EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS

FINAL REPORT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS (STANDARDS)

Prepared for:
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL)

Date: 22nd December 2015

Prepared by:
Assoc Prof Janet Clinton
Prof Stephen Dinham
Dr Glenn Savage
Ruth Aston
Anna Dabrowski
Dr Amy Gullickson
Dr Gerard Calnin
Dr Ghislain Arbour
Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL) with funding provided by the Australian Government.

The Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE) at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE), The University of Melbourne, would like to acknowledge AITSL and members of the Internal Reference Group for their assistance and collaboration throughout the Evaluation. Professor Robert Lingard (The University of Queensland) is also acknowledged for his work and support through the Evaluation. We also wish to thank all of the participants who participated in the Evaluation activities from 2013–2015.

We would like to thank the other members of the Evaluation team from CPE, including Elisabeth Betz, Elizabeth Cook, Sarah Brcan, Georgia Dawson, Eeqbal Hassim, Sydney Jantos, Alex Horton, Rachel Aston, Joe Lewsey, Nate Carpenter and Rachel Flottman.

Finally, we thank our partners from the Australian College of Educators, including Catherine Pickett, the Melbourne Education Research Institute, and MGSE. Your support and contribution during the Evaluation has been greatly appreciated.

# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Methods of data collection and analysis over the evaluation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Evaluation crosswalk matrix</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Initial criteria and literature</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Refined success criteria and definitions</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Association between contextual, environmental and accountability items and implementation intentions for high and low users of the Standards for extended and procedural purposes</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Variables and factor loadings that comprise professionalism (data from National Survey 1 and 2)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Organisation abbreviations for SNA graphs</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: ADAPTED CDC&P FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAM EVALUATION ................................................................. 11
FIGURE 2: LOGIC MODEL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS ........................................................... 13
FIGURE 3: THEORY OF CHANGE: LIFE COURSE MODEL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS .............. 14
FIGURE 4: STAGES AND PHASES OF THE EVALUATION ......................................................................................... 18
FIGURE 6: LIFE COURSE MODEL OF THE PROGRESSION OF IMPLEMENTATION FROM 2013 TO 2015 ...................... 25
FIGURE 7: MEAN SCORES FOR LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 (ALL RESPONDENTS) .......................................................................................................................... 28
FIGURE 8: MEAN SCORES OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY POSITION TYPE (ALL RESPONDENTS) .................................................................................................................. 29
FIGURE 9: MEAN SCORES OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY SECTOR (TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS) ................................................................. 30
FIGURE 10: MEAN SCORES OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY SECTOR (SCHOOL LEADERS) ................................................................................................. 31
FIGURE 11: MEAN SCORES OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY EDUCATOR FACILITY TYPE (TEACHERS) ................................................................. 32
FIGURE 12: MEAN SCORES OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY YEARS OF EDUCATION EXPERIENCE (TEACHERS) ........................................... 36
FIGURE 13: MEAN SCORES OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE STANDARDS IN 2013 AND 2015 BY YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN 2013 AND 2015 (TEACHERS) ................ 41
FIGURE 14: MEAN SCORES OF USE OF THE STANDARDS BY YEARS OF EDUCATION EXPERIENCE IN 2013 AND 2015 (TEACHERS) ......................................................................................... 45
FIGURE 15: MEAN SCORES OF USE OF THE STANDARDS ACROSS SYSTEMS IN 2013 AND 2015 (SCHOOL LEADERS) ........................................................................................................... 45
FIGURE 16: SOCIAL NETWORK GRAPH OF SCHOOL LEADERS (NATIONAL) .............................................................. 57
FIGURE 17: SOCIAL NETWORK GRAPH OF TEACHER EDUCATORS (NATIONAL) ......................................................... 58
FIGURE 18: RUBIK’S CUBE ANALOGY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS ............................................. 62
FIGURE 19: THEORY OF CHANGE - LIFE COURSE MODEL ....................................................................................... 65
FIGURE 20: DIFFERENCES IN IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS IMPLEMENTER GROUPS .................................................. 65
FIGURE 21: UNDERLYING ASPECTS OF PROFESSIONALISATION (FULLAN & HARGREAVES, 2012) ......................... 67
FIGURE 22: OPERATIONALISATION OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE - LIFE COURSE MODEL ........................................ 71
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANDARDS</td>
<td>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPE</td>
<td>Centre for Program Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITE</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEECDYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (Education Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDS</td>
<td>Multi-Dimensional Scaling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGSE</td>
<td>Melbourne Graduate School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBC</td>
<td>Perceived Behavioural Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMERR</td>
<td>National Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>Social Network Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMAG</td>
<td>Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPB</td>
<td>Theory of Planned Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoMC</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne Commercial Limited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) contracted the Centre for Program Evaluation (CPE) via the University of Melbourne Commercial Limited (UoMC), to evaluate the implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (hereafter referred to as ‘the Standards’). This project involved a three-year process and impact evaluation conducted by CPE staff and a group of education experts and based at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE).

The focus for this Evaluation was not to re-evaluate the content of the Standards but to assess the degree, usefulness, effectiveness and impact of their implementation on professional practice. The content of the Standards was previously validated by the National Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology, and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia (SiMERR) at the University of New England (Pegg, McPhan, Mowbray & Lynch, 2010).

Enhancing teacher quality is the overarching goal of the Standards, and its achievement is dependent on the degree and quality of their implementation across the (school) education sector. Therefore, this Evaluation sought to involve the sector in a comprehensive manner. The Evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach to examine implementation practices occurring in schools, initial teacher education (ITE) institutions, regulatory authorities, sector education offices and professional and principal associations, across Australia. The approach was also intended to involve school educators in policy discourse and construction, giving them a voice and recognising their level of influence over student engagement and learning outcomes. Furthermore, the Evaluation aimed to add value to the implementation of the Standards by identifying how best to support educators to implement the Standards.

Over the past three years, the Evaluation team has provided AITSL with two interim reports that have described emergent findings from the implementation of the Standards. Report I: Baseline Findings provided an analysis of the ways in which the Standards are being implemented; demonstrated varying levels of implementation across stakeholder groups, and considered the degree of readiness for implementation. Report I also confirmed the perceptions of how implementation occurs among education stakeholders, which, in turn, contributed to the development of the Theory of Change—Life Course Model. While the findings presented in Report I demonstrated varying levels of, and approaches to, implementation across stakeholder groups, analysis of data from the first National Survey and National Forum confirmed that there were high levels of positive attitudes towards the Standards, knowledge of the Standards, and engagement with the Standards, and that these high levels were essential to promoting ongoing implementation.

Report II provided detailed Case Studies, with the purpose of offering an ‘on-the-ground’ understanding of implementation practices in schools and education organisations around Australia. Data gathered from these Case Studies supported the findings of the National Forum and National Survey, and enabled the Evaluation team to identify and explain the activities associated with the implementation of the Standards. Thus, the Evaluation team gained insights into the impact of the implementation of the Standards on schools and education organisations, both nationally and within jurisdictions. Importantly, these Case Studies also illuminated several factors that facilitated implementation at the individual, school and organisation levels, including supportive leadership and a positive learning culture.

This Report presents the overall findings obtained from the three-year evaluation conducted between 2013 and 2015. As the final report on the Evaluation, it builds progressively upon the findings of the interim reports, adding new analysis to generate deeper insights into the implementation of the Standards, and inform the development of recommendations. The report provides the overall findings on the implementation of the Standards among stakeholders within the education profession including, but not limited to, teachers, school leaders, pre-service teachers and teacher educators, as well as those working within regulatory authorities, sector education offices, and professional and principal association members. First, the context of the Evaluation will be provided, in addition to a brief overview of the Evaluation questions and methodology. Next, the overall findings from the combined data collection activities conducted in January 2013 through to November 2015 will be reported in response to each of the Evaluation questions. These data collection activities included a National Forum, National Surveys, 53 Case Studies, a documentary analysis, and interviews with key stakeholders. To conclude this Final Report, the Evaluation team discuss the nature of the implementation, the impact of implementation to date, and identify considerations for the future implementation of the Standards.
The purpose of this section is to clarify the contextual factors that may facilitate effective implementation of the Standards in Australia, drawing upon the past and current standards-based practices and policy reforms in Australia, and other OECD member nations. This section also provides background information on teaching standards and their role and importance in Australia.

**What are teaching standards?**

Across the OECD member countries (in particular, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and the United States of America), professional standards for teachers have been used as a policy mechanism intended to assess and enhance teacher quality. These outcomes are realised by clarifying the dimensions of effective teaching practice, detailing the competencies of accomplished teachers, and applying rubrics specifically designed to measure teacher quality (Koster & Dengerink, 2008; Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007; Mayer et al. 2005; Santoro, 2012). Standards for teachers can have a number of other purposes, for example, they can: (a) be ‘purely normative’ and used as a prescriptive mechanism of governance; (b) emphasise public accountability and quality assurance; and/or (c) focus on improving the quality of teaching (Sachs, 2003). Moreover, criterion-based standards for teachers are often used to account for the complexity of teaching as a profession; as such, these standards do not prescribe one singular teaching style or pedagogy (Koster & Dengerink, 2008). Instead, they describe the dimensions of effective teaching, by providing a framework for individual teachers and the teaching profession to reflect on and enhance their teaching practices, communicate their knowledge with peers and, ultimately, improve teacher education and professional learning (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007; Sergiovanni & Starrat, 2002).

**Why have standards for teachers?**

The importance of quality teaching for student achievement is well established in educational research (e.g., OECD, 2005; Reynolds, 1999; Snoek et al., 2009). This research provides evidence that teacher effectiveness has a greater impact on student achievement than any other aspect of the education system (Hattie & Clinton, 2008; Nye et al., 2007). Teacher professional standards, and the knowledge and practices they prescribe are increasingly seen as the crucial element that will improve the quality of teaching in schools, raise the performance of education systems and, ultimately, enhance student learning outcomes (OECD, 2005). Darling-Hammond (2001) suggests that professional standards for teachers can help to disseminate understandings of authentic teaching practice and facilitate the collegial development of professional norms. Standards for teachers often aim to bring consistent quality to education systems across disparate jurisdictions, and can form the basis for professional career structures (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

As Hattie (2003) has shown, what teachers know, do, and care about is most crucial to supporting student learning. Hence, governments across the OECD member nations have developed policies that seek to ensure that teachers meet defined professional standards (Snoek, Swennen & Van der Klink, 2009). Over the course of the last decade, there has been concern about Australia’s declining performance in education compared to other nations, fuelling intensifying debates about the need to improve teacher quality (Hallinger, Heck & Murphy, 2013; Dinham, 2013, 2015; Hammond, 2014). It is within this context that the Standards were developed in Australia.

**The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers**

In Australia’s federal system of governance, each state and territory government has constitutional responsibility for its own education system. Historically, the states and territories have adopted very different approaches to developing and assuring school and teacher quality. Variation in the presence or absence of teaching standards has often resulted in disparate processes and expectations for teacher assessment across the nation.

As early as 1998, a Senate report on the status of the teaching profession in Australia highlighted the appeal of establishing national standards for teachers (Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee, 1998) to foster consistency across the jurisdictions. In 2002, the Australian Government announced the appointment of an independent committee to review teaching practices and teacher education in Australia. The final report of this review, *Australia’s Teachers, Australia’s Future: Advancing Innovation, Science, Technology and Mathematics*, was released in October 2003. The report argued for the
importance of quality teaching to facilitate enhanced student achievement and recommended a coordinated and collaborative national approach to advance the teaching profession across Australia. In 2003, the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) endorsed a National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching. It was the responsibility of each jurisdiction to align their existing standards (where applicable) with this framework. In 2009, work began on a common standards framework for Australia, building upon the earlier, largely uncoordinated approach (see Dinham, Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, & Anderson, 2009 for initial work on this project). In 2010, the Standards were developed by AITSL and endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA), now known as the Education Council.

The Standards embed the importance of engagement and connection with students and draw on key principles of teaching practice. The Standards can be used as a tool for teacher self-reflection, professional development, and peer dialogue. The practice of teacher self- and peer-assessment against consistent standards ensures transparency of practice and professional accountability through internal governance mechanisms (Koster & Dengerink, 2008; AITSL, 2011). The Standards are also seen as having the potential to raise the status of the teaching profession, assisting in the attraction, development and retention of exemplary practitioners, as well as providing a framework for rewarding professional growth (AITSL, 2011; Mourshe & Barber 2010; Dinham et al., 2008). The Standards also provide the framework for the development and accreditation of ITE courses, and for judgments about teacher certification at the highly accomplished and lead career stages.

**Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group**

In February 2015, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) released the *Action Now: Classroom-Ready Teachers* report that proposed ‘practical and achievable’ changes to ITE. The report called for improvements to the quality of ITE courses in Australia and identified AITSL as the key organisation to facilitate ITE reform. Part of this reform involves the implementation of the Standards, with the report requesting that the Australian Government ‘provide national leadership’ to ensure that the Standards have a ‘powerful and long-lasting impact’ (TEMAG, 2014:54). Correspondingly, TEMAG’s plans for ITE reform in Australia reflect further consolidation and refinement of AITSL’s strategic directions for Standards implementation. As such, the implementation of the Standards is a component of ITE that can be strengthened and supported by TEMAG’s recommendations. Moreover, the Standards and TEMAG’s recommendations for ITE reform share one key priority— to improve the quality of teaching in Australia.
To provide an explanation for how the Evaluation was designed and conducted, a brief overview of the methodology (evaluation framework, design, and underpinning theoretical concepts and models) and methods (data collection tools and analysis techniques) is given in this section. For more in-depth information regarding the methods utilised in the earlier stages of the Evaluation, refer to Report I and Report II.

3.1 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation methodology is characterised by three interrelated and hierarchical components: first, the high-level guiding framework; second, the evaluation approach; and, third, relevant theoretical constructs and models that provide insights into the specific topics under investigation, that is, policy implementation, teacher standards, and teacher quality. It is important to note that all three of these components comprise the Evaluation methodology.

Framework

The Evaluation framework is an adapted version of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Framework for Program Evaluation (the Framework) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999). The Framework was created primarily for public health evaluations as a comprehensive guide for research that is able to address the socio-ecological nature of public health, for example, how the prevalence of communicable and non-communicable diseases interact with socio-economic status (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999). However, the Framework can apply to program evaluations conducted in any sector, and has frequently been used in the education and social science sectors. The Framework is depicted in Figure 1, below.

![Figure 1: Adapted CDC&P Framework of program evaluation](image)

The value of the Framework is that it structures the evaluation approach and, importantly, facilitates continuous consultation and feedback with stakeholders. Thus, the Evaluation team committed to the regular feedback of findings as and when these arose during the course of the Evaluation (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999).

Approach

This Evaluation was commissioned as a formative evaluation that provides information about process and outcomes (as a result of implementation) as and when these emerge. This dissemination of information was facilitated by the Framework.
In addition, it was also proposed by the Evaluation team that the Evaluation be theory-based. ‘Theory’ in this sense refers to the set of ideas and principles upon which the implementation of the Standards was developed. To articulate what this ‘theory’ is, an initial (and ongoing) step of the Evaluation was to develop a program logic model. A logic model is necessary to conduct a theory-based evaluation that is context-dependent, accurate and founded upon testing and validating the underlying theory.

A program logic model (presented in Figure 2 below) outlines what the program will do and how it will do it. It is a visual representation of the underlying program theory, depicting the sequence of steps by which the intended outcomes will be achieved (Owen, 2006). A program logic model is developed by collecting data from stakeholders about their vision for the program, their inputs, activities and perceived outcomes, and the factors that enable or act as barriers to the program’s successful implementation.
Figure 2: Logic model of the implementation of the Standards

[Diagram showing the implementation logic model with resources, activities, short term outcomes, medium term outcomes, and long term outcomes.]

Vision: Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
Consistent national implementation of a standards referencing framework to promote high-quality, effective teaching by making explicit the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required for effective teaching across teachers' careers and by supporting a system-wide culture fostering teacher professional learning and development.
Figure 3 depicts the Theory of Change of the implementation of the Standards. It is this theory, or rather the progression of outcomes over time, that was tested in this Evaluation. Although the Standards were partly developed to achieve the intentions of the 2008 Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians – which aims for students to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens – the Evaluation was more focussed on the short-to-medium and medium-to-long-term outcomes of implementation, as opposed to the impact on student outcomes demonstrated in Figure 2. The logic (Figure 2) also presents an illusion of a linear process of implementation, which, on the surface, may appear simple, but which, in practice, is actually more complex. Similarly, external factors, that influence the implementation of the Standards, are not identifiable in Figure 2; these will be described in the findings section (4.2) of this report.

Relevant literature, and the perceptions of stakeholders were utilised to form the causal outcome pathway identified in the logic model. This causal outcome pathway, as depicted in Figure 3 (on the bottom arrow), has been explained in earlier reports. It was the theory articulated in this model (hereafter referred to as ‘the Life Course Model’) that was tested, revised, and added to, throughout the Evaluation. The final model is presented in the conclusion (5.0) of this report.

Figure 3: Theory of change: life course model of the implementation of the Standards

Theoretical Constructs and Models

In addition to defining the theory of the implementation of the Standards, the Evaluation team also sought to ensure that the methods (in particular, data collection and analysis) were informed by and reflected relevant theoretical constructs and models. By way of distinction from the earlier presentation of the theory of change, these theoretical constructs can be thought of as explaining how implementation occurs according to the literature and, importantly, how implementation could be defined, measured, and interpreted. Later, in this section, the criteria developed and utilised in the Evaluation will reflect some of this discussion; and the conclusion and interpretation of the findings of the Evaluation will also reflect the points made. Two main areas of literature, implementation science, and psychology, were drawn upon for the design, measurement, and interpretation of findings from the Evaluation. It is critical to note that literature on teacher standards; teacher professionalisation, quality improvement, change management, systems thinking, and innovation were also drawn upon in the Evaluation. This literature is reflected in the background section (2.0) and the conclusion (5.0).

Implementation Science in Educational Policy Reform

The field of implementation science can provide valuable insights into the change process associated with the implementation of education policy, as well as detail the measurement and evaluation of this change process. A brief overview of two key points directly relevant to the findings of this Evaluation is provided below: (i) the relationship between the diverse school communities in Australia and the notion of ‘implementability’ and success as policy outcomes; (ii) the process involved in policy implementation and the influence of beliefs and attitudes (Honig, 2006).
Navigating complexity by considering implementability

The implementation of reforms is often plagued by complexity due to the diversity of communities and contexts within which education occurs in Australia. Another layer of complexity is added when one considers the process of simultaneously implementing multiple reforms within schools. Honig and Hatch (2004) have noted the need for schools to ‘craft coherence’ between external demands (i.e., policy mandates regarding improvement) and their own goals and strategies. In order to cope with the challenge of implementing multiple reforms, implementation science offers approaches to illuminate and navigate these complexities to promote the integration of research findings and evidence with policy and practice. Tools from this discipline can help to clarify the reasons why certain policies are not successful in bringing about change within the sector, and can provide direction for those charged with implementing complex policies by detailing how to maximise the probability that a given policy will be effective in different contexts. Honig (2006) describes the challenge as follows:

> Those interested in improving the quality of education policy implementation should focus not simply on what’s implementable and what works but rather investigate under what conditions if any, various education policies get implemented and work ... implementability and success are the product of the interactions between policies, people, and places ... the essential implementation question then becomes not simply ‘what’s implementable and works’, but what is implementable and what works for whom, where, when, and why? (p. 2)

This quote highlights the second point relevant to this Evaluation, that is, the pragmatic focus upon what is referred to as implementability. This term can be explained as the interactions between people, policies and places that determine ‘readiness’ to implement, or the degree to which a policy implementer is ready or able to implement policy.

Researchers in this area have noted the need for evaluation to focus on assessing implementability as opposed to assessing long-term outcomes. Specifically, information about the outcomes of policy implementation alone does not highlight how and why the implementation of a policy has worked. A focus upon implementability is particularly important when examining policies that may have failed to attain the intended outcomes within the designated timeframe. In such a situation, potentially successful policies may have been excluded when, in reality, poor implementation practices and processes may have explained why intended outcomes were not achieved.

Stages of policy implementation

At a surface level, the implementation of education policy can be thought of as occurring through various stages, the first of which is for key stakeholders and implementers to become aware of the policy, and to interpret the policy as it pertains to their practice.

Stakeholders may become aware of a policy through a number of different channels and sources. To begin, the policy-making body would typically engage in a consultation process, whereby the policy is circulated and feedback sought. Thus, a dual process of consultation and dissemination of policy information may be enacted. In the case of the Standards, organisations such as the departments of education, professional learning and development providers, sectoral education offices, regulatory authorities, and AITSL itself, each played a key role towards building awareness of the Standards. Once aware, educators, and all those involved in Standards implementation, needed to undergo a process of interpreting the Standards and translating those interpretations into practice.

Based on these initial encounters with a given policy, stakeholders at varying levels (i.e., schools, professional associations, and agencies at state/territory and federal levels) then begin to formulate their attitudes and beliefs in relation to the policy (Guskey, 1988; Desimone, 2002). These are influential determinants of the extent to which the actions that are laid out in the policy are translated into practice. Implementers’ initial understandings of the policy are likely to be shaped, at least in part, by prior knowledge, beliefs, and experiences (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002). Salient beliefs and attitudes may include: the degree of clarity and actionable nature of the policy; how well supported and resourced implementers feel to implement the policy; implementers’ personal self-efficacy to implement the policy; whether the policy serves their own interests; and how likely it is that the policy will lead to valued outcomes across the sector (i.e., enhancing student learning outcomes). Whether or not the primary audience of a policy (e.g., teachers) are positively or negatively disposed to the policy, has clear implications in regard
their willingness to engage with the policy reform, and their motivation to enact it in practice (Desimone, 2002; Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002).

While this kind of ‘individual cognition’ (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002) is influential in determining early reactions to a policy, ‘situated cognition’, or attitudes and beliefs formed within the context of social interactions, are arguably even more persuasive in fostering an evolving interpretation of the policy. Honig (2006) has emphasised the role of ‘people’ (i.e., those charged with implementing the policy) as the critical mediators of implementation success. In particular, school leaders and professional communities of practice may play an important role in supporting the implementation of policy through their capacity to shape stakeholder knowledge, and their beliefs surrounding the particular reform. Coburn and Stein (2006) identify teachers’ professional communities of practice as crucial sites for implementation and highlight their organisational context and interactions as key mediators of the change process. Similarly, middle leaders may serve as key instigators for change when teachers are the primary audience of the policy, by mediating between teachers and accountability bodies (Spillane et al, 2002). In this sense, middle leaders can be champions for the reform, provide contextualised guidance regarding actions, and foster collaboration between teachers. Spillane (2002) and Fullan (2010) have both written extensively on the importance of giving teachers the opportunity to talk to one another about policy reforms to facilitate the social sense-making processes.

The Evaluation findings presented and discussed in this report will draw upon the notions of implementability, policy interpretation, and implementation stages to discuss and explain the magnitude of implementation that has occurred, how it has occurred, and what is needed to further the implementation of the Standards.

**Psychology: Theories of Behaviour Change**

While there are many theories of behaviour change in the field and sub-areas of psychology, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was utilised to measure the process of behaviour change associated with the implementation of the Standards.

The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) is a well-established decision-making model. It claims that intentions are the most proximal predictor of behaviour – the stronger an individual’s intentions, the more likely they are to carry out a behaviour. Intentions are, in turn, determined by three factors: attitudes; subjective norms; and perceived behavioural control. Attitudes are a reflection of an individual’s positive or negative evaluation of the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms are perceived social pressures (from other individuals or groups that the individual perceives are important, such as friends, family, and co-workers) related to performing or not performing the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Finally, perceived behavioural control (PBC) consists of perceived control and self-efficacy. Perceived control reflects individuals’ perceptions of control over internal and external factors that may influence their behaviour while self-efficacy reflects confidence in one’s ability to perform the behaviour, and the perceived ease or difficulty of actioning the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

In the context of utilising the Standards to inform teaching practice, it is expected that an individual is more likely to utilise the Standards if they: have a more positive attitude (i.e., view use of the Standards as beneficial and worthwhile); perceive more social pressure from important others to utilise the Standards; have more confidence in their ability to utilise the Standards; and feel they have control over utilising the Standards. Within the TPB, there are four variables: (1) intention to utilise the Standards; (2) attitudes towards the Standards; (3) subjective norms; and (4) PBC. Analysis utilising the TPB was presented in detail in Report I, and will be referred to in the findings section (4.0) of this report.

### 3.2 Evaluation Stages and Methods

To operationalise the Evaluation Framework and approach, a mixed-methods design was employed, meaning that the design included both qualitative and quantitative data collection, and analysis in parallel form. These two types of data have each been collected and analysed sequentially (where one type of data provides the basis for the collection of the other type of data) and concurrently (whereby both types of data analysed together) (Green et al, 2015; Green 2007).

A mixed-methods design is particularly useful in evaluation contexts because it enables the triangulation of data sources and findings, with a view to forming an evidence-based judgment about the merit, worth and significance of the subject matter being evaluated. Furthermore, the utilisation of a mixed-methods approach allows findings from multiple data sources to be tested for consistency (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Table 1 briefly illustrates the range of methods utilised throughout the Evaluation.
Table 1: Methods of data collection and analysis over the Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Data Collection/Analysis activity</th>
<th>Sample/Participants</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>National Forum</td>
<td>( N = 174 ) (workshop participants) ( N = 82 ) (interviewees)</td>
<td>Adapted standard-setting workshops Semi-structured individual and group interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Survey 1</td>
<td>( N = 6002 )</td>
<td>Survey examining retrospective and prospective implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Data mixing and triangulation #1 (National Forum &amp; National Survey 1)</td>
<td>All data collected from National Forum and National Survey 1</td>
<td>Triangulation of different types of data collected through different methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Studies: Lessons from Practice</td>
<td>( N = 53 ) participating sites (organisations and schools)</td>
<td>Explanatory multi-case study design Semi-structured individual interviews Focus groups Documentary analysis Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>National Survey 2</td>
<td>( N = 8374 )</td>
<td>Survey examining retrospective and prospective implementation (provides a second round of data for comparison with the first National Survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key stakeholder interviews and analysis of key documents</td>
<td>( N = 23 ) interviewees Recent annual reports from teacher regulatory authorities Documentation provided by interviewees</td>
<td>Semi-structured individual interviews Descriptive analysis of documents that provide evidence of implementation, such as annual reports from teacher regulatory authorities, documents supplied by interviewees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data mixing and triangulation #2 (National Forum, National Survey 1 &amp; 2, Case Studies, Stakeholder Interviews &amp; document analysis)</td>
<td>All participants in the Evaluation</td>
<td>Triangulation of all data collected through different methods across the Evaluation, and use of criteria to establish conclusions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Evaluation was separated into three stages, each with a particular focus. The first stage (2013) was focussed on developing and refining the evaluation design, with extensive input from key stakeholders. For instance, engagement with stakeholders at this stage was focussed on understanding the theory of the implementation of the Standards, and the factors related to successful implementation. The second stage (end of 2013-2014) was focussed on national data collection in the form of a survey, the gathering and analysis of documents, and interviews with stakeholders involved in the day-to-day implementation of the Standards. The second and final stage (2015) was focussed on developing conclusions and making recommendations and involved follow-up data collection in the form of a second National Survey, document collection, and interviews with key stakeholders who were involved in the National Forum. Figure 4 summarises the key activities that occurred in each stage and phase of the Evaluation (numbered in chronological order). The triangulated findings and analyses completed during each stage of the Evaluation are presented in this report.
3.2.1 SAMPLE CONSIDERATIONS

An in-depth description of sample characteristics for each data collection method has not been included in this report, however Report I: Baseline Findings (Clinton et al., 2015) provides this information for 2013 data collection activities, Report II: Case Studies details 2014 sample information and finally supplementary documents to this report provide an overview of sample characteristics for 2015 data collection activities.

It is worth noting several particular considerations that should be noted when reading the results presented in the following section of this report. These considerations pertain to the results presented from the National Survey.

1. Generalisability of survey sample

For both national surveys, a power analysis was conducted to develop a sampling framework. The power analysis indicated that to make conclusions from the data collected that could be generalised to the educator population in Australia a minimum of 3.27% participation of the population in sub-groups would be required (e.g., state/territory, sector). For both national surveys, the minimum sample size was surpassed at a national level, in each jurisdiction and across all sectors for both teachers and school leaders. However, it should be noted that for pre-service teachers and teacher educators no accurate population level data was available and therefore the absolute minimum sample size could not be calculated. In addition, for both of these groups and particularly for pre-service teachers the number of respondents in both national surveys was proportionately very low (2013 n= 220, 2015 n = 647) and therefore caution should be taken when interpreting results among this group.

2. Sample distribution 2013 and 2015

With respect to the distribution and characteristics of the survey samples in 2013 and 2015 were proportionately similar with respect to the sector, locality, school type (primary, secondary, special education, early childhood, distance education, combined (K-12, ECEC and primary), adult education). The largest difference was that while participation from most jurisdictions was similar at both time points, there were almost twice as many participants in 2015 from New South Wales compared to 2013.

The second significant difference warranting caution is that the size of the overall sample in 2015 was much larger than in 2013 with an additional 2372 respondents in 2015. A key concern then was an increased potential for Type I and II errors (false positive and false negative) to be evident in the interpretation of statistical analysis that examined change over time. That is

Figure 4: Stages and phases of the Evaluation

interpreting a difference (positive or negative) or lack of a difference between 2013 and 2015 as true results and generalising these results to the education profession as a whole (given the sample size allows for generalisations to be made).

The large difference in sample sizes in 2013 and 2015 can provide an explanation for the difference, that is, any observed difference is a result of a different sample size. This explanation is valid in the case of some of the sub-group analyses, such as those for pre-service teachers in particular (it has been stated above that the results among this group need to be treated with caution regardless).

To test the degree to which the results of all analyses could be explained by differences in sample size alone, the group of participants in 2015 who had identified they had also completed the survey in 2013 was analysed separately. The same set of analyses was conducted with this group as those that were conducted on all survey respondents. The results of these analyses were the same, however, the relationships were stronger and the differences larger and more significant. Based on these results, we can more confident that the results from the analyses presented in section 4.1 are unlikely to be solely a result of differences in sample size between 2013 and 2015. However, it is acknowledged that this does not dispel the risk of Type I and II errors entirely as there are variables other than sample size that could explain differences, such as changes in other related policy reforms, however, these cannot be controlled for in the analyses. While we are confident that there is a low risk of Type I and II errors based on the results of the analysis of continuous participants (those who completed the survey in 2013 and 2015), analyses of subgroups with large differences in sample size between 2013 and 2015 should still be treated with caution.

Overall, it is suggested that the readers of this report consider that the data collected (across all activities not only the National Surveys) is treated as a cross-sectional view of implementation of the Standards at the time in which it was conducted. This Evaluation was not a longitudinal follow-up study, thus, it was not the aim to follow a group of educators and track implementation of the Standards within a particular group rather it was to evaluate the implementation across Australia.

### 3.3 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

From the onset, a number of questions were proposed (in consultation with AITSL) that reflected the aims of the Evaluation. Throughout the Evaluation, these questions were refined (in consultation with AITSL) to ensure that the Evaluation generated useful and relevant findings. For example, there was initially a focus on student outcomes, indexed by NAPLAN scores, as a measure of the impact of the implementation of the Standards. However, throughout the Evaluation process perspectives changed to reflect outcomes that were most relevant to the aims of the Evaluation, that is, the focus shifted towards the process of implementation and its subsequent impacts on the teaching profession. The four final research questions that arose explored the usefulness, structure, process and impact of the Standards. The corresponding measures and data sources are listed against the research questions in Table 2.
Table 2: Evaluation crosswalk matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National Surveys</th>
<th>Case Studies</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Documentary Analysis</th>
<th>Literature Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usefulness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the rate of uptake of the Standards.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the uptake differences between a jurisdiction where a jurisdiction-based, standards-referenced approach exists and a jurisdiction where it does not.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe arrangements across jurisdictions for monitoring the enactment, inputs and outcomes of initial teacher education accreditation structures and processes.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are the systems, legislation, regulation and other formal mechanisms being developed for each strand of activity?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the use and application of the Standards in initial teacher education courses.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the differences at the national, state and territory, community and school levels to support teacher education staff?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What changes have occurred since the implementation of Standards?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the changes differ at different levels (e.g., state, jurisdictions, schools, individuals)?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the evaluation questions, evaluative criteria were required to make a transparent judgement about the usefulness, effectiveness and impact of the implementation of the Standards (Scriven, 1998). The process of developing valid criteria to achieve this purpose involved a narrative review of the literature on the factors that facilitate the implementation of teaching standards and standard-setting workshops with key stakeholders (refer to Report I: Baseline Findings for further detail).

The findings of the literature review yielded the following key factors that are associated with the successful implementation of professional teaching standards:

(i) The quality of concept or content of the Standards — this factor is associated with the Standards being based upon quality evidence and, importantly, the implementation process being evidence-based. In the case of teaching standards, there needs to be a balance between the administrative functions of implementation and those implementation activities that will lead to improvements in teaching quality (Sachs, 2003; Santoro et al., 2012).

(ii) Leadership and organisational infrastructure — effective planning of implementation are important, which includes the development of roles and responsibilities, and the establishment of organisational structures that include
management of communication, accountability, and stakeholders (ANAO, 2006; Giacchino & Kakabadse, 2003; Bernerth et al., 2011).

(iii) **Adequate support and resourcing** — for implementation of any program or policy to occur, adequate support and resourcing are necessary (Meyer, Durlak & Wandersman, 2012).

(iv) **Ownership and buy-in from the profession** — this factor is often seen as the precursor to effective implementation (Giacchino & Kakabadse, 2003). It is important to note that this factor refers to deep ownership, meaning that implementers are seen to remain steadfast in their implementation practices despite the challenges that may emerge (Fullan, 2010; Koster & Dengerink, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Mayer, 2009; Dinham et al., 2008). Further, this factor refers to ownership of the implementation process, which is distinct from the ownership of the Standards.

(v) **Teacher mindset** — closely related to the factor above, the concept of teacher mindset could be conceived as a culture of learning, combined with a positive attitude for change. In the case of implementing teacher standards, a (positive) teacher mindset is one that is open to learning, improvement and transparency, sharing what happens in classrooms in support of implementation (Koster & Dengerink, 2008).

(vi) **Understanding context** — in the case of implementing teaching standards (in a federal and multi-sector system), it is important to understand that context will influence the interpretation and implementation of the standards in schools and systems. Context should not be perceived only in the geographical sense; perhaps more influential are differences in attitudes towards reform within, and among, Australia’s three key schooling sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent) (COAG, 2008; Koster & Dengerink, 2008; Fullan, 2010).

After the literature review was completed, key stakeholders were asked (through workshops) to define a list of criteria that could be used to evaluate the implementation of the Standards. These criteria were aligned with the factors identified through the literature review, and are presented in Table 3, with the alignment of criteria to factors indicated by ‘X’. Compared to the factors from the literature, key stakeholders suggested criteria that are more specific and directly relevant to the implementation of the Standards.
Table 3: Initial Criteria and Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria from the stakeholders</th>
<th>Factors from the literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of concept or content of the Standards</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and organisational infrastructure</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate support and resourcing</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership and buy-in from the profession</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher mindset</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the Standards</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment towards Standards</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and leadership for implementation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear and consistent communication about the Standards</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are engaged and incorporating implementation in their practice</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All education key stakeholders are engaged</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of the Standards is ‘owned’ by the profession</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The implementation of the Standards is demonstrating value</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context is considered in the implementation process</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are cognisant of themselves as a profession</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of learning and improvement amongst the profession</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The criteria suggested by key stakeholders were refined further by asking National Survey respondents (teachers, school leaders, pre-service teachers, and initial teacher educators) to indicate whether or not they agreed with the criteria suggested by workshop participants. From the analysis of the survey data, ten criteria that had the highest agreement scores were identified and further defined through another workshop with key stakeholders. A definition for each criterion is provided in Table 4.
### Table 4: Refined success criteria and definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Reference to Report Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Having surface knowledge of the Standards</td>
<td>4.1.1 Awareness of the Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Having an understanding of the Standards and their implications for practice</td>
<td>4.1.2 Knowledge of the Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Demonstrated use of the Standards within your context</td>
<td>4.1.4 Intention to use the Standards 4.1.5 Use of the Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment and transferability</td>
<td>Alignment of organisational policies/procedures/processes with the Standards</td>
<td>4.2.3 System Alignment and Transferability of Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher engagement and practice</td>
<td>Promoting teacher engagement with the Standards</td>
<td>4.2.6 Teacher Engagement and Practice Informed by the Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Clarity and consistency of communication about the Standards</td>
<td>4.2.4 Collaboration and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Working with others to effectively implement the Standards</td>
<td>4.2.4 Collaboration and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Creating an environment that supports effective implementation of the Standards</td>
<td>4.2.1 Supportive Leadership 4.2.5 Culture of Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>A positive attitude towards implementation of the Standards</td>
<td>4.1.3 Attitude towards the Standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The refined success criteria in Table 4 were utilised to assess the implementation of the Standards. The following section provides a response to each of the four main evaluation areas: usefulness, structure, process and impact of the Standards (previously outlined in section 3.1, and depicted in Table 2). It references evidence collected during the three years of the Evaluation according to the established success criteria, and the findings are categorised according to each criterion as noted in Table 4. While the criteria were validated by a range of stakeholders who are representative of those educators involved in the implementation of the Standards, it is expected that these criteria will change over time. This is because policy and system priorities change over time; hence, the criteria should be adaptable to enable continuous monitoring and assessment of the progress of implementation.
This section presents the key findings of the Evaluation generated through a triangulation of all data collected from 2013 to 2015. While evidence is provided throughout this section, the full description of data analyses is not provided for the purposes of brevity and readability. Report I provides a detailed description of the findings of all analyses conducted from 2013 to mid-2014. Report II provides similar information for mid to late 2014. Data Supplement I of Report II provides the description of all analyses conducted in 2015. To give an indication of the general sample characteristics for each data collection activity referred to in this section of the report, Table 1 (section 3.3) provides the sample sizes. A more detailed breakdown of participants can be found in Report I and Report II. For 2015 information, refer to Data Supplements I and IV of this report.

The intention of this section is to provide a high-level synthesis of the overall findings and conclusions.

### 4.1 UPTAKE OF THE STANDARDS

Assessing the rate of uptake of the Standards involved utilising stakeholders’ descriptions of criteria for successful implementation. The process of implementation was statistically modelled utilising structural equation modelling of the data from both National Surveys. The resulting model presented in Figure 5 outlines the constructs that comprise ‘uptake’ according to the data collected from educators. The values noted above the arrows in the diagram indicate the strength of the relationship between conditions. These values, and the overall analysis are explained in greater detail in Report I.

Importantly, this structural model of uptake reflects the original program logic (Figure 2) developed at the beginning of the Evaluation with AITSL. Knowledge, which incorporates awareness, familiarity and understanding of the Standards, is represented in the short-term outcomes of the logic model. Prior use relates to the procedural or extended use of the Standards, as well as current use and use of the Standards within the last year. Within this factor, the use of the Standards at school, leadership and system levels are articulated in the logic model as medium-term outcomes and incorporated activities, such as accreditation and professional development. Finally, the long-term outcomes adopted in the logic model represent implementation and include a full subscription to the Standards in instructional practice and professional learning based on a positive attitude developed from the use of the Standards.

![Figure 5: The conditions necessary for uptake of the Standards: structural equation model of the process of implementation](image)

As reported previously (Report I), there are also facilitating factors for implementation. In addition, these factors can be considered as proxy indicators of uptake because their presence is associated with uptake. Such a view has been taken in accordance with the implementation science literature and with the views of stakeholders (the Theory of Change-Life Course Model) who articulated that the facilitating factors (discussed in section 4.2) should be considered – in addition to the four constructs of the process of implementation – as criteria for assessing implementation progress (section 3.3).
The rate of uptake of the Standards can be presented diagrammatically as a life course model. The model (Figure 6) has been presented throughout the Evaluation as a way of considering how implementation occurs, how it is progressing, and what should be expected in the future as implementation progresses. Thus, it depicts how implementation has changed from 2013 to 2015 based on the data collected throughout the Evaluation.

![Figure 6: Life Course Model of the progression of implementation from 2013 to 2015](image)

What is not captured in this model is the variation in the rate of progress and, related to this, the diversity that exists within states, systems, and sectors, as well as among different groups and different contexts. These aspects will be discussed in this section.

Overall, across the four constructs (depicted in Figure 5) that comprise uptake of the Standards, progress has been made and there is ample evidence of diverse implementation activities among schools, ITE providers, departments of education, Catholic education offices, independent schools associations, and principal and professional associations. Implementation activities have shifted from being focused on building awareness of the Standards at all levels, to facilitating teacher registration and ITE program accreditation. These contexts are characterised by a series of common facilitating factors (described further in this section) that include: supportive leadership; a high level of teacher engagement in implementation and evidence that teaching practice is being informed by the Standards; a positive culture of implementation underpinned by ongoing learning and development; a high degree of collaboration and communication about implementation; and system alignment and transferability of implementation. In summary, the uptake of the Standards has improved from the beginning of this Evaluation, and there is evidence of implementation across a number of levels of the education system, including sectors, regulatory authorities, schools, and groups of individual teachers.

In 2015, the Standards have, in many cases, expanded to focus on building a culture of learning. In doing so, the Standards simultaneously give educators the support and responsibility to define their own professional learning needs. As an example, teachers are developing professional learning communities to support one another and share knowledge about good practices. At a national level, the Standards are not being used predominantly as a compliance tool for monitoring teacher quality; rather, the Standards are used by educators (school leaders, initial teacher educators, teachers, and pre-service teachers) for development, lesson planning, reflection, collaboration and professional learning. This Evaluation has shown that in some contexts sustainable change is present.

The following sections will present evidence supporting each of the four constructs (Figure 5), drawing from the National Forum, National Surveys 1 and 2, Case Studies, interviews with key stakeholders, and the documentary analysis. In addition, and where applicable, discussion regarding the variation in each construct across the stakeholder groups will be presented. Variation in this context is defined as differences between the four constructs by the group. This is an important issue that warrants attention because it not only influences the evaluative judgement about the implementation of the Standards but also must be considered for future implementation activities as it highlights the nuanced differences within and among the groups.
4.1.1 KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS

This section provides an overview of the findings associated with knowledge of the standards, including awareness and familiarity.

AWARENESS OF THE STANDARDS

Over the course of the Evaluation, awareness is defined as having ‘surface knowledge of the Standards’. Awareness of the Standards has remained universally high, with very little variation. By the end of the Evaluation, increases in awareness were not observed through the final data collection activities, and this is likely due to the high levels of awareness at baseline. Awareness is a precursor to productive use but, on its own, is insufficient for sustainable implementation as suggested by the Life Course Model.

National Forum

Participants indicated that they had a high level of awareness of the Standards. These participants were largely policy makers, representatives of regulatory authorities, and initial teacher educators (refer to Report I for the details of the participants). The high level of awareness was also consistent across participants from different sectors and organisations. Implementation activities that occurred during the first year of the Evaluation were largely focussed on raising awareness about the Standards. These activities included the dissemination of information about the Standards through professional development, regular communication to educators and, in some cases, the advertising of employment positions at schools. ITE providers at this time also had a particularly high level of awareness, as they were focussing on the mandatory accreditation of all ITE courses against the Standards.

“It’s been a reorientation for our schools and teachers rather than brand new awareness raising or an introduction...so that reorientation is about learning the new structure and then applying that to a range of activities at school level and system level.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“Essentially 98 per cent of [our] teachers have awareness of the standards of professional practice requirements...” (National Forum participant, 2013)

National Surveys

Results from the National Surveys (end of 2013 and mid-2015) indicated that educators (school leaders, teachers, pre-service teachers, and initial teacher educators) had an awareness of the Standards (97 per cent in 2013, and 94 per cent in 2015 across all groups).

Case Studies

The level of awareness of the Standards among the Case Study participants (employed in schools and educational organisations across Australia) was consistently high regardless of the type of school or organisation within which they worked. This level of awareness was evidenced by their explanations for how they use the Standards in their practice (refer to Interim Report II: Case Studies for details of the participants).

“I think we are using them all the time. Probably in my job, it would involve a lot of ICT because as a [specialist teacher role] ... I am getting students to work with ICT and online tools that help them to be better learners...I always put the Standards at the top [of the lesson].” (Case Study participant, 2014)

This result was expected because sites were selected based on their actual implementation of the Standards.
Closely related to general awareness is knowledge of the Standards. The difference between the two is that awareness is defined as a ‘surface knowledge of the Standards’, whereas knowledge of the Standards is defined as ‘understanding of the Standards and their implications for practice’. An educator with high knowledge of the Standards would understand the content, descriptors and career stages within the Standards, as well as what is needed to utilise the Standards to inform practice. Knowledge/awareness, according to models within behavioural psychology, is the first step towards changing one’s behaviour (Prochaska et al., 1997; Madsen, 2003). Prior to reaching these stages, an educator may be resistant to, or have no intention of, enacting the required behaviour changes to implement the Standards in their practice.

Further, from a policy interpretation and implementation perspective, knowledge is the first step towards interpreting a policy, and then enacting it in a particular setting. As noted earlier in section 4.1 shown, knowledge of the Standards is key to informing and predicting uptake of the Standards. During the Evaluation, consistently high levels of knowledge were reported, although there was variation in reported knowledge, and the depth of this knowledge among educator groups, as described in more detail below. Overall, it is evident from the data that reported knowledge of the Standards has changed over the course of the Evaluation. For teachers, initial teacher educators and school leaders, knowledge of the Standards has increased. Those organisations involved in supporting the implementation of the Standards (e.g., regulatory authorities and sector education offices) have developed their activities to support increasing knowledge of the Standards among educators. For example, these organisations have moved from conducting awareness-raising forums and aligning existing policies and plans to the Standards, to establishing structured committees and groups that can lead and organise implementation of the Standards. These actions are in addition to forming support networks for school staff that will assist them to implement the Standards in their practice.

National Forum

At the beginning of the Evaluation, participants in the National Forum (2013) were generally familiar with the content of the Standards, as well as the structures and processes for registration, accreditation, and certification. Further, the participants understood their role in implementation, and the implications that the Standards raised for them, as individuals.

“Teachers’ recognise what highly accomplished and lead teaching looks like.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“There’s a big plus that there is knowledge out there in the system...you’ve got a baseline set of knowledge and experience with standards and so you’re not building from scratch and that’s a good thing and you can build on people’s knowledge.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“800 pre-service educators, lecturers have a clear knowledge of the...IOPs [Illustrations of Practice] at the pre-service level.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

Education leaders from across the country attended the National Forum, and their involvement helped to define the development of subsequent data collection activities.

National Surveys

Across the 2013 and 2015 surveys, reported knowledge increased over time. The overall average level of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015, across all of the educator types, corresponded to ‘a fair amount’ (3) of knowledge of the Standards; and was higher in 2015 than in 2013, as noted in Figure 7. In 2015, the mean score for knowledge was 3.15 (SD= 1.04), whereas in 2013 the mean score was 3.03 (SD= 1.02). This small difference was significant with a small effect size of $d= .12$. 


Case Studies

The Case Studies conducted in 2014 indicated a high level of knowledge and understanding of the Standards among the stakeholders interviewed, as evidenced by their reported implementation practices. Practices that focused on responding to the professional learning needs of teachers, in alignment with the Standards, were evident in schools. Similarly, among organisations including (but not limited to) regulatory authorities, those tasked with mandatory implementation of the Standards in the form of teacher registration demonstrated a high level of knowledge about the Standards as well as the accompanying registration requirements. Specifically, their level of knowledge was developed to the extent that they understood the overall purpose of the Standards, not merely the regulatory requirements they were required to enforce.

“The Standards give us the framework to hinge things off...it gives us something to say about this is what we are doing ...and then other teachers can say ‘oh, that is something useful, that is something that we can do because it is relevant to how I can grow as an educator.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“The Standards do actually articulate what are you hoping to achieve...for the year for your school because it will be different to someone else’s school, your needs will be different, the needs of your staff members will be different, the way in which your school works will be different, your core issues will be different.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

VARIATION IN KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN GROUPS

As explained in the introduction to this section, there is variation in the reported level of knowledge of the Standards between groups of educators, which should be considered in light of the aforementioned overall conclusion in regard to improvements in educators’ knowledge of the Standards. It is important to note that such variation is to be expected because the data were collected from participants across all schools throughout Australia.

Variation in Implementation by Educator Position Type, Sector and Facility Type

Variation in the mean levels of knowledge by position type was observed among different educators. Pre-service teachers reported lower levels of knowledge in 2015 ($M= 2.50$, $SD= 1.07$) than in 2013 ($M= 3.03$, $SD= 1.01$). In contrast, teacher educators, teachers, and school leaders reported higher levels of knowledge in 2015 compared with 2013, although these differences were not statistically significant, as noted in the Figure below.

Knowledge about the Standards among pre-service teachers significantly decreased proportionately in 2015 when compared to 2013, with the number of pre-service teachers stating they have ‘no knowledge’ increasing from 4.8 per cent in 2013 to 20.5 per cent. The statistically significant difference is marked with an asterisk (+) in Figure 8.
However, the significant reduction in the reported level of knowledge among pre-service teachers should be treated with caution as there was a considerable difference in the sample size between 2013 and 2015. Further, this significant reduction in reported knowledge of the Standards among pre-service teachers could be explained by the flow of a new cohort of students moving through ITE, who, at the time of the survey, may not yet have been exposed to the Standards.

**Figure 8: Mean scores of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by position type (all respondents)**

In addition to variation in the level of reported knowledge among position type (teachers, school leaders, pre-service teachers, and teacher educators) by time, there were also differences observed within each position type according to the type of school/education facilities within which they worked by time. Firstly, school leaders and teachers from the Early Childhood sector reported significantly higher knowledge of the Standards in 2015 ($M=2.65, SD=1.06$) compared with 2013 ($M=2.58, SD=0.98$). In addition school leaders and teachers from the Early Childhood sector reported lower knowledge compared with those from the Primary, Secondary, Combined K - 12, Special Education and Adult Education school/education facility types ($p<.01$) (refer to Data Supplement 1 for details about this analysis).
Further, the analysis of school leader data indicated that those leaders working in the Primary sector reported a significantly lower level of knowledge of the Standards than school leaders in the Secondary sector ($p=.04$). Knowledge and use of the Standards were also lower for principals compared with deputy principals who might, for example, have greater ‘hands on’ experiences with beginning teachers undertaking the process of obtaining proficient level status, as noted in the figure below.

Figure 9: Mean scores of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by sector (teachers and school leaders)
Secondly, pre-service teachers studying to work in Secondary schools reported higher levels of knowledge (as noted in Figure 11) than those studying to become Primary teachers ($p<.05$) although this should be treated with caution given the small sample size of this group.

Figure 10: Mean scores of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by sector (school leaders)

Figure 11: Mean scores of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by future sector of teaching (pre-service teachers)
Finally, with regard to variation in reported knowledge by school/education facility type across all teachers, those from the Early Childhood sector reported significantly lower knowledge of the Standards compared with teachers working in Special Education, Distance Education, Adult Education/HEI/Other, Combined ECEC & Primary, Combined K – 12, Secondary schools, and Primary schools as noted in Figure 12 below. However, this result should be viewed with caution given the differences in sample size between respondents in each of these sectors. Teachers from the Early Childhood sector also scored significantly lower on knowledge compared with teachers working in the Secondary sector and Combined K - 12 sectors ($p < .05$) in 2013.

Figure 12: Mean scores of knowledge of the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by educator facility type (teachers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher facility type</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education/HEI/Other</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Education</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined (ECEC &amp; Primary)</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined (K-12)</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>2.98*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.96*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.75*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^In 2015 this group was captured in 'Adult Education/HEI/Other'

4.1.2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE STANDARDS

As noted earlier in the description of the structural equation model of the process of implementation (Figure 5), attitude towards the Standards is a strong predictor of implementation intentions. This finding is supported by the Theory of Planned Behaviour and implementation science, which identify attitude as a key mechanism to support meaningful and sustainable behaviour change (Ajzen, 1991; Honig, 2006). Stakeholders who participated in the Evaluation explained that, without a positive attitude towards the implementation of the Standards, the degree and quality of implementation practices would be affected.

Attitudes towards the Standards have shifted over time. In 2013, attitudes towards the Standards were moderately positive across all who participated in the National Survey, with little disparity among teachers, school leaders, initial teacher educators and pre-service teachers. Furthermore, respondents who had a positive attitude towards the Standards were more likely to express greater intentions to use the Standards in the next six months. In 2015, levels of positive attitude towards the Standards were higher across the educator position types, although the difference in pre-service teachers mean scores was not significant between the two surveys. Staff interviewed from educational organisations and schools in the Case Studies noted that they had observed improvements in attitudes while there was still progress to be made. Overall, it is evident from the triangulation of data that there are improvements in attitudes towards the Standards particularly among teachers and school leaders.
Attitude towards implementation is related to a positive experience of implementation. It can also be affected by external factors, such as other education reforms occurring simultaneously. The attitudes of professional and principal associations indicated a process that has been referred to as ‘translation’, ‘alignment’ or ‘application’; an important foundation for communicating the relevance of the Standards to groups of educators involved in the day-to-day implementation and, consequently, identified as a facilitating factor (see 4.2.3).

National Surveys

Pre-service teachers reported the highest level of positive attitudes towards the Standards, with teachers reporting the lowest level of positive attitudes towards the Standards, particularly in terms of workload. Attitudes towards the Standards were measured in both National Surveys, and the findings indicated that teachers’ attitudes improved over time from $M=3.80$ ($SD=0.98$) in 2013 to $M=3.91$ ($SD=0.96$) in 2015. This increase was significant and has a small effect size ($d=0.11$). School leaders’ attitudes also improved significantly from $M=4.37$ ($SD=0.78$) to $M=4.45$ ($SD=0.80$) with a small effect size ($d=0.14$).

Case Studies

Across the 53 Case Studies, participants explained that negative attitudes towards the Standards are influenced by a negative experience of implementation; there are a group of teachers (experienced teachers who are not in leadership positions) who are particularly affected by this. Factors that are most likely to lead to teachers developing a negative attitude include workload, limited resourcing, and a school or organisational environment that views the implementation of the Standards purely as a tool for compliance monitoring. These factors are further discussed in the section on the culture of implementation. Teachers who participated in the Case Studies viewed their experiences of implementation positively. They saw the value of the Standards inform their practice and planned to continue implementing the Standards.

“I think they went into it thinking it was a compliance, but they're the people that have ended up often leading this performance development process across the whole school because they kind of had to go through it.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“We are at a point where we use the Standards so that it is not about compliance. What I’m seeing, it is not top down; we are getting to our classroom observations.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

School leaders who had a positive attitude and saw the value of the Standards were likely to use implementation as an opportunity to focus on achieving school priorities, or to align implementation to the school strategic plan. While school leaders tended to have a positive attitude towards implementation (given they had volunteered to participate in the Case Studies) there were several who noted the challenges of workload. Change fatigue may also be an important consideration here.

“Some principals have said quite clearly, it’s very hard to get teachers...they don’t quite know how to get teachers to engage with it.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“Sometimes it adds significantly to your normal workload and having to make sure, to fulfil your smart goal, there is that extra workload which, at times...it really impacts on my mental health [and] on my ability to complete my smart goal. Management has said, ‘we will give you time’...I have to get through my work and that is a real conflict of interest for me. I think perhaps taking it down to one smart goal per year.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“Your teaching job and then you have this whole other job, because it’s not only that stuff we have to do, it’s lots of other administrative stuff. It’s just another thing.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Early in the Evaluation, National Forum participants discussed the reaction that non-generalist teachers often had towards the Standards, including the apparent lack of value for subject-specific knowledge and expertise within the Standards themselves. This ‘reaction’ or argument was explored further in the Case Studies of professional associations. Participants from professional associations explained that they had spent time developing resources and information that align the Standards to their particular work. In the case of some associations, the Standards were used as an opportunity for advocating the importance of a specialist teaching role.

“We’re also wanting to promote, you know there is an opportunity to have good quality [reference to a specific specialist teacher role] out there and if we can link it to the national things that are happening then that should raise the
Key Stakeholder Interviews

Follow-up interviews with key stakeholders in 2015 confirmed an improvement in attitudes towards the Standards since 2013. However, they also noted that there is still progress to be made in this area. As one stakeholder said:

“Probably in...say five years, I think it will be, the attitude of teachers towards the Standards will be greatly improved at all levels, not just beginning teachers. So, people will see them as part of what they do and part of the mechanism of... what they do. What guides them in their own learning.” (Key stakeholder, 2015)

Variation in Attitudes between Groups

The following section examines variation in attitudes towards the Standards across facility types and against years’ of education experience. The data presented considers changes in attitudes between 2013 and 2015, and is based on data from both National Surveys.

Variation across Facility Types

Similar to the knowledge of the Standards, there was also variation in attitudes towards the Standards. Variation was observed among school/educational facility types. Specifically, teachers from Secondary schools scored significantly lower on positive attitudes compared with teachers from Primary and Combined K-12 schools (p < .001) and Special Education settings (p = .002).
Similarly, there were some small differences in positive attitudes towards the Standards among School Leaders in Early Childhood settings compared with those in Primary, Secondary, Combined K - 12, Special Education and Adult Education settings ($p<.01$), as shown in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14: Mean scores of attitudes towards the Standards in 2013 and 2015 by school leader facility type (school leaders)

**Variation with Experience**

Attitudes towards the Standards also varied by years' of education experience. Teachers reporting the least experience had significantly higher positive attitudes compared with teachers with 6-15 and 26-30 years' of teaching experience ($p < .001$), and 36-40 years' of experience ($p = .02$). These differences are evident in Figure 15.

^ In 2015 these groups were captured in ‘Adult Education/HEI/Other’
This trend was also observed among school leaders, those respondents with 0-5 years of education experience reported significantly higher mean scores for positive attitudes compared to school leaders with 26-30 years of experience ($p<.01$).
4.1.3 INTENTION TO USE THE STANDARDS

Intentions to implement the Standards were also examined in the Evaluation. The purpose of investigating this construct of implementation was to understand the stages of behaviour change and, importantly, to capture those groups who are intending and planning to implement the Standards in their future practice. Nonetheless, even if educators intend to implement the Standards, a variety of factors (such as inadequate time) may impede the enactment of this intention. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) was used to measure and identify the predictors of an individual's intentions to use the Standards. The results of this analysis indicated that attitudes towards the Standards for teachers and teacher educators were most predictive of implementation intentions. For school leaders and pre-service teachers, subjective norms emerged as the most predictive factor of implementation intentions. It is important to note that subjective norms were also a predictor of implementation intentions among teachers and teacher educators, even though attitudes were a stronger predictor of intentions. Therefore, if teachers and teacher educators have a positive attitude towards the Standards, they are more likely to have a higher intention to use the Standards in the next six months. Similarly, if school leaders and pre-service teachers are surrounded by other colleagues and friends who are using the Standards, and see their value, they are more likely to intend to use the Standards in the next six months.

Overall, the triangulation of data across the Evaluation indicated that intentions to implement the Standards within a six-month period improved over time among all groups. Evidence for this is provided for each data collection activity below.
National Forum

In the Forum, respondents indicated a high degree of planning for implementation activities, largely in the areas of professional learning and development, registration, and accreditation of initial teacher education. Respondents discussed how they were planning to develop resources that were specific to educators in their particular sector or jurisdiction. At this time, ITE providers demonstrated that they were largely focussed on planning and preparing for national accreditation, after strengthening accreditation became a focus in 2011.

“The unit will be providing professional learning for principals and also for any graduate who wants assistance on how to present your evidence to get full registration.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“We’ve started to direct our professional learning. So AITSL offers professional leaning to schools and they will tailor it to what schools want but we also offer leadership courses to aspiring leaders and established leaders and so on. And we are start[ing]; we are building it around Standards...” (National Forum Participant, 2013)

National Surveys

The National Surveys measured intentions to implement the Standards within a six-month period. Across all educator types, the findings showed that the intentions of school leaders increased significantly from $M=4.37(SD=0.89)$ in 2013 to $M=4.56(SD=0.88)$ in 2015, but with a small effect size ($d=0.21$). The implementation intentions among initial teacher educators also increased significantly, and to a greater extent, from $M=4.49(SD=0.90)$ in 2013 to $M=4.68(SD=0.90)$ in 2015; again with a small effect size ($d=0.22$).

Case Studies

In regard to implementation intentions, information from the Case Studies was comparatively less informative than the information provided by the National Surveys, given their purpose was to examine current implementation practices. However, teachers and school leaders who participated did indicate that they planned to continue current implementation practices, and to expand upon these practices. They noted that they were planning to build and expand existing professional learning communities that brought together teachers from common subject areas, as well as facilitate information sharing among school leaders.

“By management changing and saying ‘you can personalise your goals’...we can work in teams and we can learn from each other.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“[You learn the most] by teaching others, so to share and engage with colleagues in using the Standards and observing each other and highlighting things that are going well within the Standards and doing that professional sharing through mentoring and coaching—peer support.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

In terms of teacher regulatory authorities and sector education offices, intentions to continue and expand implementation were evident, particularly with regard to facilitating information sharing between schools, but also in respect to continuing to improve and expand professional development opportunities. With respect to ITE providers, planned implementation was also focussed on building and enhancing partnerships with schools to support valuable practicum experiences for pre-service teachers.

“We have worked very, very hard on developing relationships with the school sectors, bringing people together, and what we have done is...we have tended to build on what has [already] been an expectation.” (Case Study Participant, 2014)

Variation in Intention to Use Across Groups

Variation in implementation intentions was evident among different groups of educators. The following section presents the variations in intention to implement the Standards by position type, facility type and years’ of education experience, based on the findings from the two National Surveys.
More school leaders reported intentions to implement the Standards in 2015 when compared to 2013, with the majority of school leaders corroborating that using the Standards in the near future would be ‘easy’ (82 per cent in 2015). This increase was statistically significant ($p < .01$), even though the effect size for this change was small ($d = 0.2$). Figure 17 also shows that there was an increase in intentions to implement among teacher educators that were also statistically significant ($p < .03$) although, again, the effect size for this change was small ($d = 0.25$).

### Figure 17: Mean scores of reported intentions to implement the Standards in the next six months by position type in 2013 and 2015 (all respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position type</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-service Teacher</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Educator</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>4.68*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Leader</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.56*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: $p$-values and $d$-values are provided for statistical significance and effect size, respectively.*

### Variation across Facility Types

Teachers from Secondary settings scored significantly lower implementation intentions compared with teachers working in Primary ($p < .001$), Combined K - 12 and Special Education facilities ($p = .001$). Similarly, there were a significantly lower implementation intentions among those working in an Early Childhood facility in 2015 compared with 2013. As shown in Figure 18, this group reported a lower mean score for intention to implement (in 2015) than all other facility types, except those working in Adult Education/HEI/Other types of facilities ($p > .01$). A similar trend was seen among pre-service teachers; those studying for Secondary or Early Childhood qualifications reported lower implementation intentions than those studying to become, for example, Primary teachers.
Variation in implementation intentions was also observed across the reported years’ of teaching experience. Specifically, implementation intentions were higher among teachers reporting the least teaching experience compared to teachers who reported 6-40 years’ of experience ($p \leq .01$) as noted in the figure below.

*In 2015 this group was captured in 'Adult Education/HEI/Other'
Similarly, school leaders with 0-5 years of education experience also reported significantly higher mean scores for implementation intentions compared to those with 11-15 years of experience ($p<.01$); 21-25 years of experience ($p=.02$); and 26-30 years of experience ($p<.001$). School leaders with 6-10 years of experience also reported significantly higher mean scores for implementation intentions compared to those with 26-30 years of experience ($p<.001$), and those with 16-20 years of experience reported significantly higher mean scores compared to school leaders with 26-30 years of experience. Each of these differences is indicated in Figure 20 below. The difference in implementation intentions between 2013 and 2015, for school leaders with 41+ years of teaching experience, was not significant likely due to the very small sample size.
4.1. USE OF THE STANDARDS

In the Evaluation, use of the Standards was examined in a variety of ways: (i) self-reported level of use, which was captured in terms of frequency (how much) and also the type of use (what the Standards are being used for/in); (ii) whether it was current or planned (intentions); and (iii) sustainability of use. Each of these three approaches to capturing utilisation was monitored throughout the Evaluation, and each data collection activity contributed insights to the ways that practitioners use the Standards. Overall, self-reported levels of use among educators increased over time, and the types of use changed, from a focus on registration at the beginning of the Evaluation, to more extended uses, such as reflection, towards the end. Among educational organisations (i.e., sector education offices), use of the Standards also changed from alignment of existing policies and practices, in the beginning (as elaborated in section 4.1.1), to a focus on enhancing professional development and addressing the support needs of educators.

National Forum

Participants from departments of education, regulatory authorities, Catholic education offices, and independent school associations discussed their focus on building awareness about the Standards. States and territories that had previously used teaching standards were also undergoing what was often referred to as a ‘transition period’ (to national Standards). The implementation activities at this stage were focussed on the alignment of policies and resources to the Standards, such as aligning professional development content to the descriptors within each Standard in order to explicate how teachers can utilise the Standards in their practice.

---

![Figure 20: Mean scores of intentions to implement the Standards by years of education experience in 2013 and 2015 (school leaders)](image-url)
“I think the first thing we’re doing is actually transitioning to their use, I think that’s important to talk about because we have of course had our NSW standards and we did make a decision in NSW to transition to the Australian standards so we’re in that phase.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“I spend quite a bit of time saying—actually this is not about the performance and development framework, it’s about professional learning communities, it’s about a focus on self-improvement.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

**National Surveys**

Reported levels of use among teachers increased significantly from \(M=2.31(\text{SD}=1.28)\) to \(M=2.42(\text{SD}=1.21)\), with a small effect size \((d=0.08)\). Similarly, use among school leaders increased significantly from \(M=2.73(\text{SD}=1.18)\) to \(M=2.92(\text{SD}=1.13)\), with a small effect size \((d=0.17)\). Use among initial teacher educators also increased from \(M=2.03(\text{SD}=1.09)\) to \(M=2.26(\text{SD}=1.45)\), but this increase was not statistically significant. Intentions to use the Standards among pre-service teachers increased from \(M=4.51(\text{SD}=0.77)\) to \(M=4.64(\text{SD}=0.75)\), as noted previously, but this increase was also not statistically significant.

Survey respondents were categorised into ‘extended’ users (i.e. proactive use of the Standards in activities intended to improve the quality of teaching and learning, such as self-reflection or lesson planning) or ‘procedural’ users (i.e. use of the Standards that is associated with mandatory requirements, such as registration). Variables that were associated with implementation intention were then investigated (through multiple linear regression analyses) with teachers who were high extended and low extended users, and those who were high procedural or low procedural users. It is important to note that the users in these groups overlap, that is, if a teacher is a high user of the Standards for procedural purposes, they are likely to be a low user of the Standards for extended purposes; similarly, low users of the Standards for procedural purposes tend to use the Standards frequently for extended purposes. Table 5 below indicates the statistically significant positive and negative associations between contextual, environmental, and accountability items, and extended and procedural uses of the Standards (refer to Data Supplement I for the details of the analysis). The table also demonstrates that positive or negative associations can be observed across multiple user groups for the same item, for example Collaboration with others at their school/education facility.

Therefore regardless of user type (extended/procedural) and intensity (high/low), collaboration with colleagues is a key activity within the intention to implement the Standards. Conversely, access to quality professional development, necessary resourcing, and materials for implementation is an item only associated positively with High Extended Users.

Table 5: Association between contextual, environmental and accountability items and implementation intentions for high and low users of the Standards for extended and procedural purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual/Environmental/Accountability Items</th>
<th>Extended High</th>
<th>Extended Low</th>
<th>Procedural High</th>
<th>Procedural Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of AITSL website resources (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception that the Standards facilitate professional recognition (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual employment status (-)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with others at their school/education facility (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to quality professional development, necessary resourcing and materials for implementation (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate resourcing including professional development and mentoring (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the Standards (-)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with colleagues (not necessarily within their school/education facility) (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/education facility uses the Standards to improve teaching practices (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with other teachers outside of school/education facility (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with other education stakeholders (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the Standards (+)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(+) indicates a positive association and (-) indicates a negative association with intentions to implement the Standards within the next six months
Overall, the results of these analyses indicated that there are a number of similar factors that are positively associated with implementation intentions among teachers, regardless of the type of use, for example, collaboration with colleagues, which was associated with implementation intentions for both high and low extended and procedural users. These findings provide further confidence that teachers engaging in implementation practices tend to be collaborating with others, which has been identified in the Case Studies, and also verified in the social network analysis noted in section 4.2.4. Conversely, casual employment status was negatively associated with implementation intentions in all groups except teachers who use the Standards frequently for procedural purposes. However, it is likely that many teachers who identified that their employment status was casual would not be in a particular school or education facility long enough to use the Standards frequently for procedural purposes, given that procedural purposes include annual performance reviews. These findings support the structural equation model of the process of implementation and mirror the facilitating factors (which were derived solely from qualitative data). This high level of convergences provides confidence that these factors do indeed support the use and intended use, regardless of whether the Standards are used frequently or infrequently for extended or procedural purposes.

**Case Studies**

The findings from the Case Studies yielded valuable information about the practices of implementation in schools and educational organisations. Use of the Standards in schools tended to focus on performance and development of teachers (including reviews and appraisals), professional learning (including mentoring, coaching and professional learning communities), and self-reflection and evaluation. For organisations, use of the Standards is largely associated with accreditation, registration, and supporting school staff in their implementation of the Standards. For instance, participants discussed how they contributed to change management by supporting school leaders.

> “I think it’s really important to support the schools with the integration with the Standards into all their practices, so that teachers’ — in a way that is not just separate to it — but it is an integral part of whatever they’re doing.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Overall, use of the Standards is increasing among those educators involved in day-to-day implementation, both in degree (how much) and diversity. That is, educators are doing more implementation in general and are implementing the Standards in different areas and in a variety of ways. Among educational organisations, use of the Standards has shifted from raising awareness and establishing registration and accreditation processes for the Standards, towards supporting school staff and their progression, by establishing collegial networks for knowledge and information sharing, and developing resources and materials such as self-assessment tools. Worth noting is how at the beginning of the Evaluation, use of the Standards was largely focussed on mandatory practices, including teacher certification and registration. At the end of the Evaluation, there is comparably a greater proportion of use focussed on supporting professional growth.

**VARIATION IN USE ACROSS GROUPS**

This section considers variation in use across educator groups, based on data from the two National Surveys. Variation in use of the Standards was evident both in the level of use (how much) and type of use.

**Prior Use of the Standards**

Prior use (defined as current use and use within the last year) differed significantly among teachers as a function of the level of experience. Teachers with the least experience (0-5 years) had significantly higher levels of use of the Standards compared with teachers with 6 - 40 years of experience ($p \leq .01$), and those with 41 plus years of experience ($p = .03$), as depicted in Figure 21.
Variation across Systems

Differences in reported use of the Standards were observed across different systems, that is, Government, non-Government Catholic, and non-Government Independent schools and education facilities. Specifically, leaders in the Catholic system had significantly lower reported use of the Standards than those in the Government system ($p=.04$).

Evaluation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: Final Report

November 2015 | 45
This finding diverges from those of the Case Studies (2014) and stakeholder interviews (2015), the analysis of which indicated that there were greater involvement and support from staff at the Catholic Education Offices for school leaders compared to the departments of education. Specifically, there were differences evident in the implementation activities across the systems. Various Catholic Education Office staff, for example, reported working more directly with schools to support them in their implementation of the Standards, than those working for other systems. Various Catholic Education Office staff also reported working with school leaders and teachers to ensure that they are aware of the programs and resources that are available for them to use. The leaders and teaching staff also corroborated talking to Catholic Education Office personnel in respective jurisdictions about what supports and resources they would need to help them to work more effectively.

“We have to work in partnership. Anyone who is in the Central Office role must be working in partnership with schools and school leaders, because if they aren’t then getting any traction in terms of a cultural change it is very, very hard to do.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Similarly, the stakeholder interviews (2015) supported the notion that the Catholic system was more collaborative with its schools compared to the other sectors.

“We’ve had some great conversations, too, with the Catholic non-systemic schools, so the colleges, in particular, but the non-systemic schools and they have obviously there’s been work behind the scenes in terms of Catholic Ed structure. What we’re getting is contact from those schools to us saying, ‘we’ve got a process here around our professional development program, which is obviously based on the performance and development framework, we want to talk to you about how that can be our process for provisional to full registration.’ So, as long as it’s got the elements in it that are mandated in that process, it’s part of their landscape, and I think that that’s fantastic that they see they’ve got a really robust structure, and then they say, ‘ah, I think that we can pop this process, and this outcome, in there and there.’” (Key Stakeholder, 2015)

The explanation of the divergence between these findings can be explained by the differences in methodology. That is, the National Survey is a ‘population’ level survey and the Case Studies and key stakeholder interviews are in-depth descriptions of particular contexts. Therefore, the differences between the findings from the two data sources (in this instance) can be explained by the fact that the qualitative data illustrated the descriptive contextual differences between the sectors, whereas the survey data indicated quantitative differences between school leaders in the Catholic system and school leaders in Government schools, across Australia without any information about the context.

While data collected during the 2013 National Forum and 2015 Stakeholder Interviews illustrated some differences in implementation activities (refer to Report I: Baseline Findings), the data collected during each of the National Surveys illustrates no significant differences in rates of uptake between the states and territories (refer to Data Supplement I). While there may not be differences in use in the quantitative data, there are reported differences in the qualitative data, which tend to be associated with whether a jurisdiction has had a standards-referenced approach prior to the introduction of the Standards. This divergent response speaks to the variation across groups, indicating there is still work to be done to ensure that the Standards are fully implemented.

Jurisdictions that draw upon a standards-referenced approach reveal that use of the Standards is predominantly initiated through transitioning and adaptation of existing materials and resources. To this extent, regulatory authorities were identified as playing a role in participating and supporting ITE accreditation programs and processes.

“I think too that, I know that because different states and territories have got different histories of both registration and Standards, the timing, the length of the history, can be significant...so, more than twenty years doesn’t leave you very many people at the older end who haven’t had some engagement. Ten years, as it is the case for us, leaves you with a very large cohort who taught perfectly happily for thirty years before there was such a thing as the teaching standards.” (Key Stakeholder, 2015)

In those jurisdictions without a standards-referenced approach (prior to the Standards), the initiation of implementation was more commonly through awareness-raising activities and development of organisational structures (i.e., working groups or documents to support implementation), as evidenced through the documentary analysis (refer to Data Supplement IV). Most
commonly, teacher regulatory bodies are developing guides to support implementation, but there is undoubtedly variation among jurisdictions in this area.

“You’ve got pockets of excellence. You’ve got some systems and sectors...so I think there are conversations that are occurring. Picking individual schools or even picking individual systems and sectors, it varies.” (Key Stakeholder, 2015)

The qualitative data from the Case Studies (2014) and key stakeholder interviews (2015) reiterated the influential role of school leaders in the implementation process. As to implementation practices, however, respondents (including school leaders) noted that those teachers in ‘middle leadership’ positions have been engaged in implementation practices. These teachers tend to be those who are most involved in developing and running professional learning communities and participating in networks of collaboration and discussion about the Standards.

“But I would say that in terms of our best take up and the people who are really using them, the best would be some of our middle leaders and some of our senior leaders, because we have been able to engage with them through leadership and also through the conversations about the higher levels...that is the group that is probably using them more on a day-to-day driving basis.” (Key Stakeholder, 2015)

This clearly demonstrates variation in depth of use, even though all educators are using the Standards to some extent.

4.2 PROXY INDICATORS FOR AND FACTORS FACILITATING UPTAKE OF THE STANDARDS

This section identifies and discusses factors that facilitate implementation of the Standards. In doing so, it will also be noted that these factors can be utilised as proxy indicators for uptake, that is, an indirect but related indicator that can represent uptake. Measuring uptake in this way allows monitoring and evaluation of implementation to continue. Where uptake is slow or not yet evident, proxy indicator can be used as a way to assess progress in implementation, and explain the reason why uptake may be slow. Similarly, the factors discussed will serve as a useful framework for reflecting upon schools’ preparedness for implementing the Standards; the factors include supportive leadership, school culture and adequate resources, and these have a key role in whether or not implementation occurs. The factors also support existing research into policy reform and management processes and closely align to literature pertaining to school and organisational leadership.

The findings of the literature review (refer to Data Supplement II for the full review) suggest that system structure, teacher engagement, performance development, collaborative culture, and sustainable development are all prominent characteristics of successful implementation. Implementers also need to have a positive attitude towards the reform, which is related to the opportunity or assurance that their voice has been heard in the policy design process (Fixsen et al., 2011). Further, they need supportive management and leadership, which support access to effective professional development activities such as mentoring or coaching (Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

“Implementation is best achieved by thinking about the implementation process systematically as a series of coordinated steps and that multiple activities that include assessment, collaboration and negotiation, monitoring, and self-reflection are required to enhance the likelihood that the desired goals of the innovation will be achieved.” (Meyer, Durlak & Wandersman, 2012:14)

Overall, readiness for implementation was mediated by previous experience of teaching standards and presence of an existing policy that supported the aims of the Standards. Specifically, jurisdictions with previous experience of teaching standards were able to make use of existing policies, procedures, processes and structures in their transition to the Standards. Comparatively, jurisdictions with no prior experience of teaching standards had to establish such policies, procedures, processes and structures first, before implementing the Standards. It can be said that these jurisdictions had a lower level of readiness for implementation. For schools, principals and organisations, readiness relates to access to resources, initiatives and other processes and procedures that support the implementation of the Standards. However, the ways in which readiness changes over time and how particular groups may have lower levels of readiness is not clear. This is because there is not one particular variable (e.g., geographic location) that is related to readiness. Rather, multiple variables, both internal and external to organisations influence readiness. The factors discussed below collectively provide an overall view of the readiness of individuals, schools and organisations to implement the Standards.
4.2.1 PROFESSIONALISATION AND PROFESSIONALISM

The concept of professionalisation emerged as a theme from the literature review, the National Forum and interviews, specifically that the Standards can facilitate the professionalisation of teachers. Fullan has written extensively on the notion of professionalisation and argues that it can be developed through the attainment of professional capital, which is made up of human, social and decisional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The Standards seek to improve teacher quality through a dual purpose of regulation and development of good practice. The Evaluation team wanted to investigate the extent to which the implementation of the Standards was related to teacher professionalisation that is how implementation practices, attitudes, and knowledge of the Standards relate to professionalisation. A factor analysis was conducted on a series of items from the National Survey that depict the three components of professionalisation (knowing, complying and acting, attitude and awareness) and factors that directly support or regulate the implementation of the Standards (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

The survey items included in the analysis were identified as being conceptually relevant to the three components of professionalisation (as reflected in the second column of the table below). In summary, the items include regulatory structures designed to support professionalism (registration and certification); teacher engagement in collaborative professional learning; use of the Standards as a benchmark for practice; and, attitudes towards the Standards as a reflection of teaching as a profession. The analysis demonstrated that the items could be grouped into the three forms of professional capital.

In total, 40 items were selected and a factor analysis was used to understand how these items related to each other and ultimately whether they formed an overall construct of professionalisation. Table 6 shows the factor loadings for each item used in the analysis. Factor loadings represent the degree of association between the individual item and the overall concept. They ranged from .84 to .35, which indicates a strong to moderate consistency with the overall concept.

Table 6: Variables and factor loadings that comprise professionalism (data from National Survey 1 and 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Related to Professionalism</th>
<th>Component of professionalisation</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Standards are assisting me/my pre-service teacher education students/teachers school to continuously develop my teaching practice</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teaching practice/teaching in my subject is informed by the Standards</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the implementation of the Standards will eventually have an impact on my students’ learning</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I collaborate with others at my school/educational facility/teacher education program to implement the Standards</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards to guide my daily practice as a teacher/to guide teaching my subject course or program</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the Standards are supported, accepted and used by the teaching profession as accurately depicting levels of practice and career stages</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is value placed on implementing the Standards by teachers and school leaders</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe there is consistency in understanding and communication about the Standards across the sectors and organisations involved</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My current schools/educational facility’s environment is conducive to implementing the Standards</td>
<td>Supporting factor</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I collaborate with other education stakeholders to implement the Standards</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that other educational stakeholders (e.g., principals, regulatory authorities, professional learning/development providers) understand the importance of the Standards</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bartlett’s test of Sphericity χ² (780) = 74775.12, p<.001 indicated that correlations between the items were sufficiently large to conduct the analysis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Related to Professionalism</th>
<th>Component of professionalisation</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Standards are the benchmark for my professional knowledge, practice and engagement</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that other educational stakeholders (e.g., principals, regulatory authorities, professional learning/development providers) support the implementation of the Standards</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for self-reflection</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for collaboration/discussion with colleagues/ pre-service teachers</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My current school/educational facility’s leadership is supportive of implementing the Standards</td>
<td>Supporting factor</td>
<td>.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive/I have provided feedback and appraisal on my teaching practice based on the Standards</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Standards provide a common language for the teaching profession</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are staff available to support pre-service/teachers and school leaders in implementing the Standards</td>
<td>Supporting factor</td>
<td>.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for lesson planning</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for building the capacity of my colleagues</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Standards are enhancing public recognition of and respect for the teaching profession</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders'/teachers'/peers’ knowledge of the content of the Standards has increased over the past 6 months</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are government and organisational policies in place to support the implementation of the Standards</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards to determine my personal professional development/learning needs</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many programs and resources available to support pre-service/teachers/teacher educators and school leaders in implementing the Standards</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Standards respect individual differences in teachers’ practice</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school/educational facility requires me to implement the Standards in your teaching practice</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for performance appraisal/review</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a sufficient level of resourcing in terms of financial support, professional development and mentoring, and materials to implement the Standards</td>
<td>Supporting factor</td>
<td>.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in all areas of Australia have equal access to the initiatives based on the Standards</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for teacher observation</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining standards for effective teaching is important for teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for mentoring or coaching colleagues</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daily teaching practice is/daily teaching practices at my school are informed by current research and best-practice in education</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards for teacher registration/accreditation processes</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The implementation of the Standards should be transferable across states and territories</td>
<td>Attitude &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and/or jurisdictional certification/accreditation processes</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting</td>
<td>.352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variables Related to Professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component of professionalisation</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I use the Standards while supervising a pre-service teacher</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting &lt;.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Standards are part of the induction program in my school/educational facility</td>
<td>Complying &amp; Acting &lt;.300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on a review of the content of the items, the Evaluation team deduced that while the items may reflect the three components of professionalisation and could also be grouped into the three forms of professional capital, in isolation they do not capture all aspects of professionalisation. This may be because the Standards alone are insufficient to achieve teacher professionalisation. Given this, the Evaluation team decided that the items in the factor analysis that all loaded together are most likely describing an aspect of or a precursor to professionalisation. Accordingly, the variable that the items have loaded on has been called ‘professionalism’.

To understand how this new variable of professionalism related to other aspects of the implementation, correlational analysis demonstrated that professionalism was positively and significantly associated with knowledge of the Standards ($r = .31$) and intention to use in the next 6 months ($r = .66$). The findings of this analysis are insightful for two reasons. First, it is evident that there is a relationship between implementation of the Standards and professionalism, likely because they are interdependent that is one reinforces the other. The second insight is that the items included in this analysis that make up the concept of professionalism could provide a basis upon which to guide the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and impact of the Standards.

### 4.2.2 SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP

Supportive and effective leaders were described as those who clearly understood the Standards, established clear reform goals for their school and were able to successfully mobilise and inspire staff members towards the achievement of those goals that were aligned to the Standards.

**Case Studies**

Throughout the Case Studies, schools, and teachers, in particular, acknowledged that successful implementation is dependent on supportive principals, deputy principals and leadership teams within the school, considering the competing demands and priorities that teachers often face. Further, schools and organisations are far more likely to affect successful and sustainable implementation of the Standards, when supported by leaders or mentors who demonstrate high levels of understanding of the Standards, and who establish an organisational structure of professional communication and trust among staff members.

“*I think encouragement that we have is that we have a supportive leadership team within our school who are constantly doing these check-ins and reviews and how are we going, where are we, helping together as a team set goals, that’s individually. And then as a whole school, quite often in our staff meetings or professional development days, there are always components where the focus is based around the Standards and where we are as a whole school and as a whole team to reflect upon and then plan further for improvement.*” (Case Study participant, 2014)

The findings of the Case Studies noted that staff was more likely to build positive attitudes towards the Standards when leaders model the successful use of the Standards in areas such as individual performance and development and allow opportunities for staff to become familiar and engage with the Standards in their daily practice. As noted previously (section 4.1) this positive attitude towards the Standards is associated with ongoing use of the Standards.

### RESOURCES

Participants involved in the Evaluation commonly cited the need for adequate time, financial resources, professional development, mentoring and support as being key to supporting the implementation of the Standards. The level of resources acted as both an enabler and barrier to implementation, depending on the degree to which they were adequate and accessible as well as the manner in which they were understood and enacted by school leadership.
National Forum

National Forum attendees from various jurisdictions reported using AITSL resources, such as the Illustrations of Practice and the My Standards app (Report I: Baseline Findings), and many of them noted that they were developing (or planning to develop) other resources (often e-books or PD booklets/pamphlets).

National Surveys

There were also significant levels of use of the AITSL resources among survey respondents in both 2013 and 2015, with approximately one-third of teachers, two-thirds of school leaders, three-quarters of teacher educators and half of pre-service teachers all reporting they have used the resources on the AITSL websites.

“I have actually been using the AITSL web site for a couple of years. I have participated pretty regularly on a lot of the modules, the professional learning modules they have in the learning centre.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

“I use the resources to inform my practice and further my professional development. I also use them to assist in mentoring my pre-service teachers.” (National Survey participant, 2013)

While the AITSL resources were seen as clearly important, participants suggested resources were of little use if teachers did not have adequate time to use resources and to learn about and engage with the Standards.

“Would like to see more things available cost free, i.e. [AITSL 360 degree] leadership survey. Last time I went to use it, it was going to cost $375.00 per leader. This is far too expensive when schools are already strapped for cash. Make these tools free to enable everyone in every school able to access.” (National Survey respondent, 2015)

“It’s a great resource but takes time to share, discuss, read/study...” (National Survey respondent, 2013)

“School culture and status has a massive impact on the availability of resources that individual teachers have—intellectual, financial, time. These factors also affect the support, or lack thereof, that staff receive through the process. The system is not equitable in terms of access.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

“Teachers across the school need support to access the STANDARDS, especially pre- New Scheme teachers. I feel like I as a pre-New Scheme teacher will be left behind.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

Teachers suggest they are time poor but would be more engaged with incentives such as protected time and financial resources.

Case Studies

School leaders and teachers in the schools involved in the Case Studies, for example, spoke about competing priorities and workload pressures that compromised their abilities to engage with the Standards. Staff in participating organisations, particularly in departments of education and Catholic education offices, also acknowledged that time was a major consideration for school leadership teams when considering how to best implement the Standards, suggesting it had been necessary for school leaders to allocate time to teachers in order to support engagement with the Standards.

“I think time is a massive barrier in schools, especially the level we’re staffed and funded at to get time off class for two teachers to meet and talk, it’s all after hours. Principals work miracles and were very creative about putting planning times and all that stuff. I think it’s very hard as a teacher to be implementing new things while you’ve still got 30 kids, it’s on the feet change, and that’s really exhausting.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Further, organisation and school staff participants explained that only those resources that involved practical guidance were useful. In addition, they also deemed case examples that showcased innovation at the whole school level as informative and useful for encouraging information sharing between schools.

Key stakeholder interviews

In 2015, interviews with key education stakeholders clarified the need for additional resources. In terms of the next steps for resourcing, there was a view among several stakeholders from departments of education, Catholic education offices, and
independent school associations that future support resources (such as those developed by AITSL) need to target the classroom much more efficiently and effectively, as using the Standards in the classroom is still a challenge for teachers and principals.

4.2.3 ALIGNMENT AND TRANSFERABILITY OF IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

This factor is associated with the alignment of teaching practice against the Standards and the transferability of these aligned practices across different contexts. The alignment phase tended to occur early in the process of implementation, and all educators reiterated the need to ensure that their practices could be transferred to different contexts.

National Forum

As noted previously, National Forum participants explained their focus on aligning existing practices and policies to the Standards, which involved the revision of documents to include:

- Language of the Standards
- Intended purpose of the Standards
- Regulations around teacher registration and accreditation
- Levels of career progression.

In addition, participants explained that alignment with existing system frameworks and mechanisms would be key to ensuring sustainable implementation within the jurisdictions. This alignment is an indicator of uptake.

“I think definitely its legitimacy to professional learning and I think that sends a most powerful message which is now aligned with the registration of teachers so I think that alignment and nexus is a good thing.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“That will certainly align with school priorities and system priorities and obviously, you know, with the national plan for school improvement I think we’re going to have the development of really effective professional learning community.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

Key stakeholder interviews

In the interviews with key stakeholders in 2015, participants explained that this alignment process, in some cases, was quite smooth. However, participants explained that their focus is to support local interpretations of the Standards, which sits alongside more procedural uses of the Standards that are associated with assuring a level of national consistency in the regulation of teaching.

Case Studies

The key finding that has been consistent across interviews with educators and key stakeholders from organisations is that the Standards provide a consistent language for the teaching profession and a definition of teacher quality that is transferable across contexts. Some organisations have now begun the initial process of using the Standards as a framework to support their strategic priorities. Performance and development are still the most common mechanism being aligned to the Standards.

“I guess we created the process. We aligned the Standards with what we have already been doing in the school and we are implementing that. I guess, our aim is that every teacher will understand all of the Standards and be able to determine [where they are at], ‘Okay, I am at a four [on a rubric].’” (Case Study participant, 2014).

Another example of implementation practice has been the alignment of professional development programs against the Standards. Teachers are required to align professional and career goals with the professional learning and development they need to do in order to reach those goals. The realignment to the Standards ensures that teachers have a measure and a reference point for improvement.

School leaders involved in the Case Studies explained that the Standards became concrete the first time they had performance conversations with staff that were aligned to the Standards, noting that the Standards provided a guide for professional learning and a structure for professional discussions between leaders and their staff. Some schools show evidence of incorporating the
Standards into stages of their performance and development cycle, such as reflection on professional learning, the setting of career and learning objectives, and providing and receiving professional feedback. To support self-assessment for performance and development, teachers are increasingly being encouraged to use the Standards as a tool to help guide self-reflection. The majority of those schools involved in the Evaluation discussed how they were using the Standards to inform their school performance and development processes. In some cases, schools utilised the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework or aspects of this framework. With regard to the specific operational practices involved in implementing the Standards, participants discussed the value of partnerships, mentoring and coaching, resource development, and professional learning.

“You know, it’s really just a help to me to focus my learning in areas that are important and need to happen. Then when I work with my coach, the coach helps me to develop actions and then I am accountable. So I actually have to go out and work on those things.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“So earlier this year, we had a look at all of the Standards, so we actually get a self-reflective assessment of where we think we sat across all of the different Standards. And then we identified what is the area that I want to work on, and within a school, we have professional knowledge, professional practice, action research, and that links into our professional development plan that we work on.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“I know that from the start of the year when I looked at where my deficits were and it wasn’t in developing those skills as a leader, and also that then helped me inform my PDP (Professional Development Plan). I have been trying to be more active in making sure that I’m being—making effective leadership decisions and behaving as an effective leader.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“So I think there is now certainly a more explicit expectation about the alignment of the Australian Professional Standards and the whole performance and development process. I think there has been a requirement on the part of the workforce to develop a greater knowledge of the Standards as well because it is very much a clear expectation.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

National Surveys

Some teachers have reported changes to professional practice as a result of the implementation of the Standards. These changes are largely evident in identifying needs for professional development as well as teachers reporting uses of the Standards for self-reflection and lesson planning—49.9 per cent of teachers indicated they were using the Standards for their lesson planning (2015).

“I have used the APST to track the progression of my knowledge of the relevant pedagogical models and approaches to teaching and learning.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

4.2.4 COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

Communication is another key facilitating factor of implementation. Poor implementation can be attributed to poor message translation; implementers often do not understand the essence of the policy to be translated into practice (Elmore, 1980). In some instances, an intermediary is necessary to help translate the policy into practice. Coburn (2005) and Honig (2004) illustrated the interactions between government and non-Government organisations (e.g., professional associations) in policy implementation, describing how non-government organisations are frequently able to mediate the message between policymakers and the implementers. Educators’ beliefs, knowledge, and experiences, as well as local agendas and the broader context, also influence the ways in which policy is interpreted and implemented (Spillane et al., 2002).

National Forum

Forum participants explained that (in 2013) they were working on ensuring that communication about the Standards to educators was clear. At the same time, they noted there was still much confusion regarding the purpose and role of the Standards, as some jurisdictions had not yet agreed to implement the Standards and others were still negotiating agreements with teacher unions and other organisations, such as regulatory authorities.
Based on the National Forum, collaboration tended to be between departments of education and regulatory authorities, which saw the departments supporting the regulatory authorities to develop and/or align registration processes and raise awareness about the Standards among teachers and school leaders.

**National Survey**

Similarly, in the first National Survey, the most common site of discussion and collaboration was ‘with my colleagues’ and this finding persisted for the second National Survey $M=2.82$($SD=1.50$). The findings of both National Surveys indicated that the strongest networks of discussion and collaboration are among colleagues within schools.

“It’s how we assess our students whilst on prac and we provide PD to our partner schools around some of the Standards e.g. classroom management.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

**Case Studies**

The strong networks of discussion and collaboration among colleagues evident in the survey data were confirmed by Case Study participants, who articulated that professional learning communities were being developed for the purposes of knowledge sharing and supporting one another. Collaboration between departments of education and schools was also evident in the Case Studies, where school leaders, in particular, were working with department representatives to share their knowledge and experiences about implementation as part of disseminating this information to other school leaders. In the Case Studies, many educators considered the creation of a common language for teacher quality and practice a major part of implementing the Standards. This common language supports consistent communication within the education sector around the implementation of the Standards.

“I choose to implement the Standards because they make sense and may help inform practice and give us a common language when we are talking about what we are doing.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

“I think it has to start in a personal space before the collaboration...it is personal and building confidence that facilitates and makes collaboration concrete. For us, the main facilitator of collaboration is professional learning communities that developed as a result of the implementation of the standards.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Overall, the findings of the triangulation indicate that communication associated with the implementation of the Standards is increasing among stakeholders, and implementers are using the language of the Standards in this communication. The communication is particularly frequent within school networks and tends to be in the form of discussion within professional learning communities. Educators are also using the language of the Standards to communicate with each other about their respective approaches to implementation.

“Yes, look, I think what it does is to ... all of those things that we all talk about all the time. They provide a common language, they describe the work, they provide aspirations.” (Key stakeholder, 2015)

The nature and focus of communication and collaboration around the implementation of the Standards have evolved over the course of the Evaluation. For instance, at the beginning of the Evaluation, collaboration was largely conducted in order to raise awareness about the Standards and to ensure that policies for new teachers working towards full registration were commensurate among departments of education, catholic education offices, and other system education authorities. However over time, collaboration became more focussed on sharing knowledge about effective implementation practices at the school level, indicating progress from a predominant focus on the regulatory implementation of the Standards (procedural use) towards an increasing focus on the implementation of the Standards to support the professional growth of teachers (extended use).

**NETWORKS AND COLLABORATION: SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS**

To graphically present the networks of discussion and collaboration for the implementation of the Standards, survey respondents were asked to indicate how often they collaborated with a series of organisations and groups (provided in Table 7
below). This data was then analysed using social network analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to illustrate the relative strengths of networks for different educator groups (teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators), thus enabling a better understanding of which existing networks can support and drive implementation.

Table 7: Organisation abbreviations for SNA graphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Full name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>Staff members at AITSL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CathEd</td>
<td>Staff at the Catholic Education Office within state or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll.oth school</td>
<td>Colleagues at other schools within state or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll.oth school/state</td>
<td>Colleagues at other schools in other states and territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dep of Ed</td>
<td>Staff at the Department of Education within state or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EduFac</td>
<td>Educational Facilities (teacher educators only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA</td>
<td>Staff at Independent Schools Associations within state or territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExtOrg</td>
<td>External organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProfAssoc</td>
<td>Professional associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrinA</td>
<td>Principal associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLPD</td>
<td>Professional learning/development providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>Colleagues within schools/educational facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TeaEd</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TeacherReg</td>
<td>Regulatory Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UnionRep</td>
<td>Teacher education union representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>Universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through the analysis of this data, Multi-dimensional Scaling (MDS) Social Network graphs were developed (Figures 23, 24 and 25) to provide a spatial representation of the networks of discussion and collaboration with other groups and organisations associated with the implementation of the Standards. Each of the circular nodes in the graphs represents a distinct group/organisation. The location and arrangement of the nodes are determined by an equation that combines the organisations/groups that individuals communicate and collaborate with and the reported frequency of discussion and collaboration between the respondent and that particular organisation/group. Each graph depicts the overall result of this analysis across all teachers, school leaders and teacher educators who completed the National Survey in 2015.

The important features of each graph are where the nodes are located in the network, known as centrality, and their proximity in relation to one another. The centrality of the nodes is a reflection of the frequency of reported discussion and collaboration, that is, the nodes farthest away from the centre of each graph represent those groups/organisations that survey respondents less frequently engage with to implement the Standards. The proximity of the nodes to each other is also important. Nodes that are close together indicate regular collaboration between individuals from the respective groups. The font size and line thickness in each graph also indicates the strength of the discussion and collaboration between individuals and respective groups/organisations.

**TEACHERS**

Figure 23, illustrates the organisations and groups that teachers reported to have communicated and collaborated with in their implementation of the Standards. The graph suggests that teachers communicate and collaborate most with three groups about the Standards: (1) colleagues in their own schools (Colleagues); (2) colleagues from other schools (Coll.oth School); and (3) Professional Learning/Development Providers (PLDP).

The two closest nodes in Figure 23 are colleagues in their own schools and colleagues in other schools (within their respective states and territories). This means that teachers are much more likely to collaborate with both of these groups and at a high frequency in comparison with other groups/organisations. In contrast, teachers are the least likely to collaborate with teacher regulatory bodies or AITSL.
Figure 24 shows that school leaders tend to collaborate most with colleagues in their own school (Colleagues) and colleagues in other schools within their state or territory (Coll.oth school). The proximity of the nodes also suggests that school leaders are likely to collaborate with both of these groups at a high frequency. As for teachers, school leaders are least likely to collaborate with other organisations or AITSL.

---

2 The nodes representing staff members and AITSL and teacher regulatory boards/authorities are very small and so the font size for these two nodes does not indicate a strong network of discussion and collaboration. The expanded view is simply to enhance readability.
Teacher educators who participated in the National Surveys were also asked to report the frequency with which they discuss and collaborate with others in the implementation of the Standards. Respondents indicated they discuss and collaborate with colleagues, departments of education and sector education offices for information about the Standards. As evident in Figure 25, teacher educators collaborate most with their colleagues, other education faculties, and departments of education. Cross-sectoral collaboration is evident (with departments of education, Catholic education offices, and independent school associations) and so too is collaboration with providers of professional development. In contrast to the social network representations of teachers and school leaders, the network of teacher educators indicates a higher level of diversity, which is perhaps unsurprising given that teacher educators in general are likely to have current and former students across the different sectors. The analysis also suggests that these educators are working with a diverse range of groups/organisations (beyond ITE facilities) and at similar frequencies to support the implementation of the Standards.

3 The nodes representing staff members and AITSL and other organisations are very small and so the font size for these two nodes does not indicate a strong network of discussion and collaboration. The expanded view is simply to enhance readability.
Overall, the findings indicate that collaboration to implement the Standards was occurring in a variety of forms and at a range of levels. The National Forum data indicated that collaboration tended to be between departments of education and regulatory authorities, which saw the departments supporting the regulatory authorities to develop and/or align registration processes and raise awareness about the Standards among teachers and school leaders. However, the findings of the final National Survey indicate that the strongest networks of discussion and collaboration are between colleagues within schools. This is confirmed by school staff that participated in the Case Studies and noted that professional learning communities were being developed in schools for the purposes of knowledge sharing and supporting each other in classroom implementation. Collaboration between departments of education and schools was also evident across data collection activities—school leaders, in particular, were working with department representatives to share their knowledge and experiences about implementation as part of disseminating this information to other school leaders. These changes are encouraging because they suggest that collaboration and communication have shifted from raising awareness about the Standards and aligning existing policies, towards information sharing about implementation at the school level.

4.2.5 CULTURE OF IMPLEMENTATION

A more general but important factor that facilitates implementation within schools, education facilities, and teacher education providers was a positive and supportive learning culture. Specifically, a positive and supportive learning culture was described as an environment in which the Standards (and their implementation) were accepted and perceived as a valuable vehicle through which to improve one’s own practice. Extending beyond perceived value, this culture was also characterised by colleagues supporting one another and being open to sharing what is working and what is not working in their own classroom.

National Forum

In the National Forum, some participants noted that while they thought a positive learning culture among educators would support the implementation of the Standards, the teaching profession as a whole did not display it (in 2013). While this view was not pervasive among Forum participants, and differed depending on sector or level of implementation, teachers who participated in the first National Survey (2013) tended to agree with it.
“Nothing sits independently of the industrial battles, long history of accountability and surveillance of teachers and monitoring performance, continues to have a mixed message about accountability and quality measures.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

**Case Studies**

The majority of teachers who participated in the Case Studies (2014) demonstrated a positive culture of implementation. School leaders reflected that while there often would be a small number of teachers who are hesitant about the implementation of the Standards, these teachers are likely to change their views if the majority of teachers are reflecting a positive culture of implementation.

“What the AITSL Standards enabled me to do was the work that was connecting me with the student. It gave me a framework for talking about the work…I found it freeing and I also found it professionally very affirming, because these were the things that I was on about.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Teachers explained their concern around use of the Standards as a tool for teacher evaluation; they expressed anxiety regarding the potential for the Standards to be used in an overly judgemental, rather than aspirational or developmental way. Participants noted that if there were imbalance between the judgemental and developmental purposes of the Standards, the culture of development would be disrupted.

“In [organisation name] we were very conscious of how easily an instrument and a resource like the Standards can flip from being a developmental, aspirational resource to an accountability resource...we were also very conscious there were times when, actually, it's an excellent resource for accountability...so what we were doing was really walking these two lines...but in the main, the profession engages with them as a professional resource to develop and improve practice in an ongoing way for everybody.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

School leaders and organisational staff explained that a culture of learning is developing among the profession, although the degree to which this can be attributed solely to the implementation of the Standards cannot be determined with certainty. However, it can be said that there is a relationship between positive experiences of implementation and a culture of learning being developed and reinforced. There are also other factors that facilitate implementation—these have been articulated in Report I: Baseline Findings and confirmed by the findings from follow-up data collection activities in 2015.

“Because it is new, and I would probably say that our culture is a little bit resistant to change. In being an independent school, with a lot of long serving staff, we probably...generally speaking there are some staff members that are very set in their ways and sort of don't adjust to change very well, or are quite resistant and need a lot of convincing.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

**National Surveys**

A relationship between a ‘positive experience of implementation’ and a ‘positive culture of learning among the profession’ was confirmed through interpretive statistical analysis of the data from both National Surveys. That is, if individuals did not have a positive attitude towards the Standards, they were less likely to have intentions to implement the Standards (refer to Data Supplement I for analysis details).

Across the Evaluation data, it was clear that there were shifts in cultures of learning, stimulated by knowledge about the Standards, common language, communication and development of learning collaborations. These findings indicate the interrelationship among most of the facilitating factors. As implementation progresses, these factors become more apparent and strengthen.

### 4.2.6 TEACHER ENGAGEMENT AND PRACTICE INFORMED BY THE STANDARDS

The final and most proximal facilitating factor for uptake is teacher engagement and practice being informed by the Standards. Overall, the degree of teacher engagement and extent to which practice was reported as being informed by the Standards changed over time.
National Survey

Findings from the triangulation of Evaluation data and National Surveys reveal that teachers are engaged with the implementation of the Standards particularly with colleagues at their own school. Their level of engagement has also increased over time, from $M=2.76 (SD=1.62)$ in 2013 to $3.00 (SD=1.53)$ in 2015. The aspect of implementation that is most closely associated with teacher practice is the development of professional learning communities within schools.

Case Studies

Specifically, these communities are often clustered around subject areas in secondary schools, with a focus on content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and reflective practice. There is also evidence from the Case Studies that the Standards are being used by the teaching profession as a resource for defining quality teaching and a basis for discussions on improving the classroom practice of individual teachers, which was particularly evident in the Secondary sector.

“The Standards really are based in common sense. They are what we, as teachers, strive to do anyway. It provides a checklist almost. It is something you can check that you are doing.” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Overall, teachers are engaged in, and are helping to drive, the implementation of the Standards, particularly in the area of professional development. Self-directed professional learning communities have been formed and are being utilised to share thoughts on effective implementation of the Standards in the classroom.

Key stakeholder interviews

Follow up stakeholder interviews in 2015 indicated perceptions among participants that implementation has resulted in a greater understanding of the intended purpose of the Standards among teachers (i.e., enhancing teacher quality, and a shift in culture for the profession). However, the majority of participants noted that there is some way to go before improvements in teacher quality and students’ learning outcomes can be measured.

“For the mentors or the supervisors in the schools that are observing these pre-service teachers in the classroom, they may not have been really held to the standards themselves. Now they are being asked to provide feedback against the standards...people are having to change their practice because they are being required to, rather than provide subjective feedback, to actually (this is experienced teachers) get their heads around the Standards so that they can give constructive feedback to the pre-service teachers that are in their classroom.” (Key Stakeholder, 2015)

4.3 SUMMARY

This section has summarised the current level of uptake of the Standards and how implementation has progressed since 2013. It has presented and discussed the factors that facilitate uptake of the Standards and how these factors can be also considered proxy indicators for uptake. Overall, the level of uptake has increased nationally, from 2013 to 2015, even though there are differences among position types, sectors, systems and jurisdictions.

In addition, the ways in which the Standards are being used by stakeholders and implementers have expanded since 2013. Initially, the Standards were being used mainly for procedural purposes (purposes associated with mandatory requirements, such as registration). At the end of the Evaluation, the Standards are being used for both procedural and extended purposes, with extended use primarily associated with self-reflection, professional learning and discussion, and growth. Collaboration has emerged as a significant factor that can support implementation. It can positively influence both procedural and extended use of the Standards and is associated consistently and significantly with intentions to continue implementing the Standards across all groups regardless of context.
The proxy indicators of implementation (also facilitating factors) demonstrate a high degree of progression in the implementation of the Standards since 2013. As an example, a positive culture of implementation has developed particularly in jurisdictions without a previous standards-referenced approach. This culture is one that supports ongoing professional learning and the notion of career stages, and encourages collaboration and information sharing among educators. This finding is encouraging considering these jurisdictions did not have a history of implementing standards for teachers.

The progress in implementation of the Standards involves all factors in the process model of implementation (refer to Figure 5) as well as the facilitating factors. While the progress is encouraging, there is some way to go before sustainable behaviour change or implementation is evident at a national level, not least because implementation of the Standards is still in its early stages.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This Evaluation tells the story of a complex national education reform initiative that is progressing well in the early stage of implementation. The findings of the Evaluation indicate that the Standards have become embedded within the education profession, and use of the Standards is evident across Australia. National use of the Standards is largely at the procedural level (focused upon mandatory requirements) even though it is apparent that pockets of extended use are emerging over time. Considering the initial plan for implementation as described in the initial program logic (see Figure 2, section 3.1), the tasks described in the logic have been achieved. An encouraging result, all teachers, principals, schools and jurisdictions now appear to have access to the Standards and have used these to some extent, albeit to varying degrees and depths.

Progress of Implementation

While teachers display knowledge of and confidence in discussing the Standards, the level, nature, and impact of implementation in classrooms remain unclear. Hence, even though the Standards as a framework for good teaching practice have fulfilled their purpose, the depth of impact of their implementation (especially into classrooms) must now be developed. If this kind of impact is achieved, the implementation of the Standards can be considered as establishing the foundation for substantive reform in Australian education that will ultimately impact on student learning outcomes.

As the depth and nature of implementation varies across groups of educators, a diverse range of policy and professional implications are beginning to emerge as a consequence of the implementation of the Standards. These implications indicate that implementation has been, to some extent, a complex and intricate solution for the ‘wicked problem’ of how best to boost quality teaching to enhance quality learning in Australia (Williams, 2014). After all, teaching standards are fundamentally meant to bring about professional reform (Dilkes, Cunningham & Gray, 2014; Dinham et al, 2008). The attainment of this is dependent on the degree to which educators ensure that use of the Standards is being extended towards developmental purposes that provide a foundation for quality teaching and improved student learning.

As Rogers (2010) suggested, people will embrace innovation at differential rates and some will never comply. There are a group of educators who will be intractable in relation to the adoption of any standards. Others will simply comply with the necessary procedural uses of the Standards. But this Evaluation shows that the majority of educators know about, have begun to implement and generally have positive attitudes towards the Standards. The next phase of implementation needs to ensure that educators utilise the Standards to reinforce quality teaching and education.

While the Evaluation was tasked with investigating the use, effectiveness and immediate impact of implementation, it was also designed to understand and explain the implementation process. In so doing, the Evaluation was able to generate insights into the implementation of education policy at a national level, and this enabled the identification of lessons for education policy initiatives.

Evidently, many policymakers, educational leaders, teacher educators and principals are knowledgeable of, and are making efforts to implement, the Standards. In particular, they are aligning existing policies and procedures to the Standards and are continuing to communicate and promote the Standards within and across their networks. While differences across groups within education are to be expected given the reality of diverse contexts within a federalised system, those groups that have had positive experiences with implementation, and are sharing these experiences, have created traction and are garnering support for driving implementation within their networks. Accordingly the Evaluation has identified strong school-level and
school-department level networks of discussion and collaboration about the Standards (refer to section 4.2.4 and Report I: Baseline Findings), which are positive indicators of implementation. Similarly, at a national level, the language and idea of the Standards have been adopted by the education sector and are beginning to influence the teaching profession. Furthermore, the Standards are being utilised in planning for professional learning, performance and development frameworks, annual teaching plans, and whole school planning and strategy. Despite these gains, the Standards are yet to become fully embedded in classroom practice – considerably more time and effort will be needed to effect widespread change in professional culture and ultimately student learning and outcomes. However, the foundations for this change are firmly in place, evidenced by the rate and nature of uptake of the Standards across the education sector, which is more developed than generally expected after only a short period of time (Dilkes, Cunningham & Gray, 2014; Honig, 2006).

Turning to literature that discusses policy implementation Berman (1980, 1978) suggests three phases of implementation — mobilisation, implementation, and institutionalisation. This Evaluation suggests that the Standards are entering a new phase of implementation, situated somewhere between implementation and institutionalisation (and more so in some sectors than others). To fully institutionalise the Standards across Australia, it is essential that AITSL and the education sector nationally do not lose sight of continuing the implementation process and maintaining the balance between procedural (judgemental) and extended (developmental) uses of the Standards. While policies and reforms often change rapidly, the Standards are sufficiently embedded in the minds of many educators so as to lead to reforms than can have considerable impact on teaching and learning over the next generation.

To draw together the ideas that explain the findings of the Evaluation, it is useful to refer back to the analogy of a Rubik’s cube (Figure 26). Previously, we have utilised the analogy of a Rubik’s cube to explain the degree of implementation of the Standards within the context of whole system reform (Figure 26). In carrying this analogy forward, the fundamental elements for successful implementation of the Standards at a national level appear to be in place, but depth of implementation is yet to be attained because the internal mechanisms necessary to support movement and adaptation of these elements require further development. Similarly, the implementation of the Standards appears to have taken place, yet the mechanism for in-depth use and impact, which to some extent occurs as a consequence of multiple spheres of influence, are not yet in place. These mechanisms are multiple and are hidden within the layers and individual configurations of the blocks. Ultimately, this in-depth use is the responsibility of the whole education sector, just as in the Rubik’s cube where movement of one block has a flow-on effect on all other blocks within the cube.

For any reform or innovation to have far-reaching impact and sustainable implementation, it needs to be contextually adaptable, operationalised broadly within the target sector, and translated into meaningful practice. While pockets of excellence associated with implementation of the Standards are evident, these optimal conditions (which are described by the facilitating factors in section 4.2) within which these pockets of excellence were established are yet to be fully realised within the whole education sector. As noted at a procedural level, the use of the Standards is identifiable in policy documents such as school plans, performance reviews, and educators’ language (see Data Supplement III: Stakeholder Interview and Documentary Analysis). However, extended use of the Standards for the purposes of professional reflection, discussion and growth – in order to improve student learning and outcomes – requires further development and diffusion. This defines the next, possibly final, phase of implementation of the Standards.

Figure 26: Rubik’s cube analogy of the implementation of the Standards
Overall, the Evaluation findings and conclusion should be envisaged as a baseline for progress towards long-term, generational outcomes (enhanced teacher quality) as a result of implementation. Thus, it is suggested that implementation continues to be monitored to ensure that progress towards generational change can be captured.

5.1 EXPLAINING THE RATE OF UPTAKE

In comparison to other national social policy reforms across different sectors, the rate of uptake of the Standards within the education sector has been much more rapid. Two examples of other reforms provide some useful insights, namely the collection of SunSmart policies and programs and smoking legislation and cessation programs.

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world (Montague, Borland & Sinclair, 2001), this coupled with breakdown of the ozone layer increasing exposure to UV rays in parts of Australia sparked the need for widespread social policy reform, the purpose of which was to change the whole of society’s approach to the sun and sun exposure. Over a 20 year period (1980 – 2000), social marketing, school policy, mass media, commercial approaches, health promotion and education programs were conducted. In Victoria, an accreditation program for primary schools has been in operation since 1993, where schools can be accredited to SunSmart Schools (71% of all primary schools were accredited in 2000), which requires compulsory wearing of hats if playing outside, scheduling outdoor activities in periods of reduced UV exposure and including sun protection in the curriculum (Montague et al., 2001). Over a twenty year period of a collection of reforms in workplaces, schools, organisations and across all sectors of government have been implemented, and have been deemed effective. After two decades of implementing these reforms incidence rates of skin cancer have plateaued after decades of increases (Montague et al., 2001; Shih, Carter, Mihalopoulos & Vos, 2009; Jones, Beckmann & Rayner, 2008).

Another example of a social policy reform is smoking cessation and legislation. The collection of policies, programs and a range of interventions were implemented and it took over 50 years for public health changes to be apparent (Makin, Warne, Dobbinson, Wakefield & Hill, 2013) despite the fact that a high degree of implementation of reforms was evident (Fictenberg & Glantz, 2002). Reductions in prevalence of smoking and consumption of cigarettes per capita did occur and continue to do so but it took decades for these trends to be evident in data (Makin et al., 2013).

In both SunSmart and smoking cessation and legislation similar models of behaviour change were utilised, that is social cognitive models of change. The social cognitive theory of behaviour change states that changing attitudes, beliefs and knowledge collectively create an intention to implement the desired behaviour change (uptake of sun protection or smoking cessation). This model has been found to apply to the implementation of the Standards as well, as it is reflected in the structural equation model of implementation as noted in section 4.0.

In addition to the social cognitive theory of change, both SunSmart and smoking policy reforms also incorporated a socio-ecological view with respect to reform. Specifically the reforms were designed to create supportive environments for the behaviour change and in particular make structural and systemic changes where required to support the behaviour change, for instance legislation concerning smoking in public places, schools and workplaces and the provision of sun protection in building designs (e.g., shade cloths) (Montague et al., 2001; Fictenberg & Glantz, 2002).

What both of these ‘living’ examples of social policy reform suggest is that it can take a considerable period of time of good implementation, program design, research and evaluation before change is evident in the desired outcome. They also both (and particularly in the case of smoking cessation) highlight the importance of supportive environments including peers and colleagues being supportive and encouraging of the behaviour change (Ajzen, 1991).

Another example with more direct relevance would be the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, which was also experiencing a relatively slow and complicated implementation process (at the national level) for a variety of reasons. As noted in the 2014 Review of the Australian Curriculum;

“...the implementation picture is extremely confusing and provides little assurance that the Australian Curriculum is being implemented, as intended, across the nation.” (Department of Education, 2014: 106)

This quote directly reflects the complexity of education policy implementation that was noted early on in the report in section 3.1, and in the discussion of the Rubik’s cube as a metaphor for the implementation of the Standards (Honig, 2006). In fact a recent review of several studies of education policy implementation in the United States indicated similar experiences with a
‘confusing’ array of information about implementation or non-implementation (Young & Lewis, 2015). Hence education policy implementation takes time and goes through many stages; thus the benchmarks and expectations about the time and extent of implementation of the Standards are not clear, even in the academic literature (Young & Lewis, 2015).

Thus it is useful to see such large-scale, policy-driven social change as generational. While the rate of uptake of the Standards appears to be faster than expected (in comparison with other policy reforms discussed above), widespread changes in teaching practice that lead to improvements in student achievement are considered a much longer-term outcome. The education sector is a complex system, and complex systems take time to change. The implementation process for the Standards, via a variety of mechanisms provided by AITSL and organisations across the states and territories, has been inclusive, aiming to encourage teachers, leaders and stakeholders to trial the Standards.

The need for the Standards was established with considerable consultation with educators. Further, demonstrating implementation and impact through the Evaluation has also allowed the implementation process to be inclusive by utilising a high degree of consultation. Despite some variation in the level of adoption, the platform for the reform of teaching in Australia has been established, with various groups of stakeholders and implementers using the Standards in some form, albeit to varying degrees and in a variety of ways. However, it is anticipated that in seeking to increase the extended uses of the Standards (to achieve the long-term aims of the Standards), the complexity of the system will present a challenge to educators. Report II: Case Studies noted how, as implementation increases, so too does complexity. From further analysis, it is now clear that as extended use of the Standards increases so too does complexity of implementation, particularly if educators pursuing extended uses are not within a group of educators who are also doing so (Williams, 2014).

Taking the analogy of the Rubik’s cube, the examples of other public policy reforms as well as the findings from the Evaluation, it is now useful to present the final and revised Theory of Change – Life Course Model (also presented in section 4.1). As has been described, the Evaluation has been able to articulate a causal behaviour change model that describes the processes associated with the implementation of the Standards. The behaviour change process is illustrated in the Life Course Model of implementation (Figure 27). The Evaluation has demonstrated that once awareness is achieved, a positive attitude towards the Standards begins to form; and, as knowledge about the Standards begins to develop, educators begin to use the Standards. If their experience of use is positive, their attitude and knowledge will continue to increase leading to increased implementation. The model takes into account that implementation is not linear and is underpinned by context (Mourshed, Chijioke & Barber, 2007). As noted in section 4.2, we suggest that implementation is not yet at the peak of the curve, which is where impact and stakeholder ownership become evident and embedded. The implementation of the Standards is now sitting at ‘behaviour change’, which suggests that schools, organisations and educators are now using the Standards to inform practice and are working towards sustainable implementation. Once behaviour change occurs, impact that is attributable to implementation will be measurable and further conclusions can be drawn about the ideal conditions for implementation.
Variation in degree and level of implementation of the Standards is a significant issue in education but not unexpected given the complex and diverse nature of the sector. Utilising all the data collected, we can conceptually estimate the levels of variation for different roles and user groups. This figure does not represent statistical variance (although we demonstrate through the survey significant levels of variance between time points); rather, it represents a judgment about the degrees of variation in implementation based on the triangulation of data across stakeholders involved in implementation (refer to Report I: Baseline Findings for information about the spheres of influence).

As illustrated by Figure 28, schools and teachers demonstrate higher levels of variation in their degree of and quality of use of the Standards (both procedural and extended). The Evaluation has consistently demonstrated that teachers have the greatest
degree of variation in the adoption of the Standards, in particular those teachers who have been in the profession for more than six years compared to their more junior colleagues. While there are many suggested reasons for this differential rate of uptake, the high level of uptake among teachers in the pre-six year teaching period indicates that it is among this group that the Standards are having the greatest traction and are supporting these educators on their career pathway.

5.1.2 ADAPTABILITY

It is important to note that some level of variation is inevitable in Australia’s education context and is in fact necessary. We are referring specifically to the type of variation that can be viewed as ‘adaptability’. Given the diverse nature of the education sector in Australia, it is critical that the Standards are seen as adaptable to different contexts while maintaining the fidelity of their Theory of Change. Operationalising the Standards in ways that provide teachers with the clarity and resources to translate and adapt the Standards to their practice and particular settings appears to be a necessary next step. This can include exemplars and metrics of impact for teachers to use and understand what to look for in practice.

According to stakeholders involved in the Evaluation and the validation process of the Standards, the Standards are broad enough to be adaptable in different contexts. Therefore, building exemplars and metrics should be possible.

“...within the Standards, it covers all areas of the teaching profession and what you should be doing as a teacher. So, if you are doing your job properly, then you will be providing quality education to Aboriginal students and we’ll start seeing, hopefully, improved outcomes.” (Key stakeholder, 2015)

According to those participants involved in the Evaluation, the Standards are appropriate for most contexts and are aligned closely to teaching practice in Australia. However, questions have been raised about the applicability and appropriateness of the Standards for use in specific areas, such as remote communities. In particular, many teachers consider it difficult in their specific school to develop the skills of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as dictated by the Standards. The common argument is that with so few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools, it is difficult to implement the appropriate practices.

“It’s the expectation...that teachers know how to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students, which is great when you’re talking about graduate standards, but when you’re talking about proficient standards, it’s dependent upon whether they actually have those students in their classes. We’re taking the view that cultural competence is a measure of whether they’d be able to do that, and we’ve said to the mentor.” (National Forum participant, 2013)

“There are, for example, no indigenous students at my school, so I cannot demonstrate my ability to cater to their needs.” (National Survey participant, 2015)

The diversity of school communities in Australia presents an opportunity for extended use of the Standards that incorporates this diversity. This would help provide enrichment for the development and delivery of professional learning programs and opportunities for teachers to collaborate outside of their proximal networks (for example across schools and sectors). Some professional associations (such as Australian Council of TESOL Associations, Australian Library and Information Association, and Early Childhood Australia, as discussed in Report II: Case Studies) are taking advantage of this opportunity by extending the applicability of the Standards to support educators to address diversity within their classroom, school or sector. For example, ACTA are one of the first organisations to develop an elaboration of the Standards for use in English as an Additional Language (EAL) contexts (ACTA, 2014).

5.2 IMPACT

The implementation of the Standards is having an impact on the education sector across a variety of levels and areas with, not surprisingly, higher impact – in terms of intensity, complexity and breadth – associated with more developed implementation processes and practices.

Many Evaluation participants reflected upon the changes they had observed as a result of implementation of the Standards and noted that implementation became more of a whole-school initiative with a focus more on professional growth than compliance (positive learning culture). It is clear also that discussion about teaching is now starting to be based on, and utilise, the language
of the Standards. There are strong networks of communication and collaboration between ITE providers, teacher employers and regulatory authorities, and a perception that teachers are better prepared to enter the workforce. Teachers are starting to take more control over assessing their professional development needs, and identifying opportunities to meet these needs with their school leader. Similarly, certification processes have enabled more accomplished teachers to be identified as mentors for other teachers, and this coincides with the development of professional learning communities. It can be argued that a greater degree of professionalism is also emerging (an aspect of professionalisation), as indicated by developments in professional dialogue, changes to practice, and the expansion of collegial networks (Fullan 2000; Ingvarson, 2002).

Professionalisation is a multidimensional concept comprising attitudes and awareness, knowledge and skills, and use or behaviour (see Figure 29). It is realised by what Fullan and Hargreaves (2012) describe as the notion of professional capital within the teaching profession, which is envisaged as the collection of technical expertise teachers are required to possess. Professional capital policies and practices are a means of transforming teaching and are built upon ‘high levels of education’ and ‘strong practice within schools’ (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Specifically, professional capital is a combination of human, social and decisional capital.

The Evaluation has clearly demonstrated that educators are using the Standards to make an effort to know and understand their profession, and some are translating this knowledge into classroom practice; the combination of this with an attitudinal state that acknowledges the worth of the Standards and taking action relates to the notion of professionalisation. More importantly, the next phase of the implementation needs to work toward increasing the number of teachers (in particular) that positively engage with the Standards. The Evaluation, particularly through the Case Studies and findings of the social network analysis, has also demonstrated the emergence of ‘professional learning communities’ (Dufour, 2004; Fullan, 2001; Harris, 2013) and new forms of professional learning and development around the Standards. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argued that ‘collaboration’ is the key to building ‘professional capital’ in schools, which is an important foundation for wider system-level improvement (p.36).

![Figure 29: Underlying aspects of professionalisation (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012)](image)

The combination of increases in knowledge, common language around teaching practice and communities of practice can influence the professionalisation of teaching. Elmore (2012) argued that a weakness of the education profession is the mistaken notion that autonomy relates to professionalism; further, he suggested that ‘...within a true profession an individual does not have autonomy over its body of knowledge and its practice.’ Other professions such as medicine, law, dentistry or accountancy have a body of practice and knowledge, which must be learned, mastered and implemented within agreed and non-negotiable standards (National Forum on Initial Teacher Education, Tuesday 29 May 2012).

It is evident that the implementation of the Standards is having an impact on increasing professionalism across Australia; and, for those educators currently using the Standards for extended purposes the implementation is having an impact on professionalisation. Assuming that the current trajectory continues professionalisation as a result of the implementation of the
Standards is expected to increase over time and lead to improvements in teacher quality, greater consistency in the provision of quality education, and better student learning and outcomes.

5.2.1 TRANSLATION INTO PRACTICE

The idea underpinning the Standards is that quality teaching will lead to quality learning. We have identified that the Standards are already starting to have an influence on teacher practice. While the Illustrations of Practice developed by AITSL are a useful web-based resource, the Case Studies suggest there is richness in local mentoring and information-sharing arrangements that allow teachers to engage with the Standards in ways tailored to their local contexts and demands. This aligns to existing research on policy implementation, which suggests that teachers make sense of new policies through processes of ‘enactment’ in real-life settings (Ball, Maguire & Braun 2012; Honig, 2006). Teachers can be understood, therefore, as policy actors who are central to making the Standards ‘real’ in schools.

The Evaluation findings also support conclusions drawn in previous interim reports, which argued that forms of professional learning and development that engage teachers in locally situated and context-specific engagements with the Standards position teachers to take ownership of the Standards. The Case Studies demonstrate rich examples of supportive leadership practices that are driving engagement with the Standards amongst teachers and through whole-school strategic planning. These examples align with existing education policy and school leadership research, which suggests that the success of any reform depends on the ability of a school leader to clearly understand the initiative, shape a reform vision, establish clear goals for the school, and mobilise staff towards the achievement of set goals (e.g., Caldwell & Harris 2008; Elmore 2004; Fullan 2001; Wallace Foundation, 2013).

Similarly, the implementation of the Standards has supported the development of professional collaborations at both the organisational and individual (peer-to-peer) levels. Specifically, the social network analysis revealed that collegial networks were the strongest and most intense, and hence such networks are a valuable source of promotion of the Standards. There is also evidence of regular professional dialogue using the language of the Standards and experiences of implementing the Standards. This contributes to developing professionalisation.

“[It is] something you could hang everything on. You could hang the conversation with teachers around that and their practice. You could look at curriculum and [it is] guided towards that as well... a nice structure that you could hang quality on, basically...” (Case Study participant, 2014)

Furthermore, the nature of the Standards is intended to enable teachers to identify their own professional needs and conduct their own self-assessments. This kind of reflection supports professional dialogue and self-directed career progression.

5.3 UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIATORS OF EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

A number of factors have emerged as key facilitators in the implementation process; these have been discussed in section 4.2. This section utilises the Evaluation findings and relevant literature to describe five mediators of effective implementation. It is important to note that these mediators are a combination of the facilitating factors identified in the Evaluation and the literature on effective implementation of policy. The mediators encompass the notion of readiness, supportive organisational systems, structures and environments, champions and leaders of change, adequate resourcing, balancing the dual purpose of the Standards, and addressing and managing change fatigue. Figure 30 explores these mediators that are similar for both procedural and extended use of the Standards; the outputs for procedural use are associated with the meeting of registration and other regulatory requirements, which relates to some aspects of professionalisation but does not necessarily lead to an enhanced education system. Conversely, the outputs for extended use are associated with self-reflection and professional growth that leads to changes in teacher practice and information sharing. These outputs are more clearly linked to the professionalisation of teaching and improved student achievement.

The absence of the mediators, or the insufficient existence of them, inhibits implementation of the Standards regardless of whether the use is procedural or extended.

5.3.1 READINESS
The level of readiness to engage with the Standards is a critical factor to consider. At both a whole school and teacher level, readiness will impact on the level of implementation, contributing to a flow-on effect on the school leader’s knowledge of the Standards through to use of the Standards within a teaching and learning context. Hence, the mindset of the school leaders and teachers is critical. As Rogers (2010) suggested, there will be varying levels of adoption by the various actors based on their readiness to change their practice and accept and implement an innovation. Furthermore, the innovation theory suggests that actors need to see the value add of the innovation, and most importantly see the implementation of the Standards in their context as a priority. This notion of readiness applies to all those involved in the various levels of implementation, from teachers to regulatory bodies. Understanding the level of readiness for continual implementation needs to be established as a self-reflective exercise. Change should be considered progressive and self-directed; while compliance can only result in procedural use, it can infiltrate a system such that actors have the opportunity to ‘trial’ the innovation as suggested by Rogers (2010). Extended use of the Standards into the classroom and consequent changes to practice ought to be driven by the individual.

5.3.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES, SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTS

The organisational structures of stakeholder and implementation groups can also determine the rate, flow, degree and quality of implementation of the Standards. Furthermore, the complexity of state and federal roles in education and the history of standards-referenced approaches in some jurisdictions and not in others, largely influence and explain the varying levels of engagement with the Standards across Australia. Responsibility for implementation of the Standards, particularly in the next phase of implementation, is shared across the education community. For example, sector education offices and authorities will need to take a leadership role in implementation to ensure ongoing development at the school and organisational level.

Based on the findings of the Evaluation (the social network analysis in section 4.1.1 in particular), it is clear that sector organisations and authorities are not at the centre of networks of discussion and collaboration. Instead, they sit within broader networks, and therefore need to use their capacity to provide essential infrastructure to support implementation at the school level. Determining the balance between judgemental (procedural) and developmental (extended) uses will be critical to their role.

5.3.3 LEADERSHIP

Supportive leadership can be a vehicle to ensure organisational structures, systems and environments support the ongoing implementation of the Standards to encourage extended use. The leadership skills required to support implementation include effective communication, problem solving, planning and management, as well as an understanding of the need to distribute leadership and delegate responsibility. Barber et al. (2016) suggested that the presence or absence of the capacity to deliver supportive leadership is critical in the implementation of policy. Similarly, many researchers confirm that school leadership has a significant influence on student outcomes, second only to classroom teaching (Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hargreaves & Chapman, 2013; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, Anderson, Michlin & Mascall, 2010). Thus leadership needs to be seen as a critical determinant of overall school improvement and successful implementation of the Standards (McCall, 1998; Mourshed & Barber, 2010).

It is critical to note that part of the role of being a supportive leader is to be a champion of change. In the early stages of this Evaluation, the focus was on raising awareness of the Standards. Those stakeholders involved in building awareness of the Standards were considered champions of the implementation process. Operationally, this involved encouraging educators and supporting them to build their understanding of the purpose of the Standards and how it applies to them. This championing role now needs to continue in order to support educators to move beyond procedural and compliance-based use to more extended use of the Standards to inform their practice. With this support, the Standards will reach the classroom level across Australia, leading to the adoption of the Standards as ubiquitous and normalised.

5.3.4 TARGETED RESOURCING

The Evaluation identified adequate resourcing as a key factor influencing implementation of the Standards. Resourcing includes time allocated for implementation, access to quality professional development opportunities and infrastructural resources necessary for implementation (e.g., funding and support material). The Evaluation findings confirm that AITSL plays a pivotal role
in the provision of adequate infrastructural resourcing. For example, the use of resources on the AITSL website positively influenced use, and intention to use, the Standards.

The Evaluation findings also indicate that resources now need to target teachers and improvement of classroom practice to ensure the next phase of implementation within classrooms is successful. The challenge at this stage is ensuring that diverse school communities all have access to adequate resourcing to help support successful and sustainable implementation of the Standards.

5.3.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Evaluation adopted a perspective that the education community’s engagement in the Evaluation was indispensable to grounding the Standards within the education sector and adding value to the implementation process. Providing rigorous, accessible and useful information about implementation is a necessary component of the implementation of any innovation. It encourages all stakeholders within the sphere of influence for the implementation of the Standards to begin adopting the innovation. The high level of ongoing engagement in Evaluation, through the National Forum, National Surveys, Case Studies, key stakeholder interviews and professional presentations, demonstrates interest in the Standards as well as the impact of the collaborative Evaluation approach. It is our perspective that this Evaluation has provided a baseline view of implementation of the Standards towards achieving improved teacher quality, which is a generational change. We emphasise that it is critical for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to become an integral part of understanding this generational reform.

As Barber (2016, forthcoming) suggested, ‘poor implementation is like poison to a reform effort. It demoralizes the front line. It excites the opposition. It frays the coalition supporting it peeling off people who can use it as an excuse to defect while maintaining they still support the reform in theory’ (p. 4). Consequently, considering the role of the above mechanisms, which are deemed key to both effective and sustainable implementation, can support successful uptake of the Standards.

5.4 TRANSLATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

In addition to the Life Course Model, we present here a model (Figure 30) that translates the theory of the Life Course Model into an illustration of the practical tasks involved in the implementation of the Standards. This model also shows the mediators of implementation that can influence procedural use and extended use, and how these uses relate to the outcomes of professionalisation, enhanced teacher quality and (ultimately) student learning outcomes. Specifically, Figure 30 describes in detail what occurs (and what needs to occur) in the ‘activity’ and ‘behaviour change’ stages of the Life Course Model.
The next phase of implementation needs to consider the investment of support necessary to ensure that the Standards are operationalised and have impact on practice in classrooms. The aim now needs to relate to utilising the Standards in daily classroom practice and moving beyond planning and performance development (procedural use). Channelling the focus of implementation to classroom and teaching practice, as well as understanding the grounds for variation in the degree and quality of implementation in this context, would be worthwhile in the next phase of implementation.

6.0 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Evaluation findings highlight a number of areas for attention. Most importantly, it should be noted that this report has provided information on the initial stage of implementation, while the focus for the future is on a new phase of implementation; a phase in which effort is targeted towards increasing the number of educators, particularly teachers and school leaders, who are embedding the Standards in their daily practice.

6.1 A NEW THEORY OF CHANGE

The next phase of implementation needs a new theory of change. In particular, it needs to consider the investment of support required to ensure that the Standards are operationalised and are influencing classroom practice. To understand what support is required, the theory of change needs to clearly articulate the relationship between implementation of the Standards and teacher practice in the classroom so that educators understand how to utilise the Standards in their daily practice and not just for planning and performance development. Although the Evaluation has attempted to provide an understanding of the implementation of the Standards across Australia, further research into implementation could provide insights into the diversity and specific challenges of implementation of the Standards in rural, Indigenous and Early Childhood contexts.

6.2 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Throughout this Evaluation, the relationship between implementation of the Standards and student achievement has had little voice. During the initial National Forum exercises in 2013, student achievement was not identified as a criterion for successful implementation, and it is therefore not surprising that student achievement as an indicator of successful implementation has rarely been mentioned by participants. However, the relationship between enhanced student achievement and the
implementation of the Standards is an area that warrants further investigation, particularly to ensure that the monitoring of the implementation of the Standards supports the future investigation of the relationship between the Standards and student achievement.

6.3 RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED USE

As demonstrated by the findings of the Evaluation there is now a need for targeted resourcing, to address issues of variation and support those educators who may not have access to quality professional development opportunities or may need additional support in adapting the Standards to their context. Embedding the Standards within various subject areas may lead to more Secondary teachers being engaged with them.

More experienced teachers reported repeatedly how they were under significant pressure to enact multiple major reforms and felt overwhelmed by the scale and scope of change. For example, other national reforms such as the Australian Curriculum were very time-consuming and could sometimes divert time and energy away from the Standards. Major reforms in education are unlikely to be successful unless teachers are given adequate time and resources. Further, teachers do not only need professional development but also require mentoring and opportunities to experiment with the Standards in practice and work towards extended use.

Targeting the dissemination and promotion of specific resources, such those developed by AITSL for use on the website, is one possible means of supporting the most experienced teacher. These teachers have generally utilised most standard resources and would need something extra that would attract their attention and be seen as efficient and worthwhile. The resources developed by AITSL were well used and well regarded by the significant majority of educators. Many participants suggested it was time for something different to support a new phase of implementation.

6.4 BALANCING JUDGEMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL USES OF THE STANDARDS

Closely related to targeting resources for extended use is the need to achieve and maintain a balance between the judgemental and developmental purposes of the Standards. The Evaluation has identified some tension and anxiety, among stakeholders and implementers, about the purpose and intent of the Standards. It remains a challenge to determine the extent to which the Standards are meant for procedural use or extended use. Teacher evaluation and performance review is a major concern globally. As teachers bear the bulk of the responsibility for enhancing student achievement, there is also suspicion around the role of teacher evaluation.

“Are they [the Standards] going to be used to set KPIs? Like you have in the greater community out there, the economic sector?” (Case Study participant, 2014).

This mindset can stymie any sense of enhancement and progress of practice linked to constructive feedback from the Standards. Achieving balance in the dual uses of the Standards is critical to the future success of the Standards in terms of achieving the intended outcome of enhanced teacher quality. Embedding and communicating the purposes of the Standards as being about growth, may over time reduce anxiety. Thus, it is critical to ensure that authorities across the states and territories continue to consider the need to balance local policy against a backdrop of national reform is critical to ensuring sustainable implementation of the Standards.

6.5 SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN THE MIDDLE

The Evaluation found that teachers at the early stages of their careers and school leaders with many years of experience are much more likely to understand and enact the Standards. Young teachers, who have recently completed their initial teacher education, have been trained to see the Standards as a natural part of their practice. School leaders have responsibilities to engage with and understand the Standards as part of their roles. However, teachers in the ‘middle stages’ of their career appear less engaged with, and knowledgeable of, the Standards. The challenge, therefore, is how to connect with and transform the thinking and practices of these ‘teachers in the middle’.
6.6 FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

The Evaluation found that teachers do not have enough opportunities to receive quality feedback from school leaders and mentors about their developing use of the Standards. For example, some teachers see performance evaluations linked to the Standards as either superficial or performative. This challenge is currently being researched internationally, where there is growing evidence that teachers feel they lack adequate attention, support and recognition for the work they do, and as a result may become disillusioned. Broadly speaking, the Standards are about inducting teachers into new modes of practice, which is more likely to occur when they have ongoing opportunities to engage and experiment with the Standards. It is our view that evaluation and reflection on practice for improvement is essential for ensuring the use of the Standards. It is important to note that this should not be restricted to teachers alone. Feedback for the purposes of improvement should be available to school leaders and indeed those working in sector education organisations as well as regulatory authorities.

6.7 TEACHING PRACTICE IS ENHANCED WITH SUPPORT

Teachers learn about the Standards in more meaningful ways when they have access to quality mentoring and support. This mentoring is most effective when it comes from peers, in particular those who model successful engagement with the Standards. The process allows teachers to learn from the practices of others and appears to build self-efficacy and positive attitudes towards the Standards. It also supports teachers to see the implementation of the Standards as a shared and meaningful endeavour. While the Illustrations of Practice are a very useful web-based resource, the Case Studies suggest there is also richness in local mentoring and practice-sharing arrangements that allow teachers to engage with the Standards in ways tailored to their particular local contexts and demands. The challenge, then, is to find ways to engage teachers in locally situated engagements with the Standards that position them to take ownership over the reform and intentionally learn from these engagements. The Evaluation has clearly demonstrated that poor quality implementation in schools will divert attention from the Standards. It is also crucial to note that continued support of teacher by educational leaders in essential for ongoing use. Teachers who collaborate and work in communities of practice can help to create a collaborative culture of interdependence and shared responsibility (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). However, if schools are to be effective and develop a positive learning culture, which aspires to continuous improvement, they need to have leaders who are able to build the capacity and effectiveness of their teachers (Giffing, 2010).

6.8 LEADERSHIP

Supportive school leaders need to create conditions under which teachers are involved in implementation planning and delivery and are actively engaged in building networks of professional learning. Given the important role of school leadership in driving reform, AITSL could give further consideration to strategies that will assist systems, sectors and schools to build and nourish supportive leadership in relation to the Standards. Such strategies could include the development of targeted professional development for school leaders that focuses on leading the implementation of the Standards in schools – and, in particular, to engage the most experienced teachers to adopt and contribute to the implementation of the Standards. AITSL might also consider the development of online resources and tools for school leaders that offer strategies for further embedding the Standards within schools. The current Self-Assessment Tool, for example, is targeted towards teachers, but could potentially be adapted for school leaders who wish to self-assess the progress of their school in embedding the Standards into practice or measure the impact of the Standards in their schools.

6.9 RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

This Evaluation, while conducted over a period of two and half years, should be considered as presenting findings at “a point in time” when Standards-based reform began. Importantly, it provides a baseline point from which to consider the future impact. Further evaluations of impact based on this Evaluation could be worthwhile to continue to track a national reform.

In Australia’s federal system, the registration, professional development, employment and management of teachers are formal responsibilities of the states and territories. Based on the Evaluation findings, AITSL has an important role to play in advocating for the Standards across Australia, and supporting implementation through the development and dissemination of relevant.
information, resources and professional development linked to the Standards. This knowledge sharing and knowledge translation role can vary depending on which aspect of the implementation of the Standards it is seeking to influence.

While the Standards are playing an integral role in the broader context of national schooling reform, complex questions and uncertainties remain about which level of government is best placed to take responsibility for driving different aspects of the reform. As noted in the Reform of the Federation White Paper: Roles and Responsibilities in Education (Australian Government, 2014), the Australian reform landscape is ‘fragmented and disjointed’ (p. 26) and there is a high level of ‘overlap and duplication’ (p. 1), which can impact negatively upon the ability of systems to implement coherent and efficient reforms. No one level of government has full responsibility for the teaching profession, which makes implementing the Standards a complex affair. In this context, it would appear AITSL has an important role to play in advocating for the Australian-wide Standards, educating about the Standards, supporting implementation, and providing leadership at the national level. AITSL is limited, however, in its ability to directly shape reforms and has very little control over how the Standards are interpreted and put into practice in local contexts. Therefore, the implementation of the Standards should be seen as a shared responsibility across the education sector and not sitting with any one single organisation.

However, it should be considered that AITSL has a potentially powerful role to play in promoting what Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) call ‘professional capital policies and practices’ (p. 37), which nourish the meaningful and sustainable implementation of the Standards, but in ways that recognise the complex dynamics of Australia’s federalised system of education and do not absolve other players of their responsibility. Further consideration might be given to how AITSL can best position itself as a partner in reform, supporting states and territories, sectors and schools in implementing the Standards.

6.10 ANCHORING IN EXISTING POLICIES

It is clear from the Evaluation that educators are using existing, educational frameworks and initiatives to implement the Standards. These initiatives can provide a direction and establish priorities for targeted implementation practices across the profession. For example, based on an assessment of readiness and need, a cluster of schools may decide to focus on using their resources for professional development of staff in line with the Standards.

It is important to note that the original model for implementation suggested means by which the Standards could be implemented, that is, through initiatives such as the Charter for Professional Learning (AITSL, 2012). As is the nature of education, the Standards were utilised where they were useful, which did not necessarily align with such initiatives. The initiative model suggested by AITSL provided a lens for the assessment of the various contexts in which the Standards were to be implemented. The initiatives also provide a practical and pragmatic way to design and implement promotional and support mechanisms around the various areas of implementation of the Standards. It would be prudent to explore other policies, platforms and initiatives whereby the Standards can be promoted.

6.11 TEMAG, CLASSROOM READINESS AND ITE

During the course of this Evaluation, the Australian Government established the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), which reported in February 2015. It would be remiss not to acknowledge the TEMAG recommendations when considering the future of the implementation of the Standards. While a few stakeholders have suggested that TEMAG has diverted attention away from the implementation of the Standards, others suggest that the Standards have provided an ideal platform for changes in ITE and, to some extent, the TEMAG recommendations demonstrate the influence of the Standards in forming a thread through other policies. This is an important insight and suggests that implementation going forward needs to consider the relevance of the Standards to future educational policy reform. The area of ITE therefore provides a pathway to understanding the role of the Standards in improving teacher quality beginning with the pre-service stage of career development.

Overall, the Evaluation findings indicated progress in implementation of the Standards among ITE providers – teacher educators and pre-service teachers have a good level of knowledge of the Standards and have high levels of intentions to implement the Standards. On a related note, teachers with one to five years’ teaching experience reported significantly higher intentions to use the Standards compared with teachers with six years’ or more teaching experience. Given these differences were also supported
by the Case Studies and key stakeholder interviews, it is clear that early career teachers are indeed engaging to a very high degree in the implementation of the Standards.

The TEMAG recommendations depend significantly on the mainstreaming of the Standards. Judgements about graduate teachers being ‘classroom-ready’ are predicated on the Standards, and this relates to both the graduate standards and the Standards more broadly. TEMAG placed emphasis on the idea of supporting pre-service teachers moving into the first year or two of teaching, which means there is a focus on the movement from the Graduate to Proficient career stage. This also means that the process is likely to become more formalised and important. It is therefore likely that the Standards will continue to be used as a framework to make judgements about quality and impact for pre-service and newly qualified teachers, as well as for ITE providers.

7.0 FINAL WORD

The Evaluation has demonstrated that the Standards, on the whole, are being operationalised and embedded within the teaching profession, setting the scene for a major and important cycle of teaching reform and professionalisation. The Standards now form the basis of many educational documents at various levels and in various areas of implementation. As the national language of teaching is being refined and aligned to the Standards, it appears that these Standards offer a vision for future practice and policy in Australian education.

Overall, the Evaluation tells a positive story – the Standards are being used for professional growth, contributing to the further development of professionalism and ownership of the Standards among educators. The Standards offer a common national language and framework for self-reflection as well as for offering and receiving constructive feedback on improving teaching practice. The Standards are embedded in purposeful practices and policies in the areas of performance and development, professional learning and self-reflection. Thus, there is a greater likelihood of educators continuing to embrace the Standards, as long as they maintain the momentum of the reform and consider the implementation of the Standards a shared responsibility.

8.0 REFERENCES


Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:
Clinton, J; Dinham, S; Savage, G; Aston, R; Dabrowski, A; Gullickson, A; Calnin, G; Arbour, G

Title:

Date:
2015-12-22

Citation:
Clinton, J; Dinham, S; Savage, G; Aston, R; Dabrowski, A; Gullickson, A; Calnin, G; Arbour, G, Evaluation of the Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: Final Report, Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Standards), 2015

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/129501

File Description:
Published version