Getting to know the *Standards*

NOTES

The Professional Standards Project

- is one of the suite of DEEWR (formally DEST) funded national projects being undertaken to support the implementation of the MCEETYA *National Statement for Languages Education in Australian Schools* and the *National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008*
- is a nationally coordinated professional learning program for languages teachers, to improve the quality of languages teaching and thereby improve the learning outcomes of students
- is based on the use of the *Professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages and cultures* developed by the AFMLTA in 2005

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Aims of the project

- to stimulate self-assessment and self-reflection among languages teachers about their professional knowledge and practice, leading to:
  - enhanced quality languages programs by enabling teachers to develop the attributes and capabilities embodied in the standards
- to promote and recognise quality languages teaching
- to promote professional collaboration among languages teachers and school leaders across languages and across states and territories, leading to:
  - greater leadership density and expertise at state/territory and national levels and across all sectors and all language groups

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Professional learning program

- The professional learning program
  - is being developed and implemented by the AFMLTA with the MLTAs of each state and territory and the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures (RCLC) at the University of South Australia
  - involves up to 400 languages teachers across all states and territories of Australia
  - is divided into two Streams, A and B

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Professional learning program

- Stream A
  - is designed to familiarise teachers with the *Standards*
  - includes 2 professional learning modules
- Module 1: Getting to know the *Standards*
- Module 2: Using the *Standards* in professional learning

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Stream A is intended as an introduction to the *Professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages and cultures* (the *Standards*).

Module 1 focuses on 'walking through' the *Standards*, understanding the need for standards developed by language teachers for language teachers, and the elements of the *Standards.*

Module 2 focuses on using the *Standards* in professional practice, with an emphasis on developing an investigative stance. Guidelines for conducting classroom-based investigations are also provided in this module.

The Professional Standards Project: Project Overview

Interaction / tasks / questions	Supporting Resources
Facilitator presentation The facilitator will briefly outline the project and provide an overview of the professional learning materials. Anticipated time: 10 minutes	PowerPoint slides 1.2 – 1.7

NOTES

Professional learning program

- Stream B
  - is designed to explore, using the *Standards*:
    - educational theory and practice
    - language and culture
    - language pedagogy
  - involves participants undertaking an ongoing classroom investigation
  - includes 8 professional learning modules
    - each module is a 'stand alone' package
    - there is no set 'order' of modules

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Professional learning program

- Stream B modules
  - Module 3: Learning, learners and life worlds
  - Module 4: Identifying language specific needs: working with language specific annotations (3 versions)
  - Module 5: Resources for language learning
  - Module 6: Language learning and language awareness
  - Module 7: Teacher talk and classroom interaction
  - Module 8: Assessing language learning
  - Module 9: Developing relationships and wider connections
  - Module 10: Understanding the relationship of the intracultural with the intercultural

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Stream B explores using the *Standards* in more depth. Participants undertake a classroom investigation related to using the *Standards*. Suggestions for classroom based investigations are included with each of the eight modules in this stream.

There is no set order for presentation of the eight modules, and state and territory MLTAs will determine their own program of professional learning, to suit specific state and territory needs.

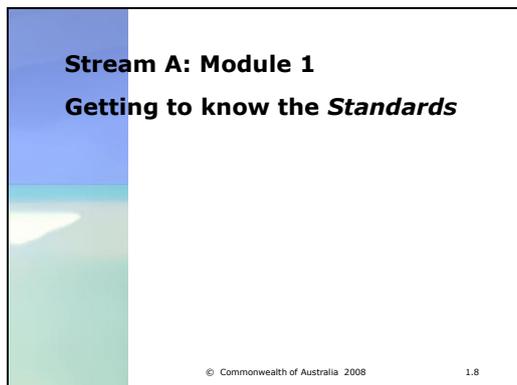Some teacher release days are provided as part of this stream.

All modules are provided in the folder. Participants involved in Stream A only may wish to use the Stream B learning modules for their own independent learning, or in other ways, such as with a hub group of colleagues. State and territory MLTAs may also wish to provide additional sessions for their members, focusing on a particular aspect covered in one or more modules.

NOTES

Stream A: Module 1

Getting to know the *Standards*

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Session objectives

- In this module you will
  - become familiar with the *Standards*
  - reflect on how the *Standards* can be used as a part of your own work

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This module introduces the *Standards* and ways of working with them.

Module 1:
Getting to know the *Standards*

Overview

This module will familiarise you with the *Professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages and cultures* (the *Standards*). We introduce you to the standards and invite you to begin working with the *Standards* document and apply them to your own work.

This module is divided into four sections. The first three sections focus on getting to know the *Standards*:

1. Introducing the *Standards*
2. **Teacher standards**
3. **Program standards**.

For each section, a short presentation will focus on the development and format of the *Standards.* You will then have an opportunity to work together to develop your understanding of the standards.

Finally, we will focus and reflect on ways of using the *Standards* in professional contexts as a resource for your own professional learning.

4. Using the *Standards.*

Objectives

In this module you will:

- become familiar with the *Standards*
- reflect on how the *Standards* can be used as a part of your own work.

NOTES
Section 1: Introducing the *Standards*

Why have standards?

- Standards are part of the current landscape of teaching and are being developed in Australia at national and state/territory levels (English, Social Studies, Science, Maths, Teaching Australia)
- Standards are not just an Australian phenomenon. Teacher standards have been developed in
  - USA (*National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*)
  - UK (*The Framework of Professional Standards for Teachers in England*)
  - New Zealand (*Professional Standards: Criteria for Quality Teaching*)

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Professional standards have become a regular part of teaching in Australia and play an important role in professional learning. These professional standards are designed to develop the profession and not to measure whether or not teachers are meeting an acceptable level of performance.

Standards are a part of modern education and are found in a number of countries around the world.

Why have standards?

- Standards help to capture the professional nature of teachers' work
- There is value in articulating what constitutes accomplished teaching and for this to be done by the profession for the profession

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In order to be effective in developing quality teaching, professional standards need to be developed by the teaching profession for the use of the teaching profession. The AFMLTA *Standards* were developed through a consultative process involving language teachers from all around Australia.

The *Standards*

- The *Standards* are designed to reflect the practice of accomplished teachers: that is, they reflect the highest end of the profession
- The *Standards* are meant to be developmental: they should be used to guide teachers in continuously developing their capabilities during their teaching careers
- There are two sets of standards:
  - *Teacher standards*
  - *Program standards*
- The two sets recognise that quality languages teaching is not just about what teachers know and do, but about the contexts in which they work

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The *Standards* are intended to describe the work of accomplished language teachers. We consider an accomplished teacher to be a highly skilled and highly experienced teacher and so the *Standards* in this project represent a high level of teaching expertise. Ideally the *Standards* are something to be aimed for during one's professional career.

It is important that the standards for professional associations describe a high level of work rather than the minimum abilities required in the profession. The *Standards* represent something teachers can aspire to and because of this they can be used by teachers to establish their own professional learning needs. They are designed as a set of ideas to which teachers can continue to return as they seek to develop professionally. You can use aspects of the *Standards* to think through your own teaching. The *Standards* should be used flexibly and in diverse ways.

The *Standards* comprise two sets:

- **Teacher standards** that describe the abilities of highly accomplished teachers in their own practice
- **Program standards** that describe the sorts of programs or program conditions in which high quality language teaching can be achieved.

These two sets of standards operate together. Quality teaching does not depend simply on the capabilities of the teacher but also on the opportunities that teachers have to exercise their professional capabilities. Some aspects of the **Program standards** are within the teacher's control, while others are not. However, it is very important to recognise that the teacher's work depends on many complex factors. For language education to be of high quality, accomplished teachers need to teach in programs that are designed to facilitate high quality teaching and learning.

Key ideas / learning
Introducing the *Standards*

Interaction / tasks / questions	*Supporting Resources*
Facilitator presentation The facilitator will briefly introduce the focus of the module and the AFMLTA *Standards.* Anticipated time: 10 minutes	PowerPoint slides 1.10 -1.12

NOTES
Section 2: Teacher standards

Teacher standards

- These are descriptions of valued practices of teachers
- Accomplished teaching of languages and cultures is reflected through the following dimensions:
  - **Educational theory and practice**
  - **Language and culture**
  - **Language pedagogy**
  - **Ethics and responsibility**
  - **Professional relationships**
  - **Awareness of wider context**
  - **Advocacy**
  - **Personal characteristics**

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The **Teacher standards** describe what is of value in the work that teachers do. The AFMLTA *Standards* identifies eight dimensions that are relevant to teachers' practice. Collectively these dimensions summarise the overall work of language teachers. Each of these dimensions tries to break down the complex and multifaceted work that teachers do into a series of different foci. Breaking down teachers' work into these categories makes it easier to focus on particular aspects for the purposes of professional learning. However, we should always remember that for accomplished teachers these different dimensions are fused together in their practice.

Teacher standards

The dimension of teachers' work to which the *Standards* apply

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Each dimension has a series of standards that describe teachers' work. These standards further elaborate the dimensions of teachers' practice into a number of typical aspects.

Teacher standards

Statement of standards: a description of what accomplished teachers do

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Each dimension is accompanied by a number of questions that relate to the particular dimension. These questions are suggestions to prompt teachers in thinking about their own practice. You can use them to guide you in thinking through your own professional capabilities and learning needs.

Teacher standards

Questions for reflection: ways of working with the *Standards* to investigate your own practice and needs

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Module 1

Key ideas / learning
Investigating Teacher standards

Facilitator presentation The facilitator introduces and explains the standards for teaching and the individual parts of the standards document. Anticipated time: 20 minutes	PowerPoint slides 1.13 -1.16

NOTES
Section 2: **Teacher standards**

Task 1: getting to know the Teacher standards

- In groups, read through and discuss the **Teacher standards**
  - Consider how these standards portray the highly accomplished languages teacher
  - Consider how these standards might apply to your own teaching context
  - Consider which standards might be most useful for you as a starting point in thinking about how to develop your own practice further

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Task 1: Small group task

The purpose of this task is to give you an opportunity to become familiar with the *Standards*. As you read the *Standards*, think about what is actually being described here. The purpose of the *Standards* is to guide your professional learning rather than describe what you should be doing now.

Key ideas / learning
Investigating Teacher standards

Task 1: Small group task In groups, read through and discuss the **Teacher standards**. In the discussions consider: • how these standards portray the highly accomplished language teacher • how these standards might apply to your own teaching context • which standards might be most useful as a starting point for thinking about how to develop your practice further. Anticipated time: 30 minutes	PowerPoint slide 1.17

NOTES
Section 3: Program standards

The **Program standards** are descriptions of what language teachers as professionals would recognise as program conditions that would provide for students' high quality language learning experiences. The **Program standards** can be seen as covering a range of issues or dimensions, including: the program in its school context, the way learning progressions are planned, the way learning is timetabled, the way the program is staffed, teaching space, resources, class sizes and class groupings. It is important to bear in mind that many teachers are not teaching in ideal programs. This does not mean that the **Program standards** are not relevant to them. Working to develop the quality of programs offered in schools is an important part of teachers' professional roles. The **Program standards** are designed to assist teachers in improving the conditions in which they teach in order to improve their students' learning.

The **Program standards** have a number of statements of standards that represent high quality language teaching.

The **Program standards** are also accompanied by a number of questions relating to the particular dimension. These questions are suggestions to prompt thinking about your own programs and conditions. They can be seen as a way of guiding teachers in working through their own professional contexts.

Task 2: Small group task

This task gives you an opportunity to become familiar with the standards. You will be given time to read the standards and think about what is actually being described here.

Reflect on ways you can use the standards to develop your own programs, rather than just commenting on problems in your own teaching contexts.

Key ideas / learning
Investigating Program standards

Facilitator presentation The facilitator introduces and explains the **Program standards**. Anticipated time: 15 minutes	PowerPoint 1.18 -1.20

Task 2: Small group task In groups, read through and discuss the **Program standards**. Consider: • how these standards portray a high quality language program • how these standards might apply to your teaching context • which standards might be most useful as a starting point in thinking about how to develop your program further. Anticipated time: 30 minutes	PowerPoint slide 1.21

NOTES
Section 4: Using the Standards

Using the Teacher standards

- The **Teacher standards** are designed to assist teachers to understand their own professional knowledge and needs for
  - performance evaluation: recognising and articulating your professional capabilities
  - professional development: recognising and articulating your professional needs
  - advocacy: recognising and articulating your professional value
  - programming: supporting development of long-term programs

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Using Program standards

- The **Program standards** are designed to assist teachers to understand their own professional context and needs for
  - performance evaluation: recognising and articulating your professional capabilities and the impact of context on teaching quality
  - program development: recognising and articulating your needs for effective language teaching both in your own practice and in your school context
  - advocacy: a statement of values that can be used to achieve program change

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Working with teaching standards

- Individual reflection on practice
- Collective reflection on practice in groups of language teachers (e.g. professional associations, language faculties, teachers across schools)
- Reflection on practice with a mentor or peer
- Reflection on practice with a school leader

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Task 3: applying the *Standards* in your professional context

- In groups, choose one dimension and at least two of the statements. Explore how the statements apply to your professional context, considering
  - areas of your teaching that are relevant to the statements
  - how the statements might guide your professional learning in these areas
  - initiatives you might take to develop your professional learning in these areas
  - how you might collect evidence of the standard in your own teaching

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The *Standards* are designed to assist in thinking through your practice. Some of the ways in which they can be used include:

- preparing material for performance evaluation: the *Standards* can be used as a process for documenting your own work in the context of a professional framework.
- developing your own professional capabilities: the Standards can be used as a way of focusing attention on areas of practice that you might wish to work with.
- advocating for recognition in the school and the wider community for your own professional work and its value
- developing your own programs and advocating for better learning conditions for your students.

The Standards can be used in a range of ways, individually and collectively, to develop and articulate the professional capabilities of language teachers.

Task 3: Small group task

This task gives you an opportunity to apply the standards. It invites you to explore and develop your understanding of the *Standards* in relation to your particular experience of teaching.

The discussion should focus on raising awareness of the implications of the *Standards* for teaching practice in your particular professional context. The discussion should build on the understanding, developed through Task 2, that the purpose of the *Standards* is to guide professional learning rather than necessarily describe what teachers should be doing now.

Key ideas / learning
Using the *Standards* in your professional context

Facilitator presentation The facilitator outlines ways in which teachers may be able to work with the *Standards* in their own context. Both the **Teacher standards** and the **Program standards** can be used for performance evaluation, professional development and advocacy for your own work. The facilitator will then provide some suggestions about how you can use the *Standards* as a starting point for your own professional learning. Anticipated time: 10 minutes	PowerPoint slides 1.22 - 1.24

Task 3: Small group task In groups, choose one dimension and at least two of the statements under that dimension. Explore how the statements apply to your professional contexts. Consider: • what areas of your teaching are relevant to the statements • how the statements might guide your professional learning in these areas • what initiatives you might take to develop your professional learning in these areas • how you might collect evidence of the standard in your own teaching. Allow 10 minutes for feedback to the whole group at the end of the task. Anticipated time: 35 minutes	PowerPoint slide 1.25

NOTES

Key ideas / learning

Reflection	Notes page
Use the notes page to consider the observations you have made on the *Standards*. Anticipated time: 10 minutes	

Further reading

Cochran-Smith, M. (2001). Higher standards for prospective teachers: What's missing from the discourse? *Journal of Teacher Education, 52*(3), 179-181

Kohler, M., Harbon, L., Fischmann, V., McLaughlin, M., & Liddicoat, A. J. (2006). Quality teaching: Views from the profession. *Babel*, *40*(3), 23-30

Liddicoat, A. J. (2006a). Developing professional standards for accomplished teachers of languages and cultures. *Babel, 40*(3), 4-6, 38

Liddicoat, A. J. (2006b). Language teachers' professional knowledge and standards for language teaching: A review of the literature. *Babel, 40*(3), 7-22, 38

Sachs, J. (2003). Teacher professional standards: Controlling or developing teaching?, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 9*(2), 175-186