

## AITSL Teacher Professional Standards Review

### Submission from the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT)

25 July 2026

The Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) welcomes the 2026 AITSL Teacher Professional Standards Review as an important opportunity to identify and address the limitations of the current Teacher Professional Standards. More specifically, the review provides a timely opportunity to strengthen teacher quality, enhance evidence-informed teaching and assessment practices, and improve the effectiveness of professional learning in a manner that is fully inclusive of the needs of all diverse Australian student subpopulations.

We particularly welcome the explicit invitation extended to the broad range of stakeholders across the Australian education sector, including teachers, school leaders, pre-service teachers, former teachers, education system and sector employees, education association representatives, teacher regulatory authorities, initial teacher education providers, parent associations, **gifted and talented education associations**, disability stakeholders, teacher educators, school psychologists and counsellors, and parents, carers and community members.

**As the national organisation representing gifted education in Australia, the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) is uniquely positioned to contribute to this review. Our membership and board comprise individuals representing each of these stakeholder groups**, united by their expertise and commitment to the education of gifted students. Consequently, our submission reflects a broad and representative perspective that draws on professional expertise, research, educational leadership, and lived experience from the Australian education sector.

We are encouraged by the opportunity this review presents and welcome the prospect that both the concerns of our organisation and those of the broader gifted education community in Australia will be given serious consideration as part of the review process.

In Australia, gifted students are defined as students who possess natural abilities which place them in the top 10% of age peers (Gagné, 2009). However, if all possible domains of

giftedness (i.e., the intellectual, creative, social and physical domains) are collectively considered, gifted students are estimated to comprise in excess of 30% of the Australian student population. Accordingly, we submit **that our organisation represents a significant proportion of the Australian student population.**

We are concerned that the educational needs of gifted students receive scant attention in the current AITSL Professional Standards for Teachers. As such, we provide the following recommendations to address this issue:

**1. A need for a dedicated Focus Area for Gifted Students within Standard 1.**

Our organisation is concerned that the educational needs of gifted students are afforded insufficient recognition within the current Standards. Specifically, the Standards contain no explicit reference to gifted students or to gifted education. Instead, this student population is only indirectly acknowledged through Focus Area 1.5 (*Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities*). This contrasts with the explicit recognition afforded to other diverse Australian student subpopulations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disability, both of which are represented by dedicated Focus Areas (1.4 and 1.6, respectively). This disparity is difficult to justify given the substantial proportion of Australian students identified as gifted, the well-established evidence demonstrating their distinct educational characteristics and learning requirements, and the central role of teachers in identifying and responding to these needs. The absence of explicit reference to gifted and talented students within the Standards risks reinforcing the misconception that differentiation alone is sufficient to address their educational needs and provides limited guidance regarding the specialised knowledge and pedagogical practices required to support this population effectively.

Accordingly, we recommend the introduction of a dedicated Focus Area within Standard 1 entitled “Strategies to Support the Full Participation of Gifted and Talented Students”. This name aligns with the existing structure and nomenclature of the Standards, including those referencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Standard 1.4) and students with disability (Standard 1.6), to promote greater coherence, consistency, and parity in the recognition of all Australian student subpopulations with distinct learning needs.

**2. A need for additional Focus Areas within Standard 3.**

Our organisation considers that Standard 3 does not explicitly address several fundamental components of effective teaching and learning that are essential to meeting the educational needs of **all** Australian students. The inclusion of these components would strengthen the Standards by providing greater guidance on evidence-informed educational practice and ensuring greater alignment with the educational obligations of teachers across Australian jurisdictions. Specifically, Standard 3 should incorporate specific reference to:

- a. **The assessment of student potential** to inform decisions regarding appropriate educational provision. The assessment of student potential is fundamental to effective educational planning, by enabling teachers to identify the level, pace and nature of instruction most appropriate for each learner. In many Australian jurisdictions (including New South Wales through the Education Act 1990), schools have a statutory responsibility to ensure that students are supported to achieve to their educational potential.
- b. **The appropriate pacing of instruction** that acknowledges the potential of each student
- c. **The appropriate progression of students** in their educational trajectory
- d. **The provision of appropriate support to allow all students to fulfil their educational potential.** As noted above, this provision is a legal requirement in many states and territories of Australia, including New South Wales (through the Education Act 1990).

As such, we recommend that four new Focus Areas be established to address each of the above concerns. The following are some suggestions for Focus Area names (which are also consistent with the names of the other Focus Areas in Standard 3):

- a. Assess student potential
- b. Appropriately pace instruction
- c. Allow students to progress at an appropriate pace
- d. Support students to fulfil their educational potential

### 3. **A need for a New Focus Area on Reporting on Student Potential in Standard 5.**

Standard 5 has an explicit focus on reporting on student achievement, but no attention to reporting on student potential. The assessment of student potential is imperative to not only abide by legal requirements relating to the provision of support to allow students to fulfil their educational potential, but also to inform the provision of appropriate educational provisions that are appropriately paced, and allow for the appropriate progression of all students in their education. A requirement for reporting will ensure that student potential is assessed and used to inform educational practice. As such, we recommend that a new Focus Area be created on the reporting of student potential. For consistency with the current Focus Area 5.5, we suggest that this be named as “Report on student potential”.

We understand that AITSL has already, and is continuing to, consult with various stakeholders and educational experts on the inclusive review of the Professional Standards for Teachers. As the national organisation representing all of the key stakeholders in the education of gifted students, we eagerly await your invitation for one or more of these consultation sessions. During these sessions, we are also happy to discuss any of the points raised above.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, should you have any questions.

A stylized, cursive signature of the name 'Jae Jung' in black ink.

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### **References**

Gagné, F. (2009). Building gifts into talents: Detailed overview of the DMGT 2.0. In B. MacFarlane, & T. Stambaugh, (Eds.), *Leading change in gifted education: The festschrift of Dr Joyce VanTassel-Baska*. Prufrock Press.