

Maintaining Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Accreditation Procedure

Information for principals, early childhood service directors and employers

October 2024

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Information for principals, service directors and employers

NESA oversees the system of accreditation and recognition of teachers' professional capacity against the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers \(the Standards\)](#) which includes the requirements and processes for maintaining HALT accreditation. The functions of NESA do not extend to industrial matters concerning teachers, such as the salaries or employment conditions of teachers.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the employer's internal procedures.

Why must Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers maintain their accreditation?

Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers need to continue to demonstrate exemplary teaching practices that impact the learning of students/children and their colleagues.

Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers must maintain their accreditation at the applicable level of the Standards to continue to teach in a NSW school/early childhood service. Maintenance requirements apply to all teachers whether they are full-time, part-time or casual.

Teachers will maintain their accreditation by continuing to demonstrate their teaching practice aligned to the Standards and stay up to date with professional practice by meeting professional development (PD) requirements.

How long is an accreditation maintenance cycle?

Full-time	5 years
Casual or part-time	7 years

Teachers employed on a full-time basis have five years to complete maintenance requirements.

Teachers employed on a casual or part-time basis have seven years to complete maintenance requirements, in recognition of the nature of their employment. Teachers can provide evidence of employment to NESA to adjust their timeframe from five to seven years.

Employers play an important role in teachers' professional growth

Employers are responsible for supporting teachers maintaining accreditation by providing and ensuring access to appropriate quality professional development opportunities suited to their needs and contexts.

Early childhood employers

Early childhood employers are entities who employ and appoint teachers to the position of an early childhood teacher in approved centre-based service(s). Employers may hold more than one provider approval according to the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW).

Through engaging in a range of ongoing PD activities, teachers update their knowledge and skills in pedagogy, curriculum, learning and assessment, wellbeing and safety in order to have the greatest impact on improving student/child learning.

PD activities should meet the needs and contexts of your teachers

The [NESA Professional Development Framework](#) is developed to guide teachers, principals/service directors and employers to identify appropriate PD activities that best suit teachers' professional needs.

Employers must have procedures for HALT accreditation

Employers are responsible for ensuring that any individual they employ as a teacher is actively accredited to teach in NSW.

Employers must have internal procedures for implementing NESA's requirements for maintaining HALT accreditation in their schools/services/workplace and must provide all teachers with a copy/access to all relevant procedures.

Who is covered by the internal procedures?

An employer's internal procedures for implementing NESA's requirements for teachers maintaining HALT accreditation apply to:

- principals
- service directors, or equivalent
- casual, part-time and full-time teachers
- teachers regularly working in the school/service placed by a third party (eg employment agency).

Definition of a 'service director'

A 'service director' is a teacher accredited at Proficient Teacher or above who has some seniority over the teachers whose practice they are making an accreditation recommendation or a verification for. This teacher may not have the title of 'service director' as it is commonly known in an early childhood service.

The function of the service director may be assigned to an accredited teacher in the same service, or may be delegated to another teacher within the employer.

If there is no one to carry out the function of the service director role, the employer must contact NESA.

What must the internal procedures cover?

These internal procedures must include processes to ensure:

- any principal/service director or delegate making a verification about maintenance of HALT accreditation is accredited at Proficient Teacher or above. A principal who is not accredited at Proficient Teacher must nominate a delegate who is a Proficient Teacher or above and employed in the same school/service to carry out the duties related to making maintenance verifications
- verifications about the maintenance of HALT accreditation are made by the end of the relevant timeframe
- timely feedback is provided to all teachers about their demonstration of practice in relation to the

Standards, including where teachers are at risk of not meeting the requirements for accreditation by the end of the relevant timeframe

- teachers are notified of any issue(s) with their practice and given 28 days to respond and address those issues before a principal/service director/employer verifies that a teacher's practice does not meet the relevant Standard(s)
- issues related to a teacher's practice not meeting the applicable Standard(s) are addressed as and when they arise at any point during the maintenance period
- any concerns relating to teachers' ongoing professional practice are addressed through appropriate support
- conflicts of interest relating to teacher accreditation are managed
- complaints and grievances about maintaining HALT accreditation are managed
- records related to verifications that a teacher has not maintained their practice at HALT are kept and provided to NESAs on request.

Overview of the principal/service director/employer's role in supporting a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher's maintenance of accreditation

At a glance



1. Support teachers to demonstrate consistent practice at HALT and meet PD requirements

Support HALTs to ensure their teaching practice continues to meet the Standards for [Highly Accomplished](#) or [Lead Teacher](#) by engaging in a range of professional activities and practices in the normal course of their work, such as:

- critical reflection of their own practice
- sharing of exemplary teaching practices and support of the professional growth of colleagues
- implementing evidence-based best practices that maximise learning opportunities for students/children
- ongoing engagement in professional development
- delivery of NSW curriculum/Early Years Learning Framework and assessment in a school/service
- developing NSW curriculum that is implemented in schools/services
- delivering professional development programs to teachers who can implement their learning into their teaching practice to enhance the learning of their students/children.

Professional development supports teachers' continual professional growth

Support a HALT's professional growth by providing them access to a range of quality PD opportunities to meet their [PD requirements](#) for maintenance of accreditation.

The [NESA Professional Development Framework](#) is developed to guide teachers, principals/service directors and employers to identify appropriate PD activities that best suit teachers' professional needs.

2. Verify teacher's ongoing satisfactory performance

Teachers submit their report in the final three months of maintenance

The teacher must complete a [HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form](#) and submit it to their principal/service director/employer within the final three months of their maintenance period.

Who can verify the teacher's practice?

The teacher's current principal/service director/employer who is accredited at Proficient or above must verify for the teacher.

Principals/Service Directors/Employers who are not accredited at Proficient Teacher or above must appoint a delegate who is an employee in the school and accredited at Proficient Teacher or above to make accreditation verifications. Principals must advise NESAs of the delegation at tsaprincipalenquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

In an early childhood service, if there is no one to carry out the function of the service director role, the employer must contact NESAs at ECTaccreditation@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

Review the HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form

The principal/service director/employer or a delegate must:

- review the HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form.
- verify if the teacher's practice continues to demonstrate the relevant Standards aligned with their level of accreditation.

You may consider the [professional capabilities](#) of HALT in the Principal/Service Director's Guide - HALT Accreditation to support your judgement as to whether a teacher's practice continues to demonstrate the relevant Standards.

You may choose to provide comments about the teacher's practice.

Email a signed copy of the form to NESAs by the end of the teacher's maintenance period at HALenquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au for an accreditation decision.

3. NESAs make the accreditation decision

The final part of the process is the accreditation decision, which is made by NESAs, within 28 days of receiving your verification.

NESAs' decision will be based on:

- the teacher's declaration that they have met all the maintenance requirements for the period
- your verification.

Notification of the decision

The teacher will be notified of the accreditation decision by email. They will start a new maintenance period the day after their current period ends.

You will be able to view their accreditation status in your NESAs online account (eTAMS).

‘What if’ scenarios for principals/service directors/employers

What if I become aware of an issue(s) with the teacher’s practice that may affect their accreditation?

If you become aware of any issue(s), you must inform the employer (if applicable) and the teacher in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of it.

Inform the teacher of the employer’s obligation to notify NESA if a teacher has been determined that they do not meet the Standards at the relevant level of accreditation.

The employer’s internal procedures must include information to guide how principals/service directors/employers must address issues related to a teacher’s practice not meeting the applicable Standards.

What if I determine that a teacher has not maintained their practice at the relevant Standards at HALT?

At any time during a teacher’s maintenance period, you must follow your employer’s internal procedures to address the issue(s) related to the teacher’s practice not meeting the applicable Standard(s).

Before you can verify that the teacher has not maintained their practice at HALT, you must notify the teacher in writing of:

- your reasons, including the Standard Descriptor(s) the teacher does not meet
- details of the appropriate and timely support you have provided to the teacher regarding maintaining their practice in relation to the Standards
- the feedback and support provided to the teacher, which may include intervention strategies or an improvement plan you have implemented to support the teacher and the outcome of the strategies/plan/support
- the teacher’s right to respond to the notice within 28 days to address the issues identified.

If the teacher responds to your written notice, you will need to consider their response to the issue(s) raised.

After the end of the 28 days’ notice period, you must notify NESA if the issues are not resolved and it is determined that the teacher has not maintained their practice at HALT.

How to notify NESA

If the teacher has not yet submitted a HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form

Notify NESA at that you have determined that the teacher has not maintained their practice at the relevant HALT level by email at TAnotifications@nesa.nsw.edu.au. You must provide documentary evidence that you have followed your employer’s internal procedures including the process as described above.

If the teacher has submitted their HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form

Record your verification in the teacher’s [HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form](#), with reasons, during the final three months of the teacher’s maintenance period. You must provide comments about the teacher’s practice.

NESA will request evidence that you have followed your employer's internal procedures, and this must be provided on request.

If the teacher has worked in your school/service/workplace for less than three months, you must contact the previous principal/service director/employer (subject to the teacher's consent) before making a verification that the teacher has not maintained their practice. If the teacher does not give you consent, you should make your verification using the information available to you.

What if I am unable to make a verification?

You may only record that you are unable to make a verification if:

- you have contacted the teacher's previous principal/service director/employer (subject to the teacher's consent) if the teacher has worked at your school/service for less than three months
- the teacher has not worked in the school/service/workplace for long enough to allow you to confidently verify whether the teacher continues to maintain their practice at the relevant level of HALT Standards; and/or
- information provided by the teacher's previous school/service/employer (where applicable and subject to consent from the teacher) has not assisted you in making a valid and reliable judgement.

Complete the relevant section of the teacher's HALT Maintenance of Accreditation Form to record that you are unable to make a verification and your reasons and email it to NESA at HALenquiry@nesa.nsw.edu.au.

What if NESA makes the decision that the teacher has not maintained accreditation at HALT?

If you verify that a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher is not maintaining their practice at the relevant Standards at HALT, NESA will contact you and the teacher to request further information and documentation to inform the decision, including:

- details of the feedback and support you have provided to the teacher regarding maintaining their practice in relation to the Standards, including the Standard Descriptors the teacher did not meet
- the intervention strategies and/or improvement plans you/your employer have implemented to support the teacher and the outcome of the strategies/plans.

We will then make an accreditation decision within 28 days of your verification.

14-day written notice to suspend HALT accreditation

If NESA finds that the teacher has failed to maintain their HALT accreditation, NESA will issue 14 days' written notice of an intention to [suspend](#) their higher-level accreditation. The 14 days' written notice period includes school holidays and employer shutdown periods.

Final notice to suspend HALT accreditation

If issues remain unresolved or the teacher still has not met the maintenance requirements by the end of the 14-day notice, NESA will notify you and the teacher of the suspension of the teacher's HALT accreditation.

A teacher whose accreditation has been suspended cannot be employed to teach in any registered school or approved centre-based early childhood service.

A NESA officer will provide the teacher with further advice about next steps.

The teacher can apply to NESA for an [internal review](#) of a decision that they have not maintained their

accreditation.

If the teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review, they can apply to NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for a review of NESA's decision.

The teacher may return to accreditation at Proficient Teacher if they have met the requirements for maintaining Proficient Teacher.

NSW Education Standards Authority

NSW Education Standards Authority
GPO Box 5300
Sydney NSW 2001
Australia

Teacher Accreditation
Phone: 1300 739 338
Email: contactus@nesa.nsw.edu.au
educationstandards.nsw.edu.au

@NewsAtNESA
