there will be an obvious need to investigate their underlying cause and potential impacts on the quality of teaching.

## 5.2.2 *Lack of consequences*

The analysis of external assessor comments against evidence and submissions identified a significant number of instances where the external assessor judged the quality of the evidence or accreditation report to be insufficient for the purposes of accreditation. These include instances where:

- evidence
  - was plagiarised
  - presented against Graduate standards
  - was poorly selected and annotated.
- accreditation reports
  - did not provide sufficient evidence of practice against the standards
  - comprised standardised reports not specific to the candidate.

Under current arrangement there are no consequences for presenting insufficient evidence of practice or inappropriate reports. While it is recognised that the evidence and accreditation report are necessary parts of the accreditation process, the judgements include wider observation of practice in situ.

This review is not proposing sanctions against candidates, supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities, rather it recognises that an appropriate feedback system would do much to raise the quality of supervision, evidence and reporting of practice against the standards. Timely feedback to Teacher Accreditation Authorities in the form of external assessor ratings and commentary made against assessment criteria would both celebrate good practice and act as a deterrent to poor practice. No school or Teacher Accreditation Authority would want to be seen to be deficient in its practices.

### 5.2.3 A culture of compliance

There is much evidence amongst submissions and reports that could be interpreted as indicative of a culture of compliance amongst candidates and those in schools responsible for their accreditation. Examples of compliance-based practices include plagiarised submissions, a submission that referenced graduate descriptors which had not been detected by the supervisor although they had annotated the submission to indicate they had counted the number of pages, the apparent dearth of supervisor influence on submissions and standardised reports.

In the absence of contradictory evidence, it is apparent that for many schools that accreditation is the process they have to go through to continue the employment of a young or returning teacher.

While compliance with process and evidence requirements is fundamental to ensuring minimum standards for accreditation, the prioritisation of compliance over candidate development is a concern given that accreditation was initially conceived as a collaborative developmental process. As currently implemented, it appears that professional growth for many teachers results from serendipity and experience in the classroom, rather than through explicit support and development programs provided by mentors and supervisors.

Implementation of strategies to provide external assessor feedback to Teacher Accreditation Authorities may conceivably contribute to refocusing accreditation on development. However, specific requirements for supervisors to attest to knowledge of accreditation requirement and to the level of support provided to candidates may be a more powerful driver for refocusing the outcomes of accreditation on teacher development.

## 6 Opportunities for enhancing the support provided to teachers seeking accreditation and to Teacher Accreditation Authorities determining accreditation

There are two areas in which support for teachers seeking accreditation and Teacher accreditation authorities determining accreditation can be enhanced. The first involves moving the accreditation system online. The second enhancing the capacity of supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities.

### 6.1 An online accreditation process

The evidence viewed to date, indicates wide variation in the form, quantity and quality of evidence and accreditation documentation presented by candidates and schools. While the majority of candidates and schools utilise the materials provided to support their accreditation and address the requirements for accreditation a minority do not. The quality of accreditation outcomes, and consequently quality of teaching could be enhanced by a well designed online accreditation system that supports candidates' presentation of evidence and compliance with accreditation requirements.

The elements of such a system could comprise:

- processes for candidates to upload and annotate evidence
  - algorithms for:
    - ensuring a minimum and maximum number of pieces of evidence
    - limiting the number of descriptors addressed by individual pieces of evidence
    - summarising and reporting in a consistent form a matrix of descriptors addressed by evidence presented
    - reporting on standards not addressed by evidence
- requirements and proforma for supervisors to report a minimum number of lesson observations
- Facilities for:
  - accreditation reports to be completed on line
  - Candidates, supervisors and candidates to complete required certifications. These to include:
    - certification by the candidate that the evidence presented is their own work and addresses all accreditation requirements including evidence of impact on learning
    - certification by the supervisor that the evidence presented is the candidate's work
    - Teacher Accreditation Authorities to certify the candidate's accreditation online.

The system should be sufficiently flexible to allow:

- candidates to develop their evidence progressively and to reconsider and edit it

- supervisors, Teacher Accreditation Authorities and External Assessors to view and assess the evidence.

The benefits of such a system are numerous:

- From the perspective of candidates, supervisors and schools, it would allow candidates, in particular, casual teachers, and teachers who transfer from school to school, to develop, record and have their evidence certified over time and across contexts.
- From a quality assurance perspective, a systems approach to accreditation with embedded compliance requirements, could do much to shift schools focus away from compliance to the quality of the evidence presented and its relationship to the standards.
- From the perspective of organisational efficiency, an online system would obviate the current need for BOSTES to scan and store evidence for future reference.

## 6.2 Enhancing the quality of supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities

Supervisors and mentors have essential roles in mentoring and supporting teachers seeking accreditation to develop their practice to a level consistent with the expectations of proficient teacher standards. Teacher Accreditation Authorities are responsible for determining accreditation decisions based on observation of teaching practice, the evidence submitted by candidates and supervisor's advice articulated in the accreditation report.

Current support for supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities is encapsulated in role statements and accreditation guides. Self-evidently from the findings presented in previous chapters, the effectiveness of these support mechanisms is uneven. The following are some suggestions for increasing the support provided to supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities.

### 6.2.1 Embedding effective supervisory and Teacher Accreditation Authority practices in postgraduate qualifications

Experienced teachers access many postgraduate programs aimed at increasing their capacity to teach and support colleagues. There is potential for BOSTES to work with providers of postgrad programs to embed effective mentoring and supervisory practices within such programs.

Attainment of qualifications aimed at enhancing mentoring and supervisory practices could be treated as contributing to evidence of attainment of higher-level standards.

### 6.2.2 Online certification

There are many examples in other fields of organisations providing online certification of specific knowledge and skills. Such programs consist of a series of units of work, (no more than five to ten) followed by a multiple choice question testing the applicant's knowledge of the requirements. The units of work comprise a statement of purpose and resource materials explaining the required knowledge or skill set.

Attainment of the Certification should take no more than 20 minutes and requires that all multiple-choice questions be answered correctly. Candidates can undertake the test as many times as they require to achieve the Certification. Possible areas for supervisors could involve:

- The supervisor's role

- What constitutes evidence against descriptors?
- The selection and presentation of evidence
- Effective annotation of evidence
- The accreditation report
- Effective description of practice.

A similar program could be developed for Teacher Accreditation Authorities.

### 6.2.3 The development of collegial networks for supervisors

The establishment of collegial networks focused on the development of supervisory skills provide a further strategy for increasing the capacity of supervisors. BOSTES could work with school authorities to support and facilitate the establishment of mentoring networks. Such networks also provide the means to develop more effective mentoring and supervisory practices.



## 7 Concluding remarks and recommendations

The purpose of a program review is to identify failings in systems and set out pathways for the future. Consequently, the major part of a review report comprises documentation of these aspect of the review. Nevertheless, the evidence available to this review indicates that the great majority of candidates for accreditation are able to demonstrate effective teaching practice against the standards.

The analyses that underpin this report provide advice for candidates about the types and quantum of evidence that candidates have found to be most efficient in their demonstration of achievement of the standards. Clearly, not all descriptors need to be addressed, either directly through individual samples of evidence or collectively through linkage of evidence to descriptors.

Candidates who judiciously selected descriptors and then choose evidence to demonstrate them appear to have found the process easier than candidates who selected evidence and then identified descriptors demonstrated by the evidence. For the former, making the link to the descriptors appeared to be a more natural consequence of the process.

The number of samples of evidence and the number of descriptors achieved through individual pieces of evidence are key issues to be considered by candidates. Too few pieces of evidence make it difficult to demonstrate the breadth of practice needed to achieve a range of descriptors representative of the standards. Too much evidence makes it difficult to demonstrate coherent understandings of practice and to effectively annotate practice to make the link between evidence and descriptors.

External assessor commentary also identified too many descriptors linked to individual items of evidence as an issue. The more descriptors ascribed to each piece of evidence the more difficult it is to argue the case for the link.

The analysis found significant differences amongst the external assessor ratings of groups of candidates disaggregated on the basis of gender, stage of schooling, school sector, geolocation and year of accreditation. Assuming that these ratings are indicative of differences in the quality of submissions and reports, these findings suggest the need for school authorities to investigate their cause and consequences.

The report also points to issues needing attention by supervisors and Teacher Accreditation Authorities, including unevenness in the support provided to candidates and the need for supervisor intervention in the selection and presentation of evidence. Also evident amongst the data available to the review were many instances where compliance is the overriding priority of those involved in the process. In such circumstances, quality and teacher development are ostensibly the losers.

There is also evidence of the need for review of current quality assurance arrangements. The current arrangements are not effectively monitoring the quality of submissions of evidence or accreditation reports. The absence of appropriate feedback mechanisms means there are few or no consequences of failing to adequately address accreditation requirements or the standards.

Crucial to considerations of policy settings needed to assure the quality of teaching are views about teacher development in the context of addressing the standards. Demonstration of achievement of Proficient teacher standards should be achieved through demonstration of more holistic understandings of the standards that set teachers on a course to demonstrating relational understandings of their practice. Establishing both lower and upper limits for the number of items of evidence and the number of descriptors linked to each item of evidence may be one way of compelling teachers to be more considered in their presentation of evidence.

Undoubtedly, there is a 'minimum standard' and presumably the accreditation process ensures that teachers judged to be at Proficient teacher level meet that 'minimum standard'. Furthermore, the minimum 'standard' required for teaching should not be static but increase over time to reflect advances in the practice knowledge base. Given the choice, no one would accept treatment from a doctor who relied on 1950s understandings of medical practice. Why should students accept anything less than current and up-to-date pedagogic knowledge from their teachers?

Ultimately, it is in the interest of students, communities and society that young teachers are supported to be the best they can be. The means of achieving this goal rests jointly with the education authorities and the profession.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That the requirements for Proficient Teacher accreditation be made more explicit**, including:
  - A list of required items of evidence
  - A firm page limit, limitations to the number of items of evidence and the number of descriptors addressed by individual items of evidence
  - Suggestions as to which types of evidence are most appropriate for each Standard Descriptor, such as a summary table in the Evidence Guide and/or on the website.
2. **That the process of accreditation be moved online and into eTAMS**. The online system to include:
  - online templates to assist teachers in presenting their evidence and annotations
  - algorithms that ensure compliance with evidentiary requirements
  - capabilities that enable teachers to progressively develop, view and amend evidence
  - requirements for teachers and supervisors to certify that the evidence presented is their own work.
3. **That the External Assessor (EA) process be improved**, including:
  - Moving the EA process online and into eTAMS to improve efficiency and reporting capabilities
  - Reviewing and renewing the training, guidelines and resources to support EA analysis of and feedback on reviewed reports
  - A review of the EA Report template
  - Development of processes to monitor the consistency of EA Reports including conducting a sample of double blind assessments and a regular 'control' to be distributed to all EAs to assess consistency of EA judgements and training needs
  - Cross sectoral review of Reports and evidence to improve consistency and reliability.
4. **That lesson observations be specified as an accreditation requirement** in addition to the Supervisor's Report and the annotated items of evidence. A mandatory template should be provided for the lesson observations to improve consistency and alignment of observations with the requirements of Proficient teacher standards.
5. **That the BOSTES credential Proficient Teacher Supervisors who meet pre-determined requirements**. Possibilities include:
  - A BOSTES developed online QTC registered training program for Supervisors
  - Professional development provided by QTC registered providers
  - Post graduate courses that include appropriate mentor/supervisor training.
6. **That regular feedback to TAAs is developed, in consultation with TAAs and their Authorised Persons**, including:
  - Annual reporting of EA feedback to TAAs
  - Direct communication of issues identified in Stage 2 of the BOSTES Policy Officer review
  - A review of the Guidelines for the Regulation of TAAs, as appropriate.