

HALT GUIDEBOOK

Certification of Highly Accomplished
and Lead teachers in Tasmania



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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and continuing custodians of Lutruwita, where Palawa have cared for their children and prepared them for life since the beginning of time.

We honour Elders, past and present, and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, families and friends.



HALT Overview

Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers (HALT) at the higher career stages enhances the professionalism of teachers by recognising the quality of their teaching and supporting career progression.

The [AITSL National Framework](#) for HALT ensures certification of teachers is rigorous and based on the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers \(APST\)](#).

Certification of HALT's has **3 primary purposes**:

- to **recognise and promote quality teaching**
- to provide an opportunity for teachers to **reflect on their practice**
- to provide a reliable indication of **quality teaching** that can be used to identify and recognise Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers.

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HAT)

HAT's are skilled practitioners who work independently and collaboratively to enhance their own and colleagues' practices. They support colleagues, including preservice teachers, and create positive learning environments. They have in-depth subject knowledge, model effective teaching, and use student assessment data to improve learning.

Lead Teachers (LT)

LT's are exemplary educators recognised by colleagues and the community. They lead initiatives to improve educational opportunities, mentor others, and promote innovative thinking. They use their expertise to deliver effective lessons and inspire colleagues to enhance their practices. LT's also represent the profession in the community and maintain high ethical standards.

By contributing to teacher quality, the certification of HALTs will help to achieve the national goals for schooling expressed in the [Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration](#) on Educational Goals for Young Australians.

This guide provides information to assist applicants and schools in understanding the requirements of the certification process.

HALT - Roles and Responsibilities

The certification process involves **several participants**, each with unique roles and responsibilities.

As an applicant you will:

- be familiar with eligibility requirements and guidelines
- engage in professional discussions with your principal/supervisor and chosen referees
- attend information sessions and workshops, as offered by the TRB
- share with referees the evidence you are requesting they verify
- take responsibility for your own certification submission.

Your principal will:

- ensure they have knowledge and understanding of the certification process and the APST to enable:
 - effective professional dialogue with applicants
 - effective support processes for applicants
 - effective support processes for assessors
 - knowledge of the applicant's practice and professional relationships with referees.

Your referees will:

- participate in discussions with you about the evidence you are requesting they verify
- sign the referee verification form to confirm their verification of the submitted evidence
- agree to respond to communication from an assessor if required.

The TRB will:

- implement and manage certification and renewal of certification processes for teachers working in a school
- grant or refuse the application for certification based on an assessment of the applicant's demonstrated abilities, experience, knowledge and skills against the APST at the chosen career stage
- record a teacher's certification status and send advice of renewal requirements.
- recruit and train Assessors and conduct Assessor Panels.

Assessors will:

- complete the Assessor Training Program
- undertake assessment of certification applications using rigorous and transparent processes
- maintain currency by attending training workshops as required and completing a minimum of one application assessment each year

The HALT Certification Process

HALT is a **portable national certification**. This means that once certified, if you move to another education sector or jurisdiction, you do not need to reapply but will need to provide evidence of certification status and eligibility to the certifying authority.

An active application for certification cannot be transferred between certifying authorities, but the evidence collected may be used for an application in a new jurisdiction, depending on their specific policy. All enquiries should be directed to the relevant certifying authority.

The **HALT Certification Process is a 4-step process**:



Readiness Check

The readiness check relates to the preliminary activities you will engage in as you determine whether you are ready to pursue certification and gain support from your employer to proceed with the certification process. Pre-assessment activities include **eligibility, self-assessment and professional discussions**:

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for certification at either career stage you must:

- be an **Australian citizen or have a permanent residency visa**
- have **full teacher registration in Tasmania**
- be **employed by a school in Tasmania**
- hold a **teaching role**.

It is your responsibility as an applicant to ensure you meet these requirements when completing your readiness check.

For successful participation in the HALT certification assessment process, you must **hold a teaching role and evidence your individual contribution**. A change in your teaching role, or other changes in circumstances during the assessment period will be reviewed by the TRB on a case-by-case basis. You are not required to be certified as a HAT before applying for LT certification.

Self-assessment

It is recommended you undertake a self- assessment using the [AITSL Teacher Self-Assessment Tool](#). This will help you to reflect on your practice and select the HALT career stage at which you are working. The self- assessment tool can also help you identify areas of practice for further development.

Professional Discussion

As part of the readiness check you must engage in a **professional discussion with your principal about your intention to apply for certification**, as they will be a required referee. Referees verify your evidence and performance against specific standard descriptors, **3 to 5 referees are required for your application**. Selecting the referees who can verify your evidence and confirming their availability is useful during this phase.

If you're in a new school, you should provide details of your previous principal. Other referees can include classroom teachers, school leaders, and specialist staff. **Referees must have direct knowledge of your practice**, and the evidence provided. They will verify specific descriptors and may be contacted by an assessor for further information.



Assessment - Stage 1

What is included in a Stage 1 application?

- a completed **Evidence Map**
- an index of **labelled pieces of evidence**, for applications submitted as a zipped file of documents
- **annotations of the evidence** demonstrating achievement against each standard descriptor
- the **Principal Verification Form** signed and dated by the principal and **2 – 4 additional referee forms**
- **2 classroom observation reports (12 months currency)**
- **assessor feedback.**

After submission, your application is checked to ensure it contains all mandatory requirements listed above and adheres to artefact and annotation limits. If any amendments or additions are required, the TRB will contact you to request these, and you will have 14 days to respond. If you do not respond within this time, your application will be considered withdrawn.

Evidence

Your Stage 1 application consists of evidence against the [37 APST descriptors](#) at your chosen career stage. Evidence may include up to **35 items of evidence** supported by up to **7,500 words of annotation.**

An effective Stage 1 application should include evidence across the categories. **One quality item with clear annotations can provide evidence for a range of descriptors.** Examples of evidence can include:

Teaching and learning programs:

- lesson plans
- learning resources
- tasks and activities
- evaluation of teaching and learning programs
- individualised student learning plans

Classroom observations:

- lesson observation and reflection notes
- videos of practice
- student survey data
- peer observation notes

Reflection and feedback:

- parent teacher interview notes

- student feedback
- professional reading and learning log
- performance review feedback
- student assessment
- assessment plan
- diagnostic assessments
- student work samples and outcomes

Collaboration and communication:

- resources co-constructed and shared
- team meeting notes
- online blogs and forums
- policy review meeting notes
- correspondence

Professional learning:

- research project
- participation in professional associations
- professional development delivered/attended
- other postgraduate study

Evidence Set

Evidence can be individual items or grouped into an evidence set. An **evidence set can be counted as one item if the documents are linked to one activity or theme** for example, an evidence set on the topic of 'The Stolen Generation.' This evidence set covers a range of APST descriptors and includes: a lesson plan, an assessment, an example of student work, a unit plan and unit plan evaluation and the teaching resources.

An evidence set could also be **linked together by demonstrating the same teacher professional capability** for example, the teacher may wish to demonstrate using ICT in their practice. The teacher may use several items of evidence including: a short video of the applicant demonstrating use of educational ICT in a staff meeting, an extract from a survey on colleagues using ICT in their classrooms and an extract from student feedback notes.

Annotations

You must annotate all your evidence to demonstrate to the assessors that you have **described, analysed, and reflected** on your evidence in response to the [APST](#).

Annotations should include:

- clear identification of the [APST](#) descriptors being addressed
- a clear statement of your role and your individual contribution

- a description of how the evidence demonstrates achievement of the descriptors
- a reflection on teaching practice
- your impact on student outcomes
- your impact on the practice of other colleagues
- the leading/supporting/sharing/modelling roles undertaken.

Annotation word limits are:

- **annotations are limited to no more than 7,500 words** in total for the Stage 1 application.
- **per descriptor** this is **approximately 150 words**
- **per item of evidence** (covering multiple descriptors) this is **approximately 350 words**
- **per evidence set** this is **approximately 600 words.**

Alternatively, you may compose a statement about your professional practice and learning. The statement will be subject to the same word limit (7500 words) and must include explicit links between the evidence and the [APST](#).

Principal and Referee Verification

Referees are required to verify your evidence, a verification comment is mandatory and must specify the direct, first-hand knowledge of your practice against the descriptor.

Your principal (who must be one of your referees) **must verify your evidence** and performance **against the specific descriptors** of which they have direct knowledge. If you are in a new school, your previous principal details must be provided. Other referees may include fully registered classroom teachers, school leaders, teacher educators, and specialist staff.

You will need to consult with your referees to decide which descriptors they can provide verification against, record this on the **Referee Verification Form**, and submit it with your Stage 1 application. For each descriptor assigned to them, referees must have first-hand knowledge of your practice, your role in the work and the impact on students and colleagues.

You and your principal can choose up to [15 Standard descriptors](#) that the certification assessors may accept as met based on your principal's verification. This verification serves as direct proof of your work, as your principal may explain how each descriptor is met.

Guidelines for verification include:

- if your principal has **verified 11-15 Standard descriptors**, you will need **approximately 25 pieces of evidence**

- if your principal has **verified 6-10 Standard descriptors**, you will need **approximately 29 pieces of evidence**
- if your principal has **verified 1- 5 Standard descriptors**, you will need **approximately 33 pieces of evidence**
- **no verified Standards** by a referee- you will need **approximately 35 pieces of evidence.**

Observations

You must complete **2 classroom observations** within the 12 months prior to submitting your application and **include the two observation reports** in your application.

One of your observations must be completed by your school principal. Your principal must observe your practice against the descriptors you have selected and provide a report. Your second observation can be completed by a different colleague who holds **full teacher registration**.

Alternatively, you can **conduct one observation of a colleague** implementing a teaching strategy (which may include leading a staff meeting) after providing them with support. Additionally, you must have one observation of your own practice, which must be carried out by the principal.

Combined with other evidence, the observation reports make an effective **evidence set** that demonstrate your impact on colleagues. Observation reports must be **signed, dated and annotated** to show a clear link to the standard descriptors. You may include other additional observations to provide evidence of your practice.

Stage 1 - Feedback

After completing and submitting your Stage 1 assessment, you will receive a **report** on how well you have met the [APST](#) at your chosen career stage.

The report is completed by a **nationally trained assessor** and moderation processes are in place for quality assurance purposes. **Applications may be returned if:**

- the **application is incomplete**, for example, the referee verification form is not included or is unsigned
- **files are corrupted** or not able to be opened or viewed by an assessor
- documents in the application are **illegible**, or the format of the application is **difficult to navigate**
- the annotation **word limit is significantly exceeded.**

You will proceed to Stage 2 if you have the demonstrated abilities, experience, knowledge and skills at your chosen career stage. For successful applications the feedback will outline focus areas for the Stage 2 site visit.

An optional feedback conversation is available at the conclusion of Stage 1 for applicants who are not successful in progressing to Stage 2. You can request this conversation with an assessor within 7 days of the Stage 1 outcome by contacting the TRB.

In a circumstance where an application decision cannot be reached, the TRB will likely invite submission of supplementary evidence. You will have 2 weeks to provide the requested evidence.



Assessment – Stage 2

Stage 2 involves **direct observation of your practice, in-person or a virtual site visit**, using the [Classroom Practice Continuum](#) and professional discussions between an assessor, yourself and your nominated colleagues including your principal.

Stage 2 provides additional evidence to inform a final judgement as to whether your application meets the [APST](#) at your chosen career stage. It allows you to reflect on and demonstrate deep understanding of the evidence presented during Stage 1 and its impact on teaching and learning.

On successful completion of Stage 1, an assessor will contact you about which standard descriptors will be the focus of the Stage 2 visit. **Guidelines for the site visit (in-person or virtual) include:**

- pre-observation discussion with an assessor about the lessons and links to the Standard descriptors, lesson plan, resources, lesson context, and learners backgrounds
- completion of 2 different 35-minute lessons in one day - virtual visit recordings must be under 2GB each
- post-observation discussion with the assessor to reflect on the lessons and discuss the Stage 1 reports focus areas.

The assessor will also have professional discussions with the principal or and other colleagues (nominated by you) to verify your practice against the [APST](#). During these discussions the principal and the assessor will determine whether you meet the [APST](#) at the relevant career stage.

Supplementary evidence may be invited by the TRB where evidence remains inconclusive or insufficient.

Stage 2 - Evidence

Stage 2 evidence must be a true representation of your practice and impact over time. Evidence must be within the 5 years preceding the date of your Stage 1 application. **You should follow these guidelines when collecting this evidence:**

- **evidence is drawn directly from your work**
- evidence demonstrates the **impact of your work on student outcomes**, such as learning, engagement in learning and wellbeing
- evidence demonstrates the **impact of your practice on teaching colleagues**
- evidence clearly **reflects your individual contribution**
- evidence demonstrates **sustained impact on student outcomes**

- multiple sources of evidence collectively demonstrate **achievement of each of the standard descriptors at the relevant career stage.**

HALT Certification

Assessors will make a final recommendation to the TRB of an applicant's suitability for Stage 2 certification based on:

- **an assessment of evidence** against the [APST](#)
- **observations of practice** against the [Classroom Practice Continuum](#)
- **referee verification**
- **professional discussions** during the Stage 2 visit.

If the TRB is satisfied that you have demonstrated the abilities, experience, knowledge and skills for LT or HAT, then the TRB will provide you with a **Stage 2 report** and an **award of national HALT certification.**

The report will detail the assessment of your practice against the [Classroom Practice Continuum](#) and include a final written assessment of achievement against the [APST](#).

For unsuccessful applications, the report will include feedback about strengths and the areas that require improvement. Applicants can request a feedback conversation with an assessor by contacting the TRB. **Feedback requests must be made within 7 days** of notification of the outcome of Stage 2.

Unsuccessful applications for certification as a LT are not considered for HAT status. If you are unsuccessful at either career stage, you may submit a new application in a future certification round.

In a circumstance where an application decision cannot be reached, the **TRB will likely invite submission of supplementary evidence.** If invited at Stage 2, you will have **4 weeks to provide one video and accompanying documentation.** A supplementary evidence timeframe may be negotiated with the TRB; such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Quality Assurance - Moderation

Quality assurance mechanisms are essential to achieve and maintain rigorous, valid and credible assessments of teacher practice for the purposes of certification.

AITSL routinely evaluates the effectiveness of quality assurance processes implemented by certifying authorities to ensure national consistency. This may include an evidence **audit of a sample of teachers** who been granted HALT certification by the TRB

Other quality assurance mechanisms may include:

- following [the AITSL Framework](#) for HALT certification
- use of the [APST](#) as the basis for assessment
- consistent **assessor training**
- use of **trained assessors**
- **support of assessors by the TRB**
- assessment of classroom practice using the [Classroom Practice Continuum](#)
- **providing instructive feedback** through the Stage 1 and Stage 2 reports.



HALT Applicant Checklist

Ensure you have completed the following tasks.

Readiness Check

- confirmed eligibility against the TRB requirements
- hold a teaching role
- completed the AITSL self-assessment tool and identified the LT or HAT career stage
- engaged in a conversation with your principal
- identified and engaged in a discussion with referees
- attended TRB Information Session and submitted your application (including principal's recommendation and a 2-page CV)

Assessment - Stage 1

- completed discussions with referees and completed the referee verification form, with dates and signatures
- completed the evidence map
- included an index of labelled evidences, ensuring consistent naming conventions across the application
- ensured all evidence is included (not hyperlinked) and either annotated, or explicitly linked in a written statement
- signed and dated lesson observations
- obtained required consent or redacted application if evidence includes an individual's personal information, copyright materials or recording
- zipped application and ensured it meets upload requirements.

Assessment - Stage 2 – (in-person or virtual site visit)

- for virtual site visits: accessed recording equipment and practiced recording a lesson
- for in-person site visits: developed a schedule for the site visit in collaboration with an assessor, principal and colleagues
- engaged in all aspects of the site visit.

Certification

- submit your application to the TRB
- receive a report Stage 1 or Stage 2
- in a circumstance where an application decision cannot be reached by the TRB:**
- Stage 1 - you have 2 weeks to provide the requested evidence
- Stage 2 - you have 4 weeks to provide one video and accompanying documentation.

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