

POLICY

Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers

Responsibility of: Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory

Effective Date: November 2018

Next Review Date: November 2020

Target Audience: Teachers/Principals/Coaches/Mentors

VERSION NUMBER: 2

1. POLICY

This policy is designed to enable eligible Northern Territory (NT) teachers to achieve National Certification at the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards). This policy outlines the purposes and principles underlying certification and the assessment process.

This policy applies to any teacher in an authentic teaching position, holding full registration in the NT and meeting all eligibility requirements, who is seeking certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT).

It elaborates on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) documents relating to certification.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia – TRB NT edition
- the TRB NT Supplement for the NT Edition of the AITSL Guide to Certification
- The Guide to Renewal of Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia – TRB NT edition
- the TRB NT Supplement for the NT Edition of the AITSL Guide to the Renewal of Certification

2. BUSINESS NEED

All Australian Education Ministers endorsed the certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia in 2012. As a result all Australian State and Territory Governments are executing initiatives linked to improving teacher quality, with jurisdictions committing to and implementing relevant policies and processes that recognise and support exemplary practice and quality educators.

By contributing to developing teacher quality, the certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers will help to achieve the national goals for schooling expressed in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2015).

The HALT certification program uses the Standards as a basis for making rigorous and consistent judgements regarding the certification of teachers. Certification is an important element in the broader teacher quality development strategy, and is designed to recognise, reward and celebrate excellence in teaching.

Certification is portable throughout Australia, allowing teachers to maintain their status as a HALT if they move across jurisdictions. The Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory (TRB NT) is the certifying authority within the Northern Territory and participates in portable recognition of HALT status.

3. SCOPE

A nationally consistent approach to certification must maintain consistency of Standards and judgements across Australia, whilst accommodating the diverse contexts and needs in which Australian teachers work. A nationally consistent approach to certification, following common process, is applied by the certifying body in each jurisdiction.

Certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher in the Northern Territory is part of a nationally recognised quality assurance framework that uses the Standards as the criteria for assessment.

4. DEFINITIONS

HALT – Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher

Applicant – The applicant is the teacher undertaking the national certification process

Certifying Authority – The body managing the certification process. The certifying authority is responsible for implementing and managing the national certification and renewal of certification process in their jurisdiction

Certification – Certification is awarded by TRB NT to teachers who provide evidence from multiple sources that is assessed as satisfying professional practice criteria at either Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stage as described in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

TRB NT – Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory. The TRB NT is the certifying authority in the Northern Territory

The Standards - The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality and are gazetted by the NT. They comprise of seven Standards which outline what teachers should know and be able to do. The Standards are interconnected, interdependent and overlapping

Descriptors – Provide further illustration of teaching knowledge, practice and professional engagement within each focus area of the Standards, separated into descriptors at four professional career stages.

Principal/Supervisor - A principal is the person designated by the employing authority as being primarily responsible for the overall control and administration of the school.

A supervisor is the person taking responsibility for day-to-day management of the teacher and assessing their performance. Supervisor includes the equivalent position to principal in early childhood settings.

Delegate – There will be situations where a principal or supervisor is not available to fulfil the role outlined below. In these cases, the principal/supervisor may delegate their responsibilities

to an equivalent member of the senior leadership team of the school/setting who has significant knowledge of the applicants practice.

Assessors – The individuals nominated by the certifying authority to undertake an assessment of the HALT application. The assessors are external to the school/setting of the applicant and are trained under the National Assessor Training Program.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

TRB NT will:

- implement and manage the National certification and renewal of Certification process within the Northern Territory
- maintain a collegial and collaborative relationship with other certifying authorities within Australia, and participate in relevant national networks
- grant or refuse the application for certification based on the assessment of the teacher's demonstrated abilities, knowledge and skills against the requirements of the standards for the relevant career stage
- add the certification details on completion of the certification process on the Register of Teachers (database) and the status will remain valid for a period of five years of certification and can be renewed.
- consider the applications for the role of national assessors and select applicants based on:
 - roles held in the last 5 years
 - areas of expertise and
 - availability, for Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments

Assessors will:

- undertake an assessment of a new certification or renewal of certification application through rigorous and transparent processes, in collaboration with the TRB NT as the certifying authority
- maintain currency by attending assessor workshops provided by TRB NT and conducting a minimum of two assessments each year

Potential assessors must hold full registration with TRB NT and be in an educational leadership role.

Principal/supervisor or delegate will:

- ensure they have knowledge and understanding of the certification process and the standards to enable:
 - effective professional dialogue with prospective applicants
 - effective support processes for applicants participating in the process
 - effective support processes for school/classroom based national assessors

The Applicant is expected to:

- contact the TRB NT Certification team to ensure appropriate modes of communication and levels of support required are established
- familiarise themselves with the relevant documents outlined within this policy
- take responsibility for their own certification journey/submission
- attend certification workshops

6. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to apply for certification at the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stages, the applicant must:

- be an Australian citizen or have a permanent residency visa
- hold full registration with the TRB NT
- have been assessed as satisfactory in their two most recent annual performance assessments for those applying for Highly Accomplished career stage
- have been assessed as satisfactory in their three most recent annual performance assessments for those applying for Lead career stage.

Teachers do not have to be certified as Highly Accomplished before applying for Lead teacher status.

7. CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

Eligible applicants will contact with the TRB NT to discuss their expression of interest in applying for certification. When ready to register their application, applicants will submit an online registration with a non-refundable direct online payment.

Fees

The fee for applying for the HALT program is \$1825 regardless of completion. No refund will be provided if an applicant is not successful. The fee is tax-deductible.

The certification fee is payable in 2 parts:

Part 1 - \$925 with Stage 1 submission

Part 2 - \$900 commencement of Stage 2

8. ASSESSMENT TIMELINES

The assessment process for Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher status will occur over a school year with communication as required by TRBNT with the applicant.

The TRB NT has the authority to maintain flexibility with timelines, as business need/demand requires. Request for extensions will only be considered in written form and are to be submitted to the Manager Certification.

9. SUBMISSIONS

- all stage 1 submissions must be provided to the TRB NT in electronic form
- stage 1 submissions will be retained by the TRB NT and will not be returned to applicants
- certification status achieved by a teacher is added to the teachers' details on the Register of Teachers and remains valid for a period of five years from the date of certification and can be renewed.

10. NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The certification issued by TRB NT is recognised in all Australian states and territories which apply the national framework for Standards certification.

Teachers with certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher from other Certifying Authorities /jurisdictions are recognised by TRB NT once documentation provided by the applicant is verified. TRB NT will confirm the recognised status with the original issuing authority and with the relevant current NT employer.

11. RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

Certification is granted for a fixed period of five years. Renewal of certification requires a re-assessment against all Standards through written statements and verification by referees who have direct knowledge of the applicant's teaching practice in the period since the original certification.

Certified teachers are able to renew their certification status provided they continue to meet the renewal requirements. The purpose of the renewal process is to verify an applicant's ongoing performance at the Highly Accomplished or Lead career stage. This process is part of the quality assurance mechanisms within the national certification process. These mechanisms are essential to ensure a rigorous, valid and credible evaluation of an applicant's teaching practice.

To be eligible for renewal of certification, teachers:

- must have been nationally certified as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher for the previous five year period
- must meet legislative requirements to be fully registered in the Northern Territory, including the requirements for professional practice and professional learning
- need to have an authentic teaching role in a classroom situation (be responsible for programming and assessment of students learning), with no requirement for specified number of hours or teaching load and
- have received positive annual performance assessments in the five years prior to renewal.

Exceptional circumstances may apply where teachers have taken leave or are in a new position in the previous five years. A teacher who is not able to meet these requirements due to having moved schools, changing job/roles and or taking extended leave will need to formally write to the Certification Manager with an explanation and a case will be presented to TRB NT.

The Office of the Board will disseminate information to applicants eligible for renewal 12 months prior to certification expiry.

Any teacher who is in a corporate position and has been for 12 months or more at the time of renewal is not eligible to renew their status.

As part of the renewal of certification, the TRB NT may request release of information from other certifying authorities (if applicable).

TRB NT reserves the right to request a Stage 2: School Site visit if the renewal application does not provide sufficient evidence of maintaining the level of practice at the certified career stage.

For further information please refer to the Guide to the Renewal of Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia.

Any teachers submitting a renewal application must do so prior to certification expiry or as per date identified in notification letter.

The cost for renewal of Certification is \$500.

12. RE-APPLYING WITH CHANGE OF CAREER STAGE

An applicant for Lead teacher who has not been successful at Stage 1 of the certification process may submit the same evidence in an application addressing the requirements for Highly Accomplished career stage, provided the written statements and annotations have been altered to address the Highly Accomplished Standards. If such a situation occurs, the application is treated as a new application and new fees apply.

13. APPEALING A DECISION

Applicants who receive an unfavourable decision at Stage 1 or Stage 2 Certification Assessment, or for renewal of Certification, may request an internal review of that decision within 14 days of being notified.

The request for internal review should be in the form of a statement not exceeding 1000 words indicating the grounds on which the applicant considers that the decision should be reviewed, highlighting challenges in response to the identified standard descriptors provided by the National Assessors in the notification letter.

On receipt of the request for internal review of a Certification decision, or a renewal of Certification decision, TRB NT will appoint a review panel of assessors not previously involved in the assessment process that is being appealed. The review panel will assess the evidence for certification or written statements for renewal of Certification against the Standards, and provide TRB NT with a recommendation to uphold or to alter the decision within 30 days of re-submission. The recommendation will then be provided to the TRB NT at the next scheduled Board meeting.

Where and if necessary/applicable the Director will be asked to moderate the assessors' decisions and contact the applicant's principal and/or nominated referees. If additional referees are required the applicant will be contacted.

The outcome will be communicated to the appellant following endorsement from TRB NT.

Once the review panel has made its final decision, and endorsement from TRB NT has occurred, no further appeals/reviews are available.

EVALUATION/REVIEW

Evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy will be through the analysis of Certification processes and anecdotal feedback.

The Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory would like to acknowledge the ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) for their permission to adapt their National Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers Policy from which this document was developed.