



QUALITY OF INITIAL TEACHER  
EDUCATION IN NSW

# CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS



BOARD OF STUDIES  
TEACHING &  
EDUCATIONAL  
STANDARDS NSW

**GREAT TEACHING, INSPIRED LEARNING - A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION**  
ACTION 3.1 - THE QUALITY OF INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
WILL BE ASSESSED AND PUBLICLY REPORTED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### **AITSL**

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

### **APST**

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

### **BOSTES**

Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW

### **DDA**

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

### **DEC**

NSW Department of Education and Communities

### **GTIL**

*Great Teaching, Inspired Learning – a Blueprint for Action*

### **ITE**

Initial Teacher Education

### **MCEECDYA**

Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs

### **NSWIT**

NSW Institute of Teachers

### **PBIS**

Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support

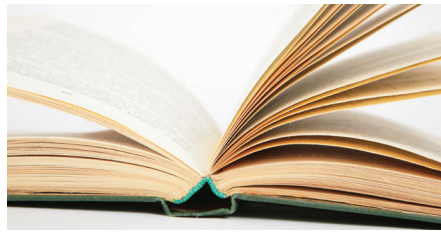
### **PBL**

Positive Behaviour for Learning

### **RTI**

Response to Intervention

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# ABOUT GREAT TEACHING, INSPIRED LEARNING - A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

Research shows that quality teachers are crucial for achieving an overall improvement in student learning outcomes.

In 2013, the NSW Government released *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning - a Blueprint for Action*, which outlines 47 actions to improve the already high standards of teaching in NSW.

Responding to extensive community feedback about teaching quality, the plan includes actions to:

- ▶ better understand and share what makes an excellent teacher
- ▶ ensure beginning teachers are well suited and thoroughly prepared for the classroom
- ▶ make the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers central to delivering fair and accountable performance and accreditation processes and high quality professional development for all teachers
- ▶ ensure career pathways and improved support for school leaders.

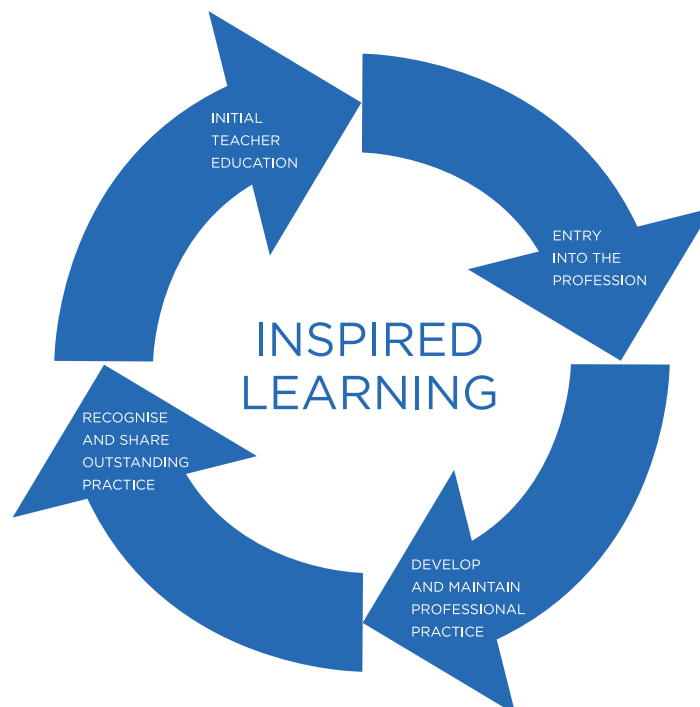
The Blueprint is designed to help students to achieve better results by researching and sharing what makes an excellent teacher, and supporting the career long professional development of all teachers.

BOSTES, the NSW Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission NSW and the Association of Independent School of NSW are working together to implement the Blueprint's reforms across NSW.

Visit [nswteachers.nsw.edu.au](http://nswteachers.nsw.edu.au) to find out how the Blueprint is improving the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes in NSW schools.

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**FIGURE 1: INSPIRED LEARNING DIAGRAM**



The Blueprint is designed to help students to achieve better results by researching and sharing what makes an excellent teacher.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Stage 1

1. This document reports on initial teacher preparation in Classroom Management and Students with Special Education Needs as required by the GTIL initiative of the NSW Government. Stage 1 is a summary of 132 initial teacher preparation programs offered by 17 NSW initial teacher preparation providers.
2. All currently operating teacher preparation programs were accredited by the NSW Institute of Teachers (from January 2014 the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)). Programs are approved under the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004* which sets out that to be approved programs must meet the NSW Professional Teaching Standards which from 2013 have included the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).
3. All programs have stand-alone units to address Students with Special Education Needs (hereafter called Special/Inclusive Education units), and 14 of the 17 teacher education providers have incorporated stand-alone units in Classroom Management (including behaviour management) into their programs. All programs integrate content both in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management throughout other program units.
4. All programs expect teacher education students to demonstrate their classroom management skills, and their skill at teaching students with special needs, during professional experience placements.
5. Consistent between programs is the commitment to preparing teacher education students to meet the needs of diverse learners in classrooms and to ensuring that teacher education students understand their obligations under legislation, including the *Disability Standards in Education 2005*. Programs are also committed to ensuring students understand the Professional Teaching Standards.
6. Consistent also between providers is the emphasis on linking theory to practice and to teaching students reflecting on their own practice in order to facilitate ongoing improvement.
7. Differences between programs are apparent in their underlying philosophies of teaching (with some being more inquiry based and others more directive) and in modes of program delivery (including face-to-face, online and blended learning).
8. Special/Inclusive Education units are generally presented using a non-categorical approach and primarily focus on strategies for implementation in the classroom. There is considerable consistency in assessment tasks and in prescribed texts.
9. Classroom Management units also focus primarily on strategies for implementation in the classroom. There is generally an emphasis on a positive approach to classroom management, but the content in units is presented through a greater range of approaches. Some providers follow the traditional approach by presenting a range of theories and methods, while others choose to focus on particular approaches they prefer based on their assessment of research-based evidence. There is little consistency in prescribed texts.
10. The majority of programs address Classroom Management in stand-alone units as well as by embedding content into other program units. The question remains open whether there is value in the inclusion of stand-alone units in all programs.
11. Overall it is apparent that, given the time available, even the most competently delivered programs cannot prepare teacher education students with all of the knowledge and skills they require to cater for the diverse range of students with special needs and behaviour challenges they will encounter when they enter classrooms. This makes an understanding of essential content and decisions about the inclusion of that content in units critical. In determining essential content a number of factors should be considered:
  - ▶ Employing authorities provide graduates with professional support and the opportunity for on-going professional education to assist them to cater for the needs of all learners in their classrooms. Co-ordination of content between initial teacher education providers and employing authorities is highly desirable, based on a shared professional framework.

- ▶ State and national governments are undertaking education reforms which require new skills of teachers and should be incorporated into initial teacher preparation programs, for example the *Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disabilities* which requires teachers to understand new ways to gather information and assess students.
  - ▶ Critical appraisal of the latest research has the potential to impact on the theories and strategies taught in programs.
  - ▶ Technological changes are impacting on modes of course delivery.
  - ▶ Providers are using a range of innovative approaches, which should be assessed, and where evidence of success is demonstrated could inform the practice of their peers.
12. It is recommended that a panel be convened to discuss the incorporation of essential elements into all programs taking into consideration the above factors. Panel members should be representatives of initial teacher education providers, employing authorities, students, teachers and principals who have demonstrated expertise in these areas of teaching.

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# INTRODUCTION

A requirement of the NSW Government GTIL initiative is that the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) will implement an annual process to examine initial teacher education programs in agreed targeted areas and produce an annual public report to the Minister.

A key issue will be the identification of suitable evidence for the utility and strength of the programs in the specified areas. The Institute will also provide an individual report to each provider containing an assessment of the practices embedded in their programs in light of the Institute's assessment and informed by other available information. The Institute will also discuss with the provider any issues which arise to ensure they are addressed. The process will initially target two key areas, the National Priority Areas of Classroom Management and Students with Special Education Needs.

On 1 January 2014 the NSW Institute of Teachers merged with the Board of Studies NSW to become the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES).

The review of pre-service teacher education in Classroom Management and Students with Special Education Needs commenced in late September 2013, and is being conducted in two stages:

- ▶ a summary of current university/college pre-service coverage in these two areas
- ▶ a process of evaluation.

This document presents a report of the first stage, that is a summary of coverage by universities and colleges of pre-service teacher education in Classroom Management and Students with Special Education Needs.

## Rationale

It is estimated that there are over 100,000 children with disabilities in NSW schools. This figure, which includes State, Catholic and Independent Schools, is based on the estimation by NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) that approximately 90,000 (12%) students who have additional learning and support needs (ie disability, learning difficulty or behaviour support needs) are enrolled in more than 2200 NSW public schools. This includes the full range of students who need adjustments to access and participate in learning under the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. Included are 35,000 (4.7%) students who are currently confirmed as having a disability (against the Department's criteria for specialist services: intellectual, physical, hearing, vision, mental health, autism), and a further 55,000 students with additional learning and support needs relating to difficulties in learning or behaviour (including dyslexia, reading and/or communication delay and ADHD) (*Every Student, Every School, 2010*).

The number of students with disability or additional learning and support needs in NSW schools has increased considerably in recent years. Particularly there has been a sharp increase in the number of students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders and students who have mental health problems. The experience of NSW schools is consistent with other education jurisdictions nationally and internationally (*Every Student, Every School, 2010*).

There has been a shift in education policy over the past two decades internationally and in Australia towards the inclusion of children who have special needs into mainstream classrooms. This shift is reinforced by legislation, internationally, for example, by the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and in Australia under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. DEC reports that students with additional learning needs are being enrolled in every class and in every school (*Every Student, Every School*, (2010)), and that more than 76% of children who require additional support are enrolled in regular classrooms (*DEC Disability Action Plan 2011–2015*).

Under the *Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005* all education providers are required to ensure that all students with disability are able to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without a disability. This includes the requirement to make or provide reasonable adjustments for the student where needed, so that they have the same experience and opportunities as their peers without disability. The introduction of the DDA has contributed to changed expectations about access and participation in education for all students with disability. It has also changed expectations about how students with a disability are supported to access learning experiences that their non-disabled peers take for granted.

The increasing number of children with special needs enrolled in mainstream classes, along with the enrolment of students from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, has made classroom environments complex and challenging for teachers. This is particularly the case for new graduates who are faced immediately with the task of differentiating instruction to cater for individual needs, while establishing and maintaining positive learning environments that support all students. This places increasing pressure on providers to thoroughly address issues of classroom diversity, including the requirement to cater for the students who have special needs (including behaviour support) in their teacher education programs.

The NSW Government has long recognised the importance of preparing pre-service teachers to cater for students with special needs in mainstream classrooms. In 1992, the NSW Department of Education notified initial teacher education providers that one of the mandatory requirements for employment of their graduates would be completion of a unit of study in Special Education. Providers who did not have a Special Education unit were thus compelled to introduce one into their programs. The units which were established at that time have developed and changed focus to reflect contemporary thinking.

Providers also responded to initiatives of the NSW Government subsequent to the Ramsay Report of 2000, which recommended the establishment of a professional body for teachers with responsibility for “developing standards for practice for teachers, accrediting teachers against the standards, endorsing the quality of teacher education and professional development, accrediting schools for the provision of teacher education,

and advising the government on teacher quality issues”. The resulting body, the NSWIT, developed a set of standards, including those specifying skills required by initial teacher education students to cater for students with special education needs in regular classrooms. Standards were also developed to address classroom management, including the provision of support for children with behavioural issues.

In 2006 the NSW Minister for Education endorsed NSWIT advice that NSWIT establish areas for focus in initial teacher education programs. These were implemented in course approval processes from 2007 in NSW, and the NSW Minister for Education was successful in gaining MCEECDYA approval for five priority areas to be included in the new national course accreditation requirements developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

The National Priority areas that resulted are: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education; Classroom Management; Information and Communication Technology; Literacy and Numeracy; and Students with Special Education Needs.

Initial teacher education programs should ensure that all graduates: gain knowledge and skills in the priority areas, as identified in the statements of elaboration; are able to link theory and practice so that the knowledge and skills acquired can be applied in practice; are able to demonstrate these attributes and are assessed against them in course work and/or professional experience, as appropriate.



### Role of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW

Through the process of assessment and approval of all initial teacher education programs BOSTES endeavours to ensure that teacher education students gain the requisite knowledge and skills and programs are of high quality. Until 2013 NSW programs were assessed against Standards specific to NSW including the NSW Graduate Teacher Standards, the requirements for unit content and professional experience, and the NSW Mandatory Areas of Study.

Since the beginning of 2013, BOSTES (NSWIT at that time) has been participating in a national initial teacher education accreditation system which means programs are now assessed against national program standards for the accreditation of initial teacher education programs (**Appendix 1**). Providers must prepare teacher education students to meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at the Graduate teacher stage (**Appendix 2**). These Standards are closely aligned to the previous NSW Professional Teaching Standards at the equivalent Graduate Teacher stage.

Providers not only are required to demonstrate to BOSTES how their programs prepare students to meet the Standards, but also how they address the National Priority Areas. Of particular relevance to this document are Special/Inclusive Education (**Appendix 3**) and Classroom Management (**Appendix 4**).

The process of program review and assessment by BOSTES is conducted by an accreditation panel. This panel includes BOSTES staff, school principals, school teachers, teacher educators and an interstate representative nominated by AITSL. The strength of the panel is in the expertise and diversity of perspective dedicated to the process.

All initial teacher education programs provided in NSW are accredited by the BOSTES, some under the NSW Standards and the more recent applications for program accreditation under the newer Australian Standards. The programs of all NSW providers have been assessed as adequately addressing the mandatory areas of Students with Special Education Needs and Classroom Management in their pre-service courses, based on the intentions and materials included in the program approval documentation.

### Definitions

In addressing Students with Special Education Needs in the following report the term Special/Inclusive Education is used and defined as “catering for students with special education needs in mainstream/regular classrooms”. The term was used for ease of communication with providers, and is reflective of the unit titles offered in this area. In the context of this report the definition of special needs is “having disability, learning difficulty or behaviour support need”. Although some providers have included “gifted and talented students” and “indigenous students” in their definition of “students with special education needs”, they are not the focus of this review.

The term Classroom Management is used to address both general classroom management for all students and management/support specific to students who have behavioural issues. There is some overlap in the students captured under the definition of Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management which means students with behavioural issues are addressed in both areas. However behaviour management/support for students with behaviour problems is one component of many in Special/Inclusive Education.

### Process

The following summary includes information from the following 17 NSW initial teacher education providers:

- ▶ Alphacrucis College
- ▶ Australian Catholic University
- ▶ Australian College of Physical Education
- ▶ Avondale College
- ▶ Charles Sturt University
- ▶ Morling College
- ▶ Macquarie University
- ▶ Southern Cross University
- ▶ University of Notre Dame
- ▶ University of New England
- ▶ University of New South Wales
- ▶ University of Newcastle
- ▶ University of Sydney
- ▶ University of Technology Sydney
- ▶ University of Western Sydney
- ▶ University of Wollongong
- ▶ Wesley Institute

Information for the report is taken from documentation submitted by initial teacher education providers to the BOSTES for approval of their programs, supplemented by information from their websites and input from their key personnel. A total of 132 courses were examined.

It has been mandatory for initial teacher education providers to include a unit in Special/Inclusive Education into pre-service teacher education programs since 1994. Some providers teach a single unit to all students, for example University of Newcastle, while others specify different core units for different awards, for example University of Western Sydney. All core units in Special/Inclusive Education were identified and examined.

While there is no compulsion for providers to include a stand-alone unit in Classroom Management, almost all providers have recognised this as an area of importance by including a core unit addressing Classroom Management in their programs. In the few exceptions where stand-alone units do not exist, providers have chosen to address the subject in a varying number of other units, and have demonstrated to BOSTES where the core content is covered in their documentation relating to the National Priority Areas.

It is to be noted that the coverage of both areas is much more pervasive than will be evident in this report. Current practice is to cater for all learners in regular classrooms and to design and implement programs that can accommodate a diverse range of needs. Pre-service teachers are generally introduced to this concept in their first teaching and learning units, and certainly before they undertake their first professional experience. Providers commit themselves to systematically building student knowledge, not only about effective teaching and classroom management for all students, but also about the unique needs of learners.

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## PART A – GENERAL FINDINGS

### NSW Institute of Teachers

The gathering of data for this report was illuminating in terms of the role of the former NSWIT. It is clear that key personnel from initial teacher education providers regarded NSWIT not only as the regulatory authority, but also as a key organisation in assisting them to meet the Standards. They appear to have relied on NSWIT staff for advice and were guided in their course structures and content, not only by the Standards and regulations, but also by suggestions that were put forward by individual NSWIT staff prior to formal reviews, and by accreditation panel members during the assessment process.

Examples of the positive influence of NSWIT have arisen incidentally in comments made by key university or college personnel during the course of this review, for example from a key academic, “when I came to visit, they drew my attention to the mandatory areas. We are now looking at them with a special eye for our re-accreditation”, and in some change of practices, for example a university which did not have a core unit in Classroom Management adopted one of its elective units as the core unit on the suggestion of the NSWIT review panel.

A more pervasive example of the influence of NSWIT was evident in the adoption by many providers of a model professional experience report template circulated by NSWIT to demonstrate how Graduate Teacher Standards could be used as the basis for professional experience assessment. It is clear that providers were comfortable to use NSWIT in both assistive and regulatory roles to help them fulfil their commitment to meeting APST including the Graduate Teacher Standards.

The role of regulator, including the provision of support to assist providers to meet standards, will continue in the newly created BOSTES.

### Commitment to meeting the Standards

It is clear that providers take the Standards very seriously and are committed to ensuring they are achieved. This is evident, not only in the documents they provide to BOSTES to demonstrate they meet program approval standards, but also in the way in which the relevant Graduate Teacher Standards are addressed in course content and in assessment tasks.

The documentation indicates that providers are committed to ensuring teacher education students become well aware, not only about the content of the APST, but also of their requirement to meet the Standards before graduating. In general teacher education students are introduced to the Standards in the early lectures of their program and referred to them in later program units.

Providers use the Graduate Teacher Standards as the basis for the assessment of student professional experience. In most cases teacher education students are assessed directly against the Standard descriptors, and in some cases, for example Wollongong University, Standards have been detailed with examples of evidence to make the process more explicit for teacher education students and professional experience supervisors. The process of assessment against Standards is directed to teacher education students being clear about the skills they must develop and provides an opportunity to demonstrate they can satisfactorily meet the Standards. This requires schools to provide teacher education students with the opportunity to focus on students who have special learning needs and those who have challenging behaviour, as well as general classroom management.

### Legislation and policy

Consistent between all providers is the commitment to preparing students to meet the needs of all learners in their diverse classrooms. This is evident in their statements of philosophy and in the content presented to students.

Providers are clearly intent on meeting their responsibility in ensuring teacher education student knowledge of all key legislation and regulations. Of prime importance are the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the *Disability Standards in Education 2005*, Work Health and Safety Legislation, and Child Protection and Duty of Care Legislation and policies. The commitment to informing teacher education students about key legislation and policies is evident not only in course aims and course content (with all Special/Inclusive Education units including a topic which addresses legislation and policy), but also in assessment tasks. Key legislation features repeatedly during courses and in professional experience.

Thinking consistent with legislation and policy is mentioned in provider philosophy statements and was often mentioned in discussion with their key personnel, who expressed that their program’s philosophical approach is concordant with legislation and policy, particularly relating to the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and in relation to the safety of students.

It is to be noted that education practice is being impacted by a number of reforms which have been introduced by DEC and the Australian Government Department of Education. Providers need to be alert to the potential impact on the content of their courses both in Special/Inclusive Education and in Classroom Management.

For example, the *Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disabilities* requires teachers to not only have a very clear understanding of their obligations to all students under the DDA, but also to provide data about the children it impacts and their programs, via their school principals, to the Australian Government. The data collection process, which has already commenced in some schools, will become an annual requirement in all Australian schools in 2015. Schools will report which of their students are being provided with reasonable adjustment because of disability as defined by the DDA, the level of adjustment that the students are provided in both the classroom and whole school context, and the broad category of disability under which the student best fits. The data is based on evidence of the assessed identified educational need of the student, and provision of personalised adjustments to meet the student's educational need in consultation with the students or their parents. Providers of initial teacher education will need to include an understanding of this requirement and the associated processes which will impact on every teacher in every school.

### Focus on reflective practice

Consistent among initial teacher education providers is an emphasis on "reflective practice". This concept is promoted in the Graduate Teacher Standards and in the resources produced by DEC, for example those associated with the NSW Quality Teaching Model. The focus on reflection is evident in course work, assessment tasks and professional experience requirements and tasks. All courses require teacher education students to dedicate the time to developing skills in reflecting on their own preconceived ideas, perceptions, beliefs, values, attitudes and experiences in relation to the complex tasks of teaching to diverse groups of learners, and, in so doing, learn and develop improved understanding and practice.

The commitment to reflection is continuous throughout courses and is generally required as a component of each professional experience. Teacher education students are required to reflect on their teaching in relation to what they have been learning in the units they have been studying, their classroom observations and their prior experiences and to evaluate their practices with the aim of continuous improvement.

Courses require teacher education students to articulate their personal philosophies of education. In some cases these students are required to incorporate statements about Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management. In a number of cases they are required to write separate statements on Special/Inclusive Education and/or Classroom Management. In many cases they are required to write a behaviour management plan for a classroom which reflects their own beliefs and philosophies about Classroom Management (in one assessment at Macquarie University, based on the teacher education student's concept of the ideal classroom).

### Child development

One of the Graduate Teacher Standards relating to both Special/Inclusive Education and to Classroom Management is knowledge of child development. The majority of providers address the subject in stand-alone child development/educational psychology units which cover development across all domains and across all age levels, for example Avondale College in its primary courses has a unit entitled *Learning and Child Development in 21st Century* and Macquarie University has a first-year unit entitled *Education: The Psychological Context*. A few providers integrate child development content into other areas, for example Australian College of Physical Education where child and adolescent development is addressed in a number of units. Combined early childhood/primary courses in general devote most attention to child development. Child development is also addressed in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management units in relation to diversity and differences in development.



## Linking theory and practice

In all cases providers appear intent on marrying theory and practice both in Special/Inclusive Education and in Classroom Management. This is evident in the methods used to deliver content, in assessment tasks, in the placement of units in relation to professional experience and in the way professional experience is conducted and assessed.

## General teaching/ learning philosophies

While philosophies of teaching and learning differ between universities/ colleges it is clear that providers, irrespective of their commitment to a particular approach, also include at least some minor elements of other pedagogical approaches. For purposes of this document these approaches are described as ranging from teacher-directed learning to student-directed learning approaches. This is evident to greater or lesser extents in both Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management.

At the student-directed end of the continuum is the approach of the University of Sydney which adopts a student inquiry methodology for course delivery in both Special/ Inclusive Education and Classroom Management. Fundamental to this approach is the use of case studies for the exploration of different philosophies and pedagogical approaches, and the examination of how these are interpreted by teachers in a range of classroom contexts. The intent of this approach is to enable teacher education students to understand how teachers make decisions as they work with diverse students in classrooms. Ultimately teacher education students are encouraged to develop their own philosophy of teaching and learning, embedded in their approach to management.

Charles Sturt University also operates at the more student-directed end of the continuum with an approach based on the theoretical underpinnings of “complexity and self-organisational theory, using key principles of embedded design, feedback and common scheme”. The intent is to have teacher education students become self-organising, inclusive

educators through the process of research, design, reflection and collaboration (see “Of special interest”, Charles Sturt University).

Towards the teacher-directed end of the continuum is the University of Technology, Sydney which is more prescriptive in its approach to Classroom Management, delivering selected content, based on the belief that teacher education students must be equipped with a well-defined, well-researched set of practices to become effective teachers. University of NSW also adopts a more teacher-directed approach to Classroom Management centred on evidence-based practice. These universities are characteristic of all providers in that they include practices that range across the continuum from student-centred to teacher-centred. For example, the University of NSW also “has a focus on teacher education students taking responsibility for their learning”.

Many providers adopt what could be termed a “constructivist” approach. For example, Macquarie University, in its approach to Classroom Management, requires teacher education students to learn about several approaches and make their own judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of each. These are incorporated with their experiences to make their own unique approach. This involves both teacher-directed and student-directed learning.

In general providers use a range of methodologies reflective of teacher-centred and student-centred approaches, such as delivery of research-based lectures, case study analysis, development of personal philosophies, critical reflection, experiential learning etc.

## Course delivery

Providers adopt a range of modes for the delivery of content in their Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management units. Some units are conducted primarily face to face, for example University of Wollongong and Avondale College. Other units are conducted entirely in distance mode, for example some units at Southern Cross University where teacher education students are presented with online lecture content, including PowerPoint presentations and recorded lectures, and are required to complete study guides and activities and attend online discussion forums.

In some circumstances teacher education students are able to elect whether they will study face-to-face or by distance, for example University of New England where off-campus students receive edited versions of their lectures by podcast, and PowerPoint presentations online. In lieu of on-campus workshops online discussion forums are provided for distance students. In the case of University of New England, distance education is supported through the innovative "Future Campus" based at Parramatta and regional study centres.

In other circumstances providers present their units in mixed/blended delivery mode combining both face-to-face and online learning, for example University of Western Sydney where this is seen not only as enhancing flexibility but as a model for best classroom practice. Macquarie University adopts a model of blended learning by presenting its unit in Special/Inclusive Education both to internal and external students via two recorded lectures each week (25 in total) published on their iLearn platform. On-campus students must attend a one-hour weekly face-to-face tutorial, and external students must attend a two-day compulsory on-campus school in lieu of the tutorials.

Alphacrucis College students study primarily by distance with a mixed mode of delivery including online learning, a week of intensive on-campus workshops, community visits, school visits and professional experience. Morling College has a similar model with students required to be on campus for several days and then work through a study guide, directed reading, materials presented in audio format and case studies, along with keeping a journal.

## Summary: General Findings

Providers regard BOSTES as having both advisory and regulatory roles. Providers appear to take their obligations to meet the Standards very seriously and appear to be intent on ensuring their students are well informed of legal and regulatory requirements. In this regard a watching brief on state and national education reforms is indicated.

Programs focus on the nexus between theory and practice along with teaching students to engage in reflective practice. Child development is covered in all programs. While providers adopt a range of teaching philosophies, programs generally incorporate methods which are reflective of a range of teaching philosophies.

There is considerable variation in the mode of presentation of content in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management units, including face-to-face, blended and distance learning. It is possible that some of the emerging models may provide more or less effective ways of delivering content in Special/Inclusive Education and/or Classroom Management than traditional models, and a review of practices is indicated.

## PART B – SPECIAL/INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

### All programs have mandatory units in Special/Inclusive Education which have been assessed by NSWIT as meeting the Standards.

The units run for a semester and generally include between 33 and 39 hours of face-to-face content (or equivalent). Exceptions include: Southern Cross University which provides 30 hours of face-to-face content in a 10-week period, University of Technology Sydney, which has 30 hours of content followed by 11 days of Professional Experience as part of the primary unit and 10 weeks of Professional Experience for the secondary unit, and the University of Sydney where units are generally 24 hours face-to-face and include between 15 and 20 hours of Professional Experience.

### Philosophies

There is considerable consistency in the philosophical approach adopted by universities toward the delivery of Special/Inclusive Education.

Many programs articulate their philosophies in terms of a “rights based” approach. For example:

- ▶ “recognising every individual's rights to be treated equally, and to be accorded the same services and opportunities as everyone else” (Australian Catholic University)
- ▶ “the entitlement of all students to attend their local school with effective learning and support frameworks. At the centre of the philosophy is respect for the rights of students with disabilities” (Southern Cross University)
- ▶ “underpinned by a rights-based philosophy” (University of Notre Dame).

Some providers, for example Avondale College and the University of Technology, Sydney adopt a social justice perspective. University of Technology, Sydney expresses this as underpinning courses by the inclusion of principles of “social justice and normalisation”.

Many programs articulate their philosophy in terms of the responsibilities of teachers. Examples are as follows:

- ▶ “Given that contemporary classrooms are inclusive in nature pre-service teachers need to be able to create learning environments in which inclusion involves enhancement of outcomes for all students” (Australian College of Physical Education)
- ▶ “Teachers and schools must provide students with disabilities and learning support needs, a pathway to achieve their potential to support them to become valued members of society in a meaningful dignified way” (Southern Cross University)
- ▶ “It is important to meet student needs in terms of individuality and diversity and ensuring as far as possible they experience success across the varied curricula that exist in schools” (University of New England)
- ▶ “Education needs to be inclusive and embrace diversity” (Wesley Institute)
- ▶ Teachers must have a sound foundation of “what is required to enable students to effectively cater for the needs of learners with individual differences in the classroom” (Conservatorium of Music).

University of Notre Dame states it is the responsibility of schools and teachers to modify classroom practice for diversity rather than that of the child to suit the schools.

Legislation is also mentioned as the driver of units. For example, Alphacrucis College and Australian Catholic University “endeavour to prepare teacher education students to implement practices consistent with the approach to inclusion articulated by National and State governments”, and the University of Newcastle clearly states that its course centres on the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

The University of New South Wales articulates not only rights-based, teacher responsibility and legislative imperatives in its philosophy but also its belief in evidence-based practice. “Teachers need to learn about inclusion and special education evidence-based practice as well as human rights as expressed in legislation. Teachers need to have adequate knowledge skills and ethical approach to provide high quality education for all students”.

Some additional dimensions to philosophy are evident, particularly in the case of providers where Christian/biblical approaches prevail. For example, Morling College adopts a Christian worldview appreciating biblical principles of humanity, equity and acceptance and special needs.

## Teaching approach and content

Most programs have adopted a non-categorical approach to Special/Inclusive Education, with some providers articulating this in their philosophical statements, that is the University of Newcastle and Charles Sturt University. This means that, in the main, children who have special education needs are not considered under disability labels.

In some cases however, providers have found it advantageous to consider groups of students by disability type for at least a few topics in their units. For example, the University of Wollongong includes categories of language and communication difficulties, intellectual impairment, physical impairment, learning difficulties/specific learning difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Implications of those disabilities and teaching and learning strategies are integrated throughout the categorical topics in addition to coverage in stand-alone topics, which include differentiation and managing the differentiated classroom. The University of New South Wales chooses to categorise students under the headings “high incidence disabilities”, “mental health issues” and “low incidence disabilities”, and to address learner characteristics and teaching strategies according to those categories, along with additional stand-alone topics. Charles Sturt University addresses types of disabilities in the classroom in one topic which includes Autism and twice exceptionality (i.e. being both gifted/talented and having a disability).

At least six providers have also chosen to address Gifted and Talented Children in the Special/Inclusive Education unit (Avondale College, Conservatorium of Music, Morling College, Australian Catholic University, Alphacrucis College and University of Notre Dame). At least two providers address indigenous students (University of NSW, Alphacrucis College) in the core Special/Inclusive Education units.

The University of New England does not use disability categories, preferring to focus on “using an instructional planning model”, and also placing emphasis on support teams. The University of Sydney also does not use categories and focuses on a “teaching and learning cycle ... and quality learning”. In some cases where treatment is entirely non-categorical, for example, Australian Catholic University and Avondale College, students are required to address a specific disability in their assessments.

However, consistent among many providers is special attention paid to Autism Spectrum Disorder. Discussion with key personnel in universities/colleges revealed this was a reflection of feedback from in-school teachers and executive staff, who are themselves seeking further education to enhance their competence to teach an increasing number of children diagnosed with Autism.

At least 10 of the providers include specific topics on Classroom/Behaviour Management in core Special/Inclusive Education units (Avondale College, Wesley Institute, Morling College, Macquarie University, Australian College of Physical Education, University of Technology, Sydney, University of Western Sydney, University of Notre Dame, University of Sydney and Southern Cross University).

In general, however, apart from legislation (which is featured as a topic in all courses), the focus of all units is on strategies for teachers to use in classrooms. These strategies generally address the identification and assessment of student needs and designing and implementing individual programs. Curriculum-based assessment and differentiation feature in most courses, along with concepts of accommodation, adjustments, modification and adaptations. Working with families and support staff to assist teachers to cater for students with special needs is also addressed.



## Placement of units

The Special/Inclusive Education units are generally placed in second or later years of programs. This reflects the perspective that teacher education students should acquire some fundamental knowledge before addressing the complexities of children with special needs. Teacher education students are however introduced to concepts of student diversity and special education needs in earlier units on teaching and learning and/or professional practice and/or child development.

## Assessments

Providers have devised a wide range of assessment tasks which are clearly intended, not only to assess, but also to supplement student knowledge, and, in almost all cases, facilitate the application of theory to practice.

At least nine providers require teacher education students to write lesson plans to cater for students with special needs. A typical approach bases these on a case study or teacher education student experience from professional experience, and requires consideration of classroom ecology and the development of lesson plans including goals and teaching strategies, the provision of adjustments and accommodations to regular lesson content along with justification from readings and research, and monitoring strategies. At least three providers (Southern Cross University, Morling College and Charles Sturt University) require the writing of an individual education plan.

Commonly, providers require teacher education students to address a child/children with a disability and present implications for their learning and strategies to use in the classroom. The presentation may be in a tutorial, a written paper or both. Often tutorials require teacher education students to prepare a handout for their peers. An example of such an assessment task from Charles Sturt University in its unit *Supporting Learners with Diverse Abilities* is “to explain and illustrate key issues and accommodations necessary for inclusion of children with a specific disability into mainstream classroom, to provide specific examples of adjustments to teaching, learning curricula, to provide examples of an individual education plan, to discuss the roles of parents, teacher aides and Learning Support Teams, to discuss specific classroom management issues and to provide strategies to include children socially and academically”.

A variation on this assessment from the University of Newcastle requires teacher education students to develop an information summary addressing a child’s needs and ways to cater for the child in the classroom as if it would be presented to a casual teacher. Similarly the University of New South Wales requires the development of an information resource relating to a child with special needs.

Some of the more innovative assessments aimed at linking theory and practice are as follows:

- ▶ University of New England has a collaborative activity where teacher education students are allocated to groups and consider themselves to be a Learning Support Team, each team member taking on one of five different roles. Teams are given two case studies relating to a student with a high support needs. Following consideration of each role, individuals in collaboration with other team members develop a list of three key concerns, three actions that they will take to address those concerns and ways that they will evaluate the effectiveness of the actions. Teacher education students also prepare a short reflection on their experience of the process of collaboration. Responses are submitted individually.
- ▶ Southern Cross University has a Professional Experience Intervention where teacher education students are required to implement an action research project focusing on behaviour or learning difficulty in a regular class. Teacher education students are required to collect data in relation to two cycles of intervention, analyse teacher education student needs in conjunction with their co-operating teacher and develop interventions and curriculum adjustments. The students must plan, implement and evaluate programs, demonstrate skills of working with other professionals and report their study.

- ▶ University of Notre Dame has an assessment task where teacher education students are required to track a student with special needs throughout a 10-week professional practice and include specific actions taken by the support/class teacher and to report connections with the family. Other providers require observation as the basis for assessment, for example Avondale College, Alphacrucis College, Conservatorium of Music.
  - ▶ Avondale College teacher education students are required to visit an educational environment where inclusion is practised and report on the way the child is included, for example adaptations to curriculum, communication styles, behaviour management styles and practices, support personnel, classroom modifications, support for parents. Alphacrucis College has a similar assessment where teacher education students are also required to interview the classroom teacher about the strategies being used.
  - ▶ Several providers require teacher education students to make personal statements about inclusion, for example University of Sydney, to write a position paper on inclusion, University of Western Sydney, to undertake self-reflection about inclusion, University of Western Sydney, as assessment tasks in the core units.
  - ▶ Macquarie University takes a unique approach, requiring teacher education students as a first assessment to undertake a self-survey about their beliefs and attitudes to inclusion. Their final assessment then requires them to write a research-based essay to address the way in which their beliefs will affect their ability to create inclusive classrooms.
  - ▶ University of Wollongong has an assessment task where teacher education students must create and justify five principles for successful inclusion.
- Some of the more traditional assessments include: exams and quizzes (which are part of many assessment suites); evaluations/reflective comments on readings (Wesley Institute, Morling College); text chapter discussions (Wollongong University); reflective commentary on current issues (University of Sydney); essay on inclusion (Australian College of Physical Education); essay on legal issues and inclusion (University of Notre Dame, University of NSW); annotated bibliography of resources on inclusion (University of NSW).

### Texts

In Special/Inclusive Education there is considerable consistency in the use of texts and readings prescribed for core units. Eight of the 17 programs prescribe Foreman (2011), as the primary text, with one unit prescribing their own text based on readings from Foreman (2011) and Lyons et al. (2011). Two units use Ashman and Elkins (2010) as the main text, and Loreman et al. (2010), Hyde et al. (2010) and Woodcock, Dixon and Tanner (2013) are each prescribed for one core unit. The remainder of units do not have set texts. In cases where units do not specify the texts listed above (with the exception of Woodcock, Dixon and Tanner, which was published in 2013) the above texts are generally included in the reference lists of Special/Inclusive Education Units.

## Of interest

In their endeavour to link theory and practice providers adopt a range of strategies. During the course of this review several practices were identified as being relatively different from most. These have been presented below:

- ▶ For the past two years at University of Sydney a special education lecturer and a Science lecturer have been “team-teaching” in one of the initial teacher education Science units, in the topic, “Diversity in the Science Classroom: Promoting Access to the Curriculum for Students with Learning Needs”. This collaborative arrangement enables lecturers to demonstrate the principles of universal design for learning using BOSTES syllabus outcomes, and to work with teacher education students to help them develop a lesson that provides access to students with a range of needs.
- ▶ Southern Cross University is developing partnerships with local schools for immersion days, where teacher education students are given the opportunity to engage with learning and support systems for students with disabilities and diverse needs. The immersion days are additional to the requirements of professional experience.
- ▶ University of Sydney, in the Primary unit *Teaching Children with Special Needs*, presents a series of lectures aimed at equipping teacher education students to meet the needs of classroom students who are experiencing difficulties in literacy and numeracy. It also requires teacher education students, under the guidance of a mentor, to conduct at least 15 lessons teaching numeracy and/or literacy to a child with an identified difficulty. The mentor conducts “mini tutorial” sessions in schools around specific readings, assists and guides the planning of programs and provides feedback about program implementation and the instructional skills being used. Teacher education students are required to complete a reflective journal and a professional statement at the conclusion of the unit.

## Summary: Special/ Inclusive Education

With increasingly diverse classroom environments the Special/Inclusive Education units are explicitly designed to prepare teacher education students, as much as is possible, to cater for students who have special needs in their classrooms by addressing strategies for assessing, planning and implementing appropriate programs. Teacher education students are also made aware of their responsibilities under legislation, particularly the DDA. Special/Inclusive Education Unit content has changed since its compulsory introduction in 1994 from a categorical approach to one which now recognises the individuality of students, no matter what their label, and focuses on strategies for personalised education.

While the Special/Inclusive Education units are comprehensive in their content, it is to be recognised that teacher education students will require much more information than is imparted to them in their pre-service education, as it is not possible to acquire all the information they will need to know in the time which can be allocated to the study of students with special needs. Recognition must be made that on-going professional learning and professional expertise and support needs to be available to teachers to supplement their initial teacher education. As a result initial teacher education providers and employing authorities should work closely to identify their roles and develop a shared professional framework to ensure effective continuing education for beginning teachers occurs.

## PART C – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

While all programs cover the standards required to prepare teacher education students, the manner in which Classroom Management is addressed varies.

In the majority of cases (13 of 17 providers) Classroom Management is addressed primarily in a core unit with content integrated into other units and also into professional experience. Some providers also incorporate professional experience into the core unit (see below).

Four providers do not have stand-alone units:

- ▶ Avondale College, where Classroom Management is systematically addressed throughout the content section of the eight professional experience units
- ▶ University of Sydney, where a more holistic approach is adopted (ie. examining the child's situation as a whole in the context of the classroom) and an inquiry/case-based approach is the vehicle for addressing Classroom Management throughout courses (eg teacher education students are asked to read about and discuss models of Classroom Management, examine critical classroom/behaviour incidents in tutorials, address the topic during assignments and in professional experience)
- ▶ Australian College of Physical Education, where the content is addressed primarily in the Special/Inclusive Education, Classroom Skills and Professional Experience units
- ▶ Wesley Institute, where content primarily is addressed in the first teaching and learning units and in psychology units in both primary and secondary programs.

Classroom Management units generally run for a 12 to 13 week semester, with the exception of Southern Cross University which has a 10 week lecture period. Units generally have 30 to 39 hours of instruction for those that provided lecture/workshop content only. Units that incorporate both lecture/workshop content and professional experience have varying hours of lecture/workshop content (from 8 hours to 13 weeks), along with varying lengths of professional experience (from 10 days to 10 weeks). The latter units incorporating professional experience are presented in a variety of arrangements (see Nexus between theory and practice).

### Philosophies

Providers generally describe their philosophies in similar terms to those used in Special/Inclusive Education. Examples area as follows:

- ▶ “based on concepts of equity and justice along with appreciation of policy and process in school setting” (Wesley Institute)
- ▶ “focusing on a social justice approach in context of relevant legislation, national frameworks, policy and curriculum documents to develop social and personal capabilities of all children” (Australian Catholic University)
- ▶ “valuing individuality and diversity” (University of New England)
- ▶ “responding to student diversity” (University of New South Wales)
- ▶ “as a national priority area directly related to principles of equity and inclusion as basis for connecting teachers to their teachers and to students to one another” (Southern Cross University)
- ▶ “the rights of members of the school community balanced with acknowledging responsibilities and respect for all participants at all times” (University of Wollongong)
- ▶ “establishing environments to enable all students to participate fully in educational activities” (Australian College of Physical Education).



## Teaching methodology

As mentioned above, the teaching methodology used to impart knowledge in Classroom Management differs between providers from student-directed to teacher-directed approaches, with all providers incorporating elements of both to greater or lesser extent.

The majority of units adopt an approach which exposes teacher education students to a range of theories, but focuses on classroom practice. Teacher education students are given the opportunity to think critically about these theories and practices, to implement these in professional experience placements, reflect on their successes/areas for improvement and devise their own classroom management philosophies and plans, for example University of Western Sydney, Charles Sturt University, University of Wollongong and Macquarie University.

Specifically, the University of Newcastle focuses on the Quality Teaching Model and teacher education students are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and beliefs about Classroom Management and draw on various theorists, to be critical of their approaches and then to design an eclectic Classroom Management plan. The University of Notre Dame expresses the approach in the introduction to one of its assessments as “empowering students with a wide repertoire of possible responses to children’s behaviour and enabling them to make a clear, rational selection for their choice of strategy”.

The University of Sydney has similar goals but has a more inquiry-based approach to achieve these outcomes and aims to develop student thinking throughout the entire course rather than in a discrete Classroom Management unit. Some providers require teacher education students to reflect on their own preconceived ideas about Classroom Management before learning about theorists and practices (eg Morling College, University of New England and Charles Sturt University).

While the approach of presenting a number of theories along with practical implications dominates, on average, study of particular theorists occupies less than 20% of course work. The number of theorists presented by each provider and the manner in which they are presented varies, for example Avondale College presents the largest number of theorists (10) systematically integrated across the content of eight Professional Experience units. University of New England presents theorists in one of nine topics. However units across all programs predominantly focus on practical strategies for implementation in the classroom, for example Avondale includes practical strategies in all of its eight professional experience units. University of New England devotes seven of nine topics in its core unit directly to strategies for teachers, including assessment and implementation.

Two universities, University of New South Wales and University of Technology, Sydney, are more selective in their approach. They have adopted the philosophy that evidence-based practice should be the core of their teaching and are more prescriptive in the way they approach Classroom Management. University of New South Wales course work is grounded in the philosophy of Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support (PBIS), Applied Behaviour Analysis and Inclusive Education. Similarly the University of Technology, Sydney adopts an evidence-based practical approach teaching preventive and corrective strategies and techniques that are applied in classroom situations during student professional experience.

Several providers in their Christian/biblical perspective offer “biblical approaches” to behaviour management and ethical difficulties that arise in school settings, for example Alphacrucis College, Morling College, which leads them to adopt their own philosophies. They also include additional unit content, for example policies of their sector education systems.

## Positive approach

The majority of providers also adopt the view that creating a positive classroom environment is central to overall behaviour management, for example University of Newcastle states that Classroom Management is primarily an effect of good pedagogy rather than a precondition for it, and a proactive preventative focus is the key. The Australian College of Physical Education focuses on establishing positive learning environments that allow all school students to participate fully in all educational activities of their schools. The University of Western Sydney founds its approach on a “commitment to positive behavioural learning and pro-social learning”.

In some units the establishment of positive classroom environments is discussed under the title of preventative strategies, for example Macquarie University where three topics in prevention are presented, and the University of New South Wales, which presents proactive classroom strategies and makes links between curriculum content, teaching methods and literacy and numeracy deficit and classroom behaviour. In the same unit UNSW addresses the development of classroom climate through positive teacher-child interaction.

While most providers endeavour to adopt a positive approach to Classroom Management, it is clear that some have a particularly strong commitment to the approach. This is evident in unit titles, for example *Building Positive Relationships* and *Understanding and Guiding Children's Behaviour* (University of Notre Dame), *Creating Positive Learning Environments* (University of Wollongong), *Positive Behaviour*

*Support* (Southern Cross University) and *Pro-social Learning and Positive Classroom Management* (University of Western Sydney). Some units also present their content under particularly positive content headings, for example University of New South Wales which commences its core unit with proactive strategies, then moves on to positive behaviour interventions, followed by consequences (encouraging positive student behaviour) then consequences (responding and in the context of least to most intrusive strategies) and supporting students with special needs. While University of Sydney does not have a designated unit in behaviour management, the theme across the integrated content is proactive teacher behaviour and a positive learning framework.

While it is clear that providers endeavour to present a positive approach, it is also evident that, in some circumstances, documentation held by BOSTES isn't yet reflective of contemporary terminology. This is indicated by their use of the term “behaviour management” rather than the more contemporary terms “behaviour support” or “behaviour guidance” and the term “Individual Behaviour Management Plan” rather than “Individual Plan” or “Individual Support Plan”. The intention of the shift in terminology is to place more emphasis on the developmental processes that ultimately result in pro-social behaviour based on self-control. This concept is reflected in terminology used for specialist staff, that is Behaviour Support Teachers and in the terms used in recent education reforms, for example *Every Student, Every School* (2012).

## Presentation of content

Most providers adopt a non-categorical approach in their presentation of Classroom Management (ie labels for student behaviour/conditions do not determine content). Bullying, as an issue, along with causes and strategies for management, features in all Classroom Management units and often recurs in other units. As mentioned earlier, obligations under legislation feature in all courses.

There is little consistency in the way content is grouped, thus, while it is clear that units are focused on strategies to manage classrooms and student behaviour, it is hard to determine the extent of consistency of content and it appears to vary considerably. For example, providers sometimes group content by theory/theorist but from different perspectives, for example Macquarie University uses the categories: psycho-educational approaches, behavioural approaches, social justice approaches; where Charles Sturt University groups theories under the heading “Theories of Behavioural Guidance”, and examines assertive discipline, applied behaviour analysis, cognitive behaviourism, neo-Adlerian theory, humanism, solution-focused approaches. University of Wollongong examines theories under the categories: prevention strategies (motivation and social skills), responsive strategies (behaviourism), needs-based strategies (Adler, Dreikurs and Glasser).

The more strategy-focused topics also vary, for example Charles Sturt University presents two key modules, that is “Classroom” and “Classroom Dynamics”. The module “Classroom” includes: reflective practice, theories

of behaviour guidance, analysis of classroom dynamics, and building relationships. The module “Classroom Dynamics” includes: inclusive classrooms, classroom dynamics, identifying behaviour problems, managing conflict, behaviour management and creating a classroom management philosophy and policy. The University of New South Wales has the topics: proactive classroom strategies, introduction to positive behaviour interventions, developing classroom climate, consequences, responding to severe behaviour, supporting students with special needs, managing the escalating cycle, culturally responsive classrooms. The University of Western Sydney in its Master of Teaching (Secondary) uses topics framed as questions, for example What is contemporary classroom management? What causes students to become disengaged from their learning? The question topics address causes, pedagogy, assessment, individualised strategies, the relationship of behaviour to literacy and numeracy and Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL).

### **Placement of units**

The placing of the study of Classroom Management in relation to professional experience varies and is generally related to the content covered. Providers are mindful of the need to incorporate content in Classroom Management into programs before students commence professional experience. This means that some providers introduce the topic in their more generic early units on teaching and learning, leaving the stand-alone unit, where specific strategies for challenging behaviour are taught, until later years when students have more experience and are able to accommodate more sophisticated knowledge (eg Australian Catholic University). Other providers make Classroom Management the primary focus of student course work before they engage in their first practical experience (eg University of Technology, Sydney, Alphacrucis College). Some providers (eg University of Technology, Sydney, University of Wollongong) also make Classroom Management the focus of observational professional practice experiences prior to students commencing their first practice teaching placements.

### **Assessments**

Less variable are teacher education student assessments, which are, in the main, focused on classroom practice. At least eight providers require teacher education students to complete Classroom Management plans and/or personal philosophies of Classroom Management as assessment tasks for the core unit. Additionally, University of Wollongong requires students to describe the ideal classroom and analyse their own skills in relation to the creation of that classroom. Australian Catholic University requires students to write a “whole of school” management plan.

At least five providers require teacher education students to submit documents reflecting on their own behaviour management practices in professional experience teaching. Several providers require teacher education students to observe a classroom teacher’s practice and report on the methods used in classroom management. Two providers require teacher education students to critique school discipline/welfare policies. Four providers require teacher education students to respond to scenarios/case studies where classroom management and behaviour issues need to be addressed.

Other practical assessments include: designing a student assessment (Macquarie University), action research on behaviour in the classroom (Southern Cross University), designing a unit of work on pastoral care (Morling College), conducting a learning environment analysis (Charles Sturt University) and preparing a teaching resource (University of Wollongong). Where essays are required they are also practically based, for example writing a paper which presents a “whole school” approach to behaviour management (Australian Catholic University), discussing the implications for classrooms of behaviour theories (four universities/colleges) and discussion of classroom strategies and their implications (University of Technology, Sydney). Additionally six units have embedded professional experience placements which form part of the assessment.

## Nexus between theory and practice

### Professional experience

Consistent among all providers is the endeavour to link theory and practice. This can be seen in course content, the manner in which it is delivered and in assessment tasks, but is best illustrated in the organisation of Professional Experience in relation to course content. A variety of models exist, and within those models providers have devised strategies to ensure the nexus of theory and practice. Examples are:

#### ► Core unit comprised of lecture content followed by professional experience

Several providers present a core unit which is followed by a professional experience placement as part of the unit. An example of this model is taken from the University of Newcastle which provides a 12-week unit in Classroom Management followed by a professional experience placement. University of Newcastle has endeavoured to ensure relevance of content and integration into practice by employing well-credentialed former school executives to teach the units and by including practice-focused content. They achieve this by use of video of real-life-situation problem-solving activities for teacher education students and by examining current DEC local school policies (eg school-wide and individual behaviour management and students policies) and practices (eg Positive Behaviour for Learning). The professional experience placement (which in this case includes a week of school visitation followed by a 20-day supervised placement) is immediately subsequent to the delivery of lecture content and includes a reflection and debriefing

session for all teacher education students once the professional experience has been completed. Another example of this approach is the University of New England which has an integrated classroom management unit comprised of nine topics plus a 15–20 day professional experience placement.

#### ► Core unit with integrated content and professional experience

One model of integration of content and professional experience is that of University of Technology, Sydney where the Bachelor of Teaching comprises two units devoted to classroom management. These are sequenced so that teacher education students' initial knowledge and skills are refined as they prepare for, and then undertake, professional experience placements. The first unit comprises one lecture and four workshops. The lecture and two workshops are timetabled immediately prior to teacher education students undertaking their first professional experience placement. At this time students are familiarised with the Standards against which they will be assessed while on professional experience and how assessment occurs, introduced to the principles of preventive and corrective classroom management and taught specific strategies and techniques for developing routines and managing classrooms. A third workshop occurs at the mid-point of the teacher education student's professional experience placement. This workshop is designed to assist students to refine their classroom management in situ while in schools. The final workshop is a debrief aimed at sharing lessons learned from the professional experience placement.

Another model of full integration of the presentation of content and professional experience

is that adopted by University of Notre Dame where the second professional experience unit, entitled Building Positive Relationships, commences with six weeks of lecture content which is followed by a 10-week professional experience. The focus of the unit is on "maintaining the child's sense of worth and self-esteem". Additional to 10 weeks in school, teacher education students are required to attend eight after school sessions dedicated to reflection run by teaching skill specialists. The reflection sessions enable these students to undertake some group and individual planning and to reflect on the implementation of their teaching strategies and classroom management skills. These sessions include both highly structured and less formal processes to ensure teacher education students address key areas of teaching practice while having the opportunity to discuss any issues or questions that have arisen during the week.

Avondale College integrates content on classroom management into the content of all eight of its professional experience units, which include lectures followed by professional practices of varying lengths.

#### ► Distance education model

Charles Sturt University conducts a 25-day professional experience unit which integrates online content and classroom practice. The online content includes pre-placement tasks, tasks to support the professional experience and concluding tasks. It is expected that teacher education students will demonstrate clear documentation of Classroom Management in their planning, and their choices of strategy will be reflected in their reflective writing while in school.

They must explore their own values and beliefs and consider policies and processes that inform classroom practice. Students must complete an online workbook while on professional experience.

► **Lectures delivered at local school**

Yet another model of integration of content and professional experience placement is to be seen at the University of Wollongong, based on their relationship with their professional experience schools. In the first year teacher education students commence with an immersion professional experience, reinforced by the core Classroom Management unit, which is largely taught by university personnel at a local demonstration school. In the second year students attend in-class experiences in pairs every two weeks followed by either a relevant group lecture or tutorials about the topics which are prescribed for those weeks. They then complete their reflective diaries addressing the lecture/tutorial topics and their school visits.

► **Role modelling classroom practice**

The University of New South Wales staff place importance on role modelling the classroom teaching methods they are endeavouring to impart to teacher education students as a way of “practising what they preach” and reinforcing methods in a concrete and explicit way. Specifically, the teaching of the core unit in Classroom Management incorporates the use of collaborative group work structures, a new one each week for 10 weeks in tutorials, so teacher education students are able to experience first-hand how these instructional methods work.

**Texts**

Classroom Management units use a greater range of texts than Special/ Inclusive Education with up to 14 different texts being prescribed. In a number of cases universities/colleges prescribed two texts for their core courses. The texts that were prescribed by more than one university/college were McDonald (2010), Marsh (2010) and Lyons (2011). Four providers do not have a set text.

**Summary: Classroom Management**

Teacher educators recognise that the ability of graduate teachers to manage their classrooms is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes for students. The more diverse the range of students in the classroom the more difficult this becomes. Classroom management units therefore focus on strategies to develop and maintain positive classroom environments. There is, however, considerable variation in the way this is achieved. The reasons for the variability relate both to the large range of content from which providers can choose when designing their courses and their philosophical approach to the teaching of classroom management.

Most providers select their content to incorporate well-documented theories and evidence-based practice in their units. This approach has been criticised by some researchers who have suggested that providers have been teaching theories that do not have a sound research base, although some of the individual practices within those approaches have been demonstrated to be effective (O'Neill & Stephensen, 2011). There is therefore a trend by some researchers in classroom/behaviour management towards not only trying to identify exactly which individual practices have been well researched and found effective, but also to examine how these work when

integrated into whole systems. This approach has been the catalyst for PBL. As a result teacher education providers should remain alert to discourse and approaches which arise from new research to inform content selection for their courses.

However the exercise of trying to identify both individual practices and systems of practices that are effective in classroom management is difficult because there is clear recognition by academics and classroom practitioners that the systems and practices that are effective for some schools/teachers in some circumstances are ineffective for others. This is evident at school, class and individual level. For example, teachers working in remote indigenous communities tailor their classroom management practices to be supportive of the cultural values and practices of their students. These practices may be unsuitable in certain city schools. Similarly, teachers tailor classroom management styles to adapt to other variables, for example the ages of their students, the unit content and environment in which they are teaching, dynamics between children, whole of school policies, parent expectations, personal style etc. Teacher educators recognise these variables and endeavour to provide teacher education students with a range of strategies that can be accessed in appropriate circumstances, rather than being prescriptive about approaches to be taken. It would be valuable for BOSTES and providers to discuss the issues associated with emerging research and current course content as part of the next phase of this project.



## PART D – STAGE 1: CONCLUSIONS

Teacher education providers are, to the extent possible, clearly intent on preparing students to meet the challenges they face in managing classrooms and catering for students with special needs (including those who have behaviour issues). This is evident in their commitment to addressing teaching standards, ensuring teacher education students are aware of their obligations under legislation, teaching content directly related to classroom strategies, marrying theory and practice along with assessment of teacher education student professional practice in classroom management and catering for students with special education needs.

Criticism is sometimes levelled at teacher preparation courses based on findings that graduate teachers do not feel well prepared for the issues they will encounter when they commence teaching. During the course of this review it became increasingly evident that, given the diverse range of students with special needs who are now enrolled in mainstream schools, it is highly unlikely that graduating teachers can be prepared with sufficient knowledge to cater for all of the students with special needs they will encounter in their first classrooms. The problem is exacerbated by the continuous generation of new knowledge in special/inclusive education and classroom/behaviour management along with rapidly changing technology. It is to be recognised that the specialist knowledge to cater for more complex special education and/or classroom management issues generally rests with teachers who have obtained postgraduate qualifications in special education and/or classroom/behaviour management. These teachers often have speciality areas, for example in particular disabilities or approaches. Their skills are sometimes needed to assist even the most experienced classroom teachers. Graduates should

be prepared with an understanding they may not be fully prepared for some classroom situations, along with a positive attitude towards accessing specialist support, and, where indicated, additional professional development.

It is, however, imperative that graduates are prepared with a set of skills to ensure quality outcomes for the majority of the children in their classes, no matter what the need, and upon which to build a solid base for further pursuing support/learning to assist them with the more challenging needs they will face.

The DEC has articulated its role in this relationship by addressing the post-initial teacher education elements in the *Every Student, Every School Strategy* (2012), recognising that classroom teachers (whether beginning or experienced) need systemic support to address the very difficult and complex task of catering for children who have special needs (including those who need behaviour support in mainstream classes). Teacher education students once having entered the workforce must be supported by ongoing professional development, specialist staff expertise, assessment and classroom resources and guidance and direction in ways to address learning and support in their classrooms.

It is recommended that the second phase of this review, that is the evaluative component, address pre-service teacher education for children with special needs and classroom management in the context of the expectations and roles of post-initial teacher education employers. An understanding of, and co-ordination between, teacher education providers and employers in the initial and ongoing development and support of teachers who cater for the diverse range of students in their classrooms is fundamental to successful outcomes for children.

In the quest to determine the essential core skills for teacher education, providers should also keep close watch on State and Commonwealth Government education reforms to be alert to changes in policy and practice that might impact on the teaching profession (eg Nationally Consistent Collection of Data), and may need to be addressed in provider programs. This relates not only to practices but also to terminology (eg Work Health and Safety rather than Occupational Health and Safety).

This review has highlighted similarities and differences between providers, including some innovations aimed at improving the quality of teacher preparation courses. Providers would benefit from sharing this knowledge and discussing the practices they have found most effective. This discussion could include the rapidly changing landscape relating to mode of delivery, and the place of technology in enhancing teacher preparation in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management. The discussion should also consider the value of including a core unit in Classroom Management in all programs.

Finally, a number of providers have expressed the view that critical appraisal and sharing of the latest research findings in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management would be beneficial to all programs.

It is therefore recommended that a panel be convened with representation from initial teacher education providers, employing authorities, teachers, students and principals to discuss the issues identified above with a view to determining some essential/core content for inclusion in Special/Inclusive Education and Classroom Management units.

## PART E – STAGE 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

The review of pre-service teacher education in classroom management and students with special education needs has been conducted in two stages. The first stage, completed in April 2014, was to produce a summary report of current practices in initial teacher education programs in these two areas. The second stage involved the evaluation of the report within the context of the National Priority Area Elaborations by an expert panel with the subsequent recommendations.

These recommendations will form the basis of advice to program assessment panels in relation to the evidence that should be submitted by providers in the classroom management and students with special education needs priority areas.

The expert panel met at the BOSTES on Thursday 28 August 2014 and comprised:

- ▶ **Associate Professor Michael Arthur-Kelly**  
Assistant Dean, Teaching and Learning  
Director, Centre for Special Education and Disability Studies  
University of Newcastle
- ▶ **Mr Tim Connell**  
Consultant: Special Education  
Association of Independent Schools NSW
- ▶ **Ms Philippa Ellis**  
Initial teacher education student  
Macquarie University
- ▶ **Associate Professor David Evans**  
Designation Coordinator,  
Special and Inclusive Education  
University of Sydney
- ▶ **Ms Penelope Grace**  
Teacher  
Member – Coffs Harbour Local AECG  
Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)
- ▶ **Ms Tracey Grocher**  
Assistant principal  
Cook School, Loftus
- ▶ **Dr Susan O'Neill**  
Lecturer in Special Education  
University of New South Wales
- ▶ **Mr Dominic Wilkinson**  
Head of Faculty –  
Learning Enrichment  
St Ignatius College

The following recommendations were made:

### Classroom Management

- ▶ Where programs do not include a stand-alone unit on classroom management, providers should clearly demonstrate where an equivalent amount of teaching and learning covering classroom management occurs within the program.
- ▶ Initial teacher education providers should ensure that each teacher education student undertakes professional experience that includes attention to and reporting on classroom management. Emphasis should be given to the selection and application of contextualised, evidence-based practices.
- ▶ Initial teacher education providers should ensure that the principles of classroom management, which include preventive and educative approaches, are explicitly and systematically embedded within curriculum method studies and be able to identify where this occurs.
- ▶ Initial teacher education providers should ensure that graduate teachers are provided with conceptual frameworks that emphasise evidence-based practices and support a proactive approach to classroom management, for example universal design for learning and multi-tiered approaches such as positive behavioural intervention and supports (PBIS) or response to intervention (RTI).
- ▶ Initial teacher education programs should include content specific to promoting and supporting student wellbeing and mental health.

## Students with Special Education Needs

- ▶ In addition to the stand-alone unit in students with special education needs, initial teacher education providers should ensure that the principles of inclusion and special education are explicitly and systematically embedded across curriculum method studies.
- ▶ Initial teacher education providers should ensure that each teacher education student undertakes professional experience that includes attention to programming for students with special education needs. Emphasis should be given to the selection and application of contextualised, evidence-based practices and the use of a collaborative approach.
- ▶ Initial teacher education providers should ensure that graduate teachers are provided with conceptual frameworks that emphasise evidence-based practices to support students with special education needs, for example universal design for learning and multi-tiered approaches such as positive behavioural intervention and supports (PBIS) or response to intervention (RTI).
- ▶ Initial teacher education programs should include content specific to promoting and supporting student wellbeing and mental health.

Further recommendations were made in relation to early career teachers:

- ▶ The BOSTES will use qualitative research methodology to identify large samples of graduates to seek information directly from them and then employing principals about the quality of their preparation to teach, as a way of measuring the outcomes of teacher preparation programs.
- ▶ Early career teachers should continue to engage in a structured and targeted program of professional learning within the areas of classroom management and students with special education needs while working towards Proficient Teacher accreditation.

# APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Standard 1: Program outcomes

- 1.1 At the time of initial accreditation, providers must show that graduates of their programs will meet the Graduate career stage of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and how this will be demonstrated.
- 1.2 At the time of re-accreditation, providers must demonstrate that graduates of their programs meet the Graduate career stage of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
- 1.3 Programs meet the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) so that, on satisfactory completion, the graduate has a four-year or longer full-time-equivalent higher education qualification structured as:
  - ▶ a three-year undergraduate degree providing the required discipline knowledge, plus a two-year graduate entry professional qualification<sup>1</sup>, or
  - ▶ an integrated qualification of at least four years comprising discipline studies and professional studies, or
  - ▶ combined degrees of at least four years covering discipline and professional studies, or
  - ▶ other combinations of qualifications identified by the provider and approved by the teacher regulatory authority<sup>2</sup> ('the Authority') in consultation with AITSL to be equivalent to the above, and that enable alternative or flexible pathways into the teaching profession<sup>3</sup>.

## Standard 2: Program development

- 2.1 Programs take account of:
  - ▶ contemporary school and system needs
  - ▶ current professional expert knowledge
  - ▶ authoritative educational research findings and
  - ▶ community expectations.

This occurs through consultation with employing authorities, professional teacher bodies and/or the direct involvement of practising teachers, educational researchers and relevant cultural and community experts (e.g. local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander groups, parents' organisations).
- 2.2 Programs at self-accrediting higher education institutions have been assessed as meeting internal accreditation processes such that there is coherence and rigour in the intended program outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning, and related student assessment.
- 2.3 Programs of non-self-accrediting institutions meet both the relevant accreditation requirements for such institutions and the requirements for national accreditation of initial teacher education programs. Wherever practicable, the two accreditation processes will be undertaken concurrently, ensuring there is coherence and rigour in the intended program outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning and related student assessment, as well as economy of effort.

## Standard 3: Program entrants

- 3.1 All entrants to initial teacher education will successfully demonstrate their capacity to engage effectively with a rigorous higher education program and to carry out the intellectual demands of teaching itself. To achieve this, it is expected that applicants' levels of personal literacy and numeracy should be broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population.
- 3.2 Providers who select students who do not meet the requirements in 3.1 above must establish satisfactory additional arrangements to ensure that all students are supported to achieve the required standard before graduation.
- 3.3 Graduate-entry initial teacher education programs have clear selection criteria and equitable entry procedures that require students to have achieved a discipline-specific qualification relevant to the Australian curriculum or other recognised areas of schooling provision.

For secondary teaching this is at least a *major* study<sup>4</sup> in one teaching area and preferably a second teaching area comprising at least a *minor* study<sup>5</sup>.

For primary teaching this is at least one year of full-time-equivalent study relevant to one or more learning areas of the primary school curriculum.

1 In this document, references to the duration of academic programs or elements of them should be read in terms of 'equivalent full-time student load' (EFTSL). This defines the amount of study required for completion rather than the calendar duration.

2 While in most jurisdictions the accreditation functions will be undertaken by teacher regulatory authorities, jurisdictions may choose to make other arrangements, including cooperative arrangements with other regulatory authorities. In this document, the teacher regulatory authority or other body performing this function in a jurisdiction is referred to as 'the Authority'.

3 The Authority will make an initial determination about the eligibility of a program for accreditation, based on Program Standard 1.3. Where a program is "(an)other combination of qualifications" as provided for in the standard, the Authority will report its determination to AITSL, who will confer with all of the teacher regulatory authorities and either endorse or recommend reconsideration of the determination before a final decision is reached by the Authority.

4 Study undertaken for a major study will be equivalent to a total of three-quarters of a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years. In most programs, this equates to six units, with no more than two at first-year level and no fewer than two units at third-year level.

5 Study undertaken for a minor study will be equivalent to a total of half a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over two years. In most programs, this equates to four units, with no more than two at first-year level.

**3.4** Students admitted to programs on the basis of an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) assessment, or an equivalent English language proficiency assessment, have attained an overall IELTS (or equivalent) score of 7.5 (with no score below 7 in any of the four skills areas, and a score of no less than 8 in speaking and listening), either on entry to or on graduation from the program.

**3.5** Recognition of prior learning or credit transfer arrangements are determined by providers in accordance with the *AQF National Principles and Operational Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning and Good Practice Principles for Credit Transfer and Articulation from Vocational Education and Training to Higher Education*.

## Standard 4: Program structure and content

**4.1** Program structures must be sequenced coherently to reflect effective connections between theory and practice.

**4.2** Professional studies in education include discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies, general education studies and professional experience. The professional studies in education will comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent study<sup>6</sup>.

**4.3** Discipline studies will normally be completed either in a separate discipline degree completed prior to a graduate-entry initial teacher education program, or as part of an integrated undergraduate teaching degree or combined teaching/discipline degree program.

### 4.4 Primary programs

Teacher education programs that prepare primary teachers must include study in each of the learning areas of the primary school curriculum sufficient to equip teachers to teach across the years of primary schooling.

In undergraduate primary programs, at least one half of the program (i.e. normally two years of full-time-equivalent study) must be dedicated to the study of the discipline of each primary learning area and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies. This must include at least one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline and discipline-specific curriculum and

pedagogical studies in each of English/literacy, mathematics/numeracy, and at least one eighth of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in science.

The remainder of the program may be structured to include extension or specialist studies in priority areas or related curriculum areas.

Graduate entry primary programs must comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent professional studies in education.

These programs must include at least one year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies across the learning areas of the primary school curriculum. Programs must include at least one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in each of English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, and at least one eighth of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies in science.

These programs may include up to one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of relevant discipline studies as elective units which could be undertaken by applicants who do not fully meet prerequisite discipline study requirements.

<sup>6</sup> These standards refer to the amount of study to be undertaken in particular areas in terms of years of full-time equivalent study. This is compatible with the measurement of student load in terms of equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL). In a traditional structure of eight units per year, one unit would be equivalent to one-eighth of a year of full-time equivalent study.



#### 4.5 Secondary programs

Undergraduate secondary programs must provide a sound depth and breadth of knowledge appropriate for the teaching area/s the graduate intends to teach.

These programs should provide at least a *major* study<sup>7</sup> in one teaching area and preferably a second teaching area comprising at least a *minor* study<sup>8</sup>.

In addition, these programs must include a minimum of one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies for each teaching area the graduate intends to teach. Discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies will prepare graduates to teach across the years of secondary schooling.

Graduate entry secondary programs must comprise at least two years of full-time-equivalent professional studies in education.

Programs must include a minimum of one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies for each teaching area that the graduate intends to teach. The discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies should prepare graduates to teach across the years of secondary schooling.

These programs may include up to one quarter of a year of full-time-equivalent study of relevant discipline studies as elective units which could be undertaken by applicants who do not fully meet prerequisite discipline study requirements.

#### 4.6 Specialist programs

Where initial teacher education programs include specialist area studies (e.g. primary physical education, secondary special education, secondary teacher librarianship, etc.), these studies must comprise one year of full-time equivalent study relevant to that specialist area.

#### 4.7 Non-traditional and other settings

Some teacher education programs prepare graduates for teaching across traditional boundaries.

Programs that prepare graduates to teach in both early childhood settings and primary schools are expected to prepare graduates for teaching the curriculum in both contexts.

Programs that prepare graduates for middle school teaching may have a stronger emphasis on teaching particular year levels (e.g. Years 5 to 9) but must fully address the requirements for primary teaching and for secondary teaching in at least one major study or two *minor* studies in secondary teaching areas.

Programs that prepare graduates for teaching across P/F/R/K-Year 12 must address the requirements for both primary and secondary teaching.

Programs that prepare graduates for teaching in other specialised teaching roles in schools and other educational settings must address the specific content and pedagogy of the specialisation<sup>9</sup>.

### Standard 5: School partnerships

- 5.1** Providers have established enduring school partnerships to deliver their programs, particularly the professional experience component.
- 5.2** The professional experience component of each program must include no fewer than 80 days of well-structured, supervised and assessed teaching practice in schools in undergraduate and double-degree teacher education programs and no fewer than 60 days in graduate entry programs.
- 5.3** Providers describe in detail the elements of the relationship between the provider and the schools, the nature and length of professional experience placements, the components of the placement, including the planned experiences and related assessment criteria and methods, and the supervisory and professional support arrangements.
- 5.4** Providers and their school partners ensure the professional experience component of their program provides their program's students with professional experience that enables:
- ▶ working with learners in a variety of school year levels
  - ▶ appreciation of the diversity of students and communities which schools serve (e.g. rural and metropolitan settings, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Indigenous communities, etc).

7 Study undertaken for a major study will be equivalent to a total of three-quarters of a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years. In most programs, this equates to six units, with no more than two at first-year level and no fewer than two units at third-year level.

8 Study undertaken for a minor study will be equivalent to a total of half a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over two years. In most programs, this equates to four units, with no more than two at first-year level.

9 Specific requirements will be developed for programs preparing teachers for settings other than traditional schools where required.

**5.5** Providers and their school partners ensure that teachers supervising professional experience (in particular the supervised teaching practice) are suitably qualified and registered. They should have expertise and be supported in coaching and mentoring, and in making judgments about whether students have achieved the Graduate Teacher Standards.

**5.6** Providers require that the supervised teaching practice:

- ▶ mandates at least a satisfactory formal assessment of the program's students against the professional practice elements of the Graduate Teacher Standards as a requirement for graduating from the program
- ▶ is undertaken mostly in a recognised Australian school setting over a substantial and sustained period that is relevant to an authentic classroom environment, and
- ▶ includes a designated role for supervising teachers in the assessment of the program's students.

**5.7** School partnership arrangements provide for the timely identification of program students at risk of not satisfactorily completing the formal teaching practice, and of ensuring appropriate support for improvement or program counselling.

## **Standard 6: Program delivery and resourcing**

**6.1** Programs must use effective teaching and assessment strategies (linked to intended learning outcomes) and resources, including embedded information and communication technologies.

**6.2** Programs are delivered by appropriately qualified staff, consistent with the staffing requirements in the relevant National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes, including an appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience.

**6.3** Providers ensure that programs use contemporary facilities and resources, including information and communication technologies, which students can expect to be available in schools.

**6.4** Providers ensure that their facilities conform to the general expectation for a contemporary higher education learning environment appropriate to the mode of delivery, including such matters as access to:

- ▶ education-related library resources
- ▶ information and communication technologies.

## **Standard 7: Program information and evaluation**

**7.1** Providers use a range of data, such as student assessment information, destination surveys, employer and other stakeholder feedback to drive program improvement and periodic formal evaluation.

**7.2** Providers report annually to the Authority outlining challenges encountered or any changes in programs.

**7.3** Providers supply data as required to support local and national teacher workforce supply reporting, to support program and provider benchmarking, and to build a cumulative database of evidence relating to the quality of teacher education in Australia. Data collected is held in a centrally managed database and, under agreed protocols, will be available to all jurisdictions and teacher education providers for research, evaluation and program improvement.

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## APPENDIX 2: AUSTRALIAN GRADUATE TEACHER STANDARDS

The Graduate Teacher Standards make explicit the professional expectations of those graduating from initial teacher education programs. They describe the professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement at the first of the four career stages defined in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Because they define what graduate teachers should know and be able to do, the Graduate Teacher Standards are the key to the accreditation of programs.

For programs to be accredited, providers need to show how their graduates meet the Graduate Teacher Standards.

The following is an extract from the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* that describes the Graduate Teacher Standards. The Standards have been developed, revised and validated through nationwide consultation and a national validation process involving several thousand teachers across the country.

### Graduate teachers

Graduate teachers have completed a qualification that meets the requirements of a nationally accredited program of initial teacher education. The award of this qualification means that they have met the Graduate Teacher Standards.

On successful completion of their initial teacher education, graduate teachers possess the requisite knowledge and skills to plan for and manage learning programs for students. They demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the implications for learning of students' physical, cultural, social, linguistic and intellectual characteristics. They understand principles of inclusion and strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

Graduate teachers have an understanding of their subject/s, curriculum content and teaching strategies. They are able to design lessons that meet the requirements of curriculum, assessment and reporting. They demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice. They know how to select and apply timely and appropriate types of feedback to improve students' learning.

Graduate teachers demonstrate knowledge of practical strategies for creating rapport with students and managing student behaviour. They know how to support students' well-being and safety working within school and system curriculum and legislative requirements.

They understand the importance of working ethically, collaborating with colleagues, external professional and community representatives, and contributing to the life of the school. Teachers understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers and recognise their role in their children's education.

## Professional Knowledge

### Standard 1 – Know students and how they

Focus area	Graduate
<b>1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.
<b>1.2 Understand how students learn</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.
<b>1.3 Students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds</b>	Demonstrate knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.
<b>1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</b>	Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
<b>1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
<b>1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability</b>	Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

### Standard 2 – Know the content and how to teach it

Focus area	Graduate
<b>2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.
<b>2.2 Content selection and organisation</b>	Organise content into an effective learning and teaching sequence.
<b>2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting</b>	Use curriculum, assessment and reporting knowledge to design learning sequences and lesson plans.
<b>2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians</b>	Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.
<b>2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies</b>	Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas.
<b>2.6 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b>	Implement teaching strategies for using ICT to expand curriculum learning opportunities for students.

## Professional Practice

### Standard 3 – Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning

Focus area	Graduate
<b>3.1 Establish challenging learning goals</b>	Set learning goals that provide achievable challenges for students of varying abilities and characteristics.
<b>3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs</b>	Plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies.
<b>3.3 Use teaching strategies</b>	Include a range of teaching strategies.
<b>3.4 Select and use resources</b>	Demonstrate knowledge of a range of resources, including ICT, that engage students in their learning.
<b>3.5 Use effective classroom communication</b>	Demonstrate a range of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to support student engagement.
<b>3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs</b>	Demonstrate broad knowledge of strategies that can be used to evaluate teaching programs to improve student learning.
<b>3.7 Engage parents/carers in the educative process</b>	Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process.

### Standard 4 – Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments

Focus area	Graduate
<b>4.1 Support student participation</b>	Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.
<b>4.2 Manage classroom activities</b>	Demonstrate the capacity to organise classroom activities and provide clear directions.
<b>4.3 Manage challenging behaviour</b>	Demonstrate knowledge of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.
<b>4.4 Maintain student safety</b>	Describe strategies that support students' well-being and safety working within school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.
<b>4.5 Use ICT safely, responsibly and ethically</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues and the strategies available to support the safe, responsible and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.



## Professional Practice

### Standard 5 – Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning

Focus area	Graduate
<b>5.1 Assess student learning</b>	Demonstrate understanding of assessment strategies, including informal and formal, diagnostic, formative and summative approaches to assess student learning.
<b>5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.
<b>5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements</b>	Demonstrate understanding of assessment moderation and its application to support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.
<b>5.4 Interpret student data</b>	Demonstrate the capacity to interpret student assessment data to evaluate student learning and modify teaching practice.
<b>5.5 Report on student achievement</b>	Demonstrate understanding of a range of strategies for reporting to students and parents/carers and the purpose of keeping accurate and reliable records of student achievement.

## Professional Engagement

### Standard 6 – Engage in professional learning

Focus area	Graduate
<b>6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in identifying professional learning needs.
<b>6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice</b>	Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.
<b>6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice</b>	Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.
<b>6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the rationale for continued professional learning and the implications for improved student learning.

## Professional Engagement

### Standard 7 – Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Focus area	Graduate
<b>7.1 Meet professional ethics and responsibilities</b>	Understand and apply the key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.
<b>7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements</b>	Understand the relevant legislative, administrative and organisational policies and processes required for teachers according to school stage.
<b>7.3 Engage with the parents/carers</b>	Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.
<b>7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities</b>	Understand the role of external professionals and community representatives in broadening teachers' professional knowledge and practice.

# APPENDIX 3: NATIONAL PRIORITY AREA - STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Since 1994, initial teacher education programs in NSW have been required to include the equivalent of a one semester unit of study in special education.

## Initial Teacher Education Program Outcomes

In inclusive classrooms graduate teachers will work with the full spectrum of children in terms of abilities, difficulties and special needs, including learning difficulties and giftedness. In addition to the stand-alone unit, initial teacher education programs should ensure that graduate teachers have demonstrated skills and/or knowledge, as noted below.

### Knowledge

- ▶ Understanding of child and adolescent development and milestones
- ▶ Understanding of the broader implications of special education needs on learning and the responsibilities of teachers
- ▶ Understanding of the likely impacts that special needs may have on a student's access to and participation in learning.

### Teaching strategies

- ▶ Ability to identify individual learning needs and, with appropriate specialist support, apply strategies to address such needs in the school and classroom environment
- ▶ Understanding of strategies for engaging and collaborating with parents/care-givers and other professionals in order to better support students with special educational needs
- ▶ Ability to use curriculum based assessment and monitoring procedures for identifying prior achievement and making differentiated assessment and learning decisions, including the reasonable adjustments required to enable students to meet curriculum outcomes
- ▶ Ability to plan, implement and evaluate programs in order to include the specific learning needs of students
- ▶ Priorities, policies and resources
- ▶ Broad understanding of how programs and resources can meet specific learning needs of all students, including inclusive education practices, specialist support and government and community services
- ▶ Knowledge of legislative responsibilities and educational policies as they relate to educational settings for students with special needs.

### Program Design

Initial teacher education programs may address these issues in specific units of study or by embedding them across the program of study.

**The Students with Special Education Needs priority area is specifically relevant to the Graduate Standards noted below:**

#### Standard Descriptor 1.5.1:

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

#### Standard Descriptor 1.6.1:

Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

#### Standard Descriptor 4.1.1:

Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.

# APPENDIX 4: NATIONAL PRIORITY AREA – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

## Initial Teacher Education Program Outcomes

Initial teacher education programs should ensure that graduate teachers have demonstrated skills and/or knowledge, as noted below.

### Knowledge

- ▶ Understanding of how effective teaching, including curriculum rigor, engagement, participation and inclusion, is a key factor in effective classroom management
- ▶ Knowledge of child and adolescent development, student well-being and mental health, and an understanding of the implications for learning and the management of behaviour
- ▶ Understanding of anti-bullying strategies and how to identify and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying, in different contexts and cohorts

## Teaching Strategies

- ▶ Ability to enact appropriate strategies that respond to the learning needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds
- ▶ Ability to design and implement plans and strategies that can be used within classrooms and other school settings to facilitate a positive classroom climate. These strategies could include (but not be limited to):
  - the promotion of positive student behaviour and positive relationships within the classroom
  - support of students with special needs within the classroom and wider school settings, including practical strategies to facilitate the students' success
  - effective communication with parents/care-givers and communities
  - intervention to manage disruptive student behaviour
  - discipline/crisis/emergency response for disruptive student behaviour:
    - Ability to successfully manage student behaviour, as demonstrated within the professional experience component of the program
    - Ability to work with colleagues to develop and implement practical

approaches to managing students with challenging behaviours in a whole-school context

- Ability to develop strategies to minimise physical and emotional bullying, and to support students who have been victims of bullying and to respond to perpetrators

## Priorities, policies and resources

- ▶ Understanding of key systemic policy documents and legislative requirements, resources, personnel and referral agencies that assist teachers to create effective learning environments and interpersonal relationships
- ▶ Awareness and understanding of the whole-school approach to student welfare/discipline policies and/or approaches to classroom and student management adopted by professional experience schools and the evidence on which these are based.

## Program Design

Initial teacher education programs may address these issues in specific units of study or by embedding them across the program of study.

The Classroom Management priority area is specifically relevant to the Graduate Standards noted below:

### Standard Descriptor 1.1.1:

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.

### Standard Descriptor 3.5.1:

Demonstrate a range of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to support student engagement.

### Standard Descriptor 4.3.1:

Demonstrate knowledge of practical approaches to manage challenging behaviour.

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