AITSL Pilot Projects, July – November, 2011

Summary Report (Feb 2012)

The SiMERR National Research Centre

The University of New England

ARMIDALE NSW

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Executive Summary

Background

This report represent a partnering of AITSL, the SiMERR National Centre (SiMERR) and a range of significant Australian educational organisations. The purpose of this collaborative research endeavour was (i) to trial the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers (Standards) and (ii) to determine the support required for implementation of the Standards nationally.

These aims were addressed through the conduct, data collection and subsequent analyses of the findings of 17 separate Pilot Projects. These were undertaken throughout Australia and drew on expertise from teachers, educational administrators and researchers from each State and Territory.

The context for the Pilot Projects was established in 2010 when, between August and November 2010, the Draft National Professional Standards for Teachers were validated by the SiMERR National Research Centre and subsequently endorsed by Ministers in February 2011. National stakeholders had developed the Draft National Professional Teaching Standards that were the subject of the validation through significant collaboration and consultation. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) had national responsibility for refinement and validation of the draft Professional Teaching Standards. One important outcome of the validation process was the production of a properly articulated set of Standards that can inform developments in quality teaching by establishing a platform for teachers' career paths.

To address issues identified within the validation study, in May 2011, AITSL sought proposals from interested individuals, organisations and consortia with demonstrated capacity and ability to design, develop, undertake and report on a pilot study to trial the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within existing structures and practices.

Following the final date for submission to AITSL of Requests for Tender (RFTs) by organisations to undertake Pilot projects (15 June, 2011), a review and refinement process was completed prior to a 2-day joint SiMERR – AITSL planning and training meeting with successful groups in Melbourne (27-28 July, 2011). Pilot Projects commenced after this planning meeting with a completion date of 11 November, 2011. Final Pilot Project Reports were submitted to SiMERR and planning for a Pilot Forum commenced. This Form is scheduled for 22-23 February and will provide an opportunity for Pilot organisations to present an overview of their Pilot, to share findings, and to discuss implications for the implementation of the Standards both within their own contexts and, more broadly, for other stakeholders within the profession.

Overview of Pilots

Based on the preliminary titles, project focus and planned stakeholder engagement that were detailed in the seventeen submissions, Pilots were assigned to one of four thematic groupings. These groupings were informed by key themes, such as *Collaboration with Colleagues in the Profession* and *Engagement of parents and the Community*, that emerged from the commentary provided by teachers in response to the two surveys that formed part of the Standards validation study conducted in 2010. The groupings for assigning Pilot projects were:

1. Teacher self-reflection
2. Professional development
3. Initial teacher education and registration
4. Parents, community and students

These groupings provided an overall organisational framework for the duration of the Pilot projects.

The two-day training and planning meeting in Melbourne had a two-fold purpose.

1. To provide a contextual overview of the place of the Pilot projects within AITSL's overall planning around implementation of the Standards.

2. To provide Pilot groups with a collaborative setting in which to:

   - Develop a clear focus and overview of each Pilot
   - Articulate research/focus questions
   - Prepare a comprehensive management plan for the Pilot
   - Clarify methodological issues and associated data collection protocols
   - Identify stakeholder engagement, and
   - Establish timelines, inclusive of identifiable milestones and reporting requirements.

Pilot groups ultimately drew on a range of methodologies to conduct their investigations, and they can be described in general terms as 'participatory' in that they reflected characteristics identified in the literature by:

- Investigating instances of engagement with the Standards that would inform national adoption by the profession (i.e., Advancement of an action agenda for change)
- Applying a Standards framework that provides a nationally consistent language about what teachers should know and be able to do (i.e., Initial adoption of an important issue or stance)
- Gathering commentary from a range of education stakeholders about their engagement with the Standards (i.e., Creation of a political discussion and debate so that change can occur), and

- Facilitating opportunities for members of the profession across all career stages to provide colleagues with feedback about current practice (i.e., Engagement of participants in active collaboration).

Pilot projects were documented in three reports to SiMERR and report templates were provided to each Pilot group for:

1. A one-page Stakeholder Engagement statement, due 30 September
2. A three-page Interim Report, due 30 September
3. A Final Report of approximately twenty-five pages (excluding Appendices), due mid-November.

These three reports, with an emphasis on the Final Report, form the basis of this Summary Report.

As a result of the initial planning stage of the Pilot projects, forty-four research questions were developed across projects within the four thematic groupings.

Within the **Teacher Self-reflection** theme grouping, three state-wide jurisdictions (two independent and one government) undertook investigations to address eight research questions. Through surveys and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' comprised graduate teachers, teachers across a range of career stages and school leaders. The research questions for this group were:

Research Question: How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?

Research Question: How does teachers' engagement with National Professional Standards for Teachers impact on their:

- confidence to meet the school goals and
- preparedness to engage in self-evaluation as part of the appraisal process?

Research Question: How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?

Research Question: How effectively were project leaders able to work with staff to contextualise the Standards?

Research Question: How well did teachers engage with the Self-reflection Tool?

Research Question: Did the tool inform future direction for teachers, for their own professional learning? What patterns emerged within schools and across schools?

Research Question: How useful did schools find the data for strategic planning?

Research Question: How could ISQ use the information collected?

Within the **Professional Development** theme grouping of Pilot projects, eight professional bodies that included associations, government education systems, regulatory authorities and universities undertook investigations across a range of geographic locations. Through surveys, interviews, professional self-audits, inquiry plans and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was collected through both face-to-face and online options and was drawn from graduate teachers, teachers across a range of career stages, teacher mentors and leaders within respective schools. The twenty-two research questions for this group were:

Research Question: *What does Asia literacy mean for a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers?*

Research Question: *How can teachers be supported in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the National Professional Standards for Teachers in relation to Asia literacy?*

Research Question: *What strategies do principals propose to use to engage staff in implementing the standards?*

Research Question: *What kind of structures might they put in place to do this?*

Research Question: *What kind of things do they need to know and understand before they can start implementing the Standards?*

Research Question: *What kind of support do they think could be helpful? And what things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?*

Research Question: *What are the professional learning needs for your school?*

Research Question: *What things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?*

Research Question: *What barriers do you think there will be to implementing the Standards?*

Research Question: *How prepared are you to implement the Standards? And how will the school context influence how the Standards are implemented?*

Research Question: *How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?*

Research Question: *How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a tool for teacher self-reflection?*

Research Question: To what extent are the Standards useful for teachers to reflect upon their practice?

Research Question: How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?

Research Question: To what extent is it possible to align the current professional learning program to the Standards?

Research Question: In developing teacher quality and teacher leadership at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead: What are the professional learning needs of teachers?

Research Question: How can high quality teaching practice be best evidenced in relation to the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within the context of NSW DEC settings?

Research Question: What will be involved in engaging NSW DEC teachers in the National Professional Standards for Teachers, particularly at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead?

Research Question: What are the data-related practices that teachers at the three nominated Career Stages use?

Research Question: In what ways does networking within and across schools in a remote setting enhance professional learning and dialogue?

Research Question: Does an online platform have the potential to support collegiate learning within rural and remote locations?

Research Question: Does a blended approach enhance collegiate mentoring in supporting individual professional learning as described in the Standards?

Within the ***Initial Teacher Education and Registration*** theme grouping of Pilot projects, three professional bodies that represented State-Territory teacher regulatory authorities and universities undertook investigations across a range of geographic locations. Through surveys, interviews, professional self-audits, inquiry plans and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was drawn from pre-service teachers, graduate (early career) teachers and teacher mentors within respective locations. The three research questions for this group were:

Research Question: How will Standards 1 (Know students and how they learn) and 6 (Engage in professional learning) inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors in the ACT?

Research Question: In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?

Research Question: How does the current process for full registration accommodate the Standards for teachers at the proficient level?

Three key education stakeholder groups were represented in the **Parents, Communities and Students** theme grouping of Pilot projects, two with a national focus and the third a school. Through surveys, focus group sessions and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' comprised parents – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, from metropolitan, regional, remote and very remote locations, as well as students, teachers and mentor teachers. The eleven research questions for this group were:

Research Question: What do you believe are the important attributes, behaviours and processes for teachers when they engage with parents?

Research Question: How do these attributes, behaviours and processes show up differently across the four categories of teachers (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead)?

Research Question: What are some examples of what this looks like in practice?

Research Question: How can the Professional Practice domain be used to audit current professional learning practices and structures?

Research Question: How can students contribute to improved teaching and learning?

Research Question: How can student feedback data assist schools to improve practice?

Research Question: What summative and formative strategies can be used to engage the community and to monitor student feedback?

Research Question: What are the three priority areas for improving teaching identified from student feedback?

Research Question: What issues and challenges arise from the pilot for using the National Professional Standards for Teachers to inform a school's professional learning program?

Research Question: What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?

Research Question: What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities?

Findings from the Pilots

Based on the data collected by Pilot groups and the way each interrogated their data sets, commentary around each of the research questions was constructive and advisory. A sample of the commentary provided in project reports for selected research questions is provided in the Table on the next page.

It is not surprising that engagement with the Standards became more specific during the course of each investigation. During the Pilot planning stage for the projects, generalised references were frequently made to "using the Standards" as a way of investigating research questions. In some cases, specific Focus Areas were identified to fine-tune these investigations, e.g., Focus Areas 3.7 and 7.3 were the basis of the investigation undertaken by the Australian Parents Council to gain feedback about how teachers engaged with parents/carers.

Coverage of each of the three Domains of the Standards framework resulted from a reference to the following Standards and Focus Areas, references which reflect an emphasis on teaching and learning:

Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice Domains: Standard 1 (Know students and how they learn), Standard 2 (Know the content and how to teach it), 3 (Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning), and Standard 5 (Assess, provided feedback and report on student learning).

Professional Practice and Professional Engagement Domains: Focus Areas: 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 7.3

During the Pilots implementation stage, participant engagement with the Standards provided the opportunity for a broader range of particular Focus Areas to be investigated. The depth of treatment was often determined by the instrument or tool that formed part of the Pilot methodology. For example, the use of Surveys as self-reflection tools encompassed every Focus Area within the Standards document, as was the case with the Department of Education, Western Australia.

Table 1: Sample Commentary for Selected Research Questions

Pilot Group	Research Question	Sample Commentary
CDU – NTTRB	In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?	All participants reported that they valued the mentoring opportunities as they felt that such opportunities were necessary to enable them to meet the requirements of both moving from provisional to full registration; and for meeting their probation requirements.
DECS SA	How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?	Teachers and leaders considered the observation of teacher practice as a powerful professional learning activity. Despite some trepidation regarding the observation of colleagues, the overwhelming conclusion was that the observation tool was effective in both providing a platform for deep professional conversations and was an effective way of engaging with the Standards.
DoE Tas	How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?	In many cases the Standards have brought a degree of rigour to the action based research and a sense of authenticity around the foci and research questions. In this context, the Standards sit well alongside teacher's own thinking about what is important to develop in their practice and the established directions and goals of their school or workplace.

An indication of the extent to which specific Focus Areas of the Standards were incorporated into investigations during the implementation (participant engagement) stage is provided in the Table on the next page.

Table 2: Standards Elements Addressed in Planning and Implementation Stages of Pilot Projects

Pilot Group	Instrument/Tool	Standards Element Addressed	
		Pilot Planning Phase	Pilot Implementation Phase
ACT TQI	Survey	Standard 1; Standard 2	Focus Areas: 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3
AEF	Interview		Focus Areas: 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4
AIS NSW	Questionnaire		Focus Areas: 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
APC – ACSSO	Focus Group	Focus Areas: 3.7; 7.3	Focus Areas: 3.7; 7.3
DECS SA	Lesson Observation Tool		Focus Areas: 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
DoE Tas	Student Survey		Focus Areas: 1.5; 5.1 – 5.3
	Graduate Teacher Survey/Self-audit (Within a range of Inquiry Design Templates)		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 6.1 – 6.4; 7.1 – 7.4
DoE WA	Self-reflection tool		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 6.1 – 6.4; 7.1 – 7.4

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was performed to identify the presence or absence of recurring themes and sub-themes within and across the final pilot project reports. The identification and refinement of themes and sub-themes was an iterative process, involving repeated close reading of the data. The thematic analysis resulted in the identification of four themes:

- Alignment;
- Data Sources for Improvement (Working with Feedback);
- Growth and Learning within the Profession; and
- Improved Outcomes.

It is important to note that the thematic analysis was based on the Pilot authors' representations in the final pilot reports; the thematic analysis does not confirm the veracity or legitimacy of the representations. Also the thematic analysis examined what was explicitly included in the reports; it did not examine silences and it did not make inferences, despite how readily inferences could be made in some instances.

The theme of '**Alignment'** designated the 'congruence', or 'correspondence', or lack thereof between professional practice(s) and the contextual backdrop. The contextual backdrop was conceived to include the *apriori* requirements and/or expectations of overarching guidelines, such as policies, community expectation or an institution's aspirational goals. Professional practice(s) encompassed individual

engagement with and/or implementation of requirements inherent within the context, such as integration of the Standards into planning for professional learning opportunities within a school's improvement cycle. Professional practices were also designated to include the design and conduct of the pilot itself. In this instance, the alignment of the pilot project with the contextual backdrop included relationships between the pilot project and previous, concurrent or planned research projects.

Four sub-categories were identified for this theme:

1. school/system priorities and individual teacher needs;
2. existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice;
3. local and network practices; and
4. other.

'**Data sources for improvement**' generated a brief overview of the data sources utilised by the pilot projects and how the organisations dealt with obtaining data. The section addresses data collection from:

1. school and/or system;
2. student voice;
3. community; and
4. universities and initial teacher education students.

The theme of '**Growth and Learning within the Profession**' described professional development of organisations, groups and/or individuals. This theme is closely aligned with the sub-theme '**Improved Outcomes**'.

Eight sub-categories were identified for this theme:

1. self-reflection/;self evaluation
2. strategies/evidence;
3. professional conversations;
4. support structures;
5. planning and research;
6. paradigm shift;
7. aspirational goals; and
8. continuity of practice,

Based on an overview of the themes and sub-themes that were identified within the final Pilot project reports, a 'heat map' was produced to signify the relative presence of sub-themes within and across the reports.

Resources

A range of artefacts was either produced or developed during the Pilots and they could be refined/extended to inform the implementation of the Standards within different contexts. These resources included, but are not limited to:

- Seven Questionnaires/surveys
- Four Interview protocols
- Four Self-reflection tools/audits
- Two Planning Guides

Two Feedback proformas/information options, e.g., video samples

Introduction

This report represent a partnering of AITSL, the SiMERR National Centre (SiMERR) and a range of significant Australian educational organisations. The purpose of this collaborative research endeavour was (i) to trial the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers (Standards) and (ii) to determine the support required for implementation of the Standards nationally.

These aims were addressed through the conduct, data collection and subsequent analyses of the findings of 17 separate Pilot Projects. These were undertaken throughout Australia and drew on expertise from teachers, educational administrators and researchers from each State and Territory.

This report provides a detailed overview of the partnership, the analyses both of the individual Pilot projects and as their combined contribution to our knowledge concerning the application of Standards across Australia.

Context

Between August and November 2010, the Draft National Professional Standards for Teachers were validated by the SiMERR National Research Centre and subsequently endorsed by Ministers in February 2011. National stakeholders had developed the Draft National Professional Teaching Standards that were the subject of the validation through significant collaboration and consultation. A national reference committee comprising representatives of the Commonwealth, states and territories, government and non-government school representatives spent over eighteen months developing the standards to the point where many of the structural issues defining the standards have been agreed. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) had national responsibility for refinement and validation of the draft Professional Teaching Standards.

The validation was conducted by a research team at SiMERR using two interrelated approaches. The first involved the distribution and analysis of responses to two rounds of surveys each providing quantitative data suitable for psychometric study and opportunities for teachers to provide qualitative feedback. The research questions related to the first of these surveys concerned the perceived 'difficulty' of the descriptors. The research questions related to the second of these surveys were concerned with assessing the internal validity of the descriptors and standards by considering the 'appropriateness', 'preparedness' and 'priority for development'.

The second approach involved the analysis of qualitative data arising from National Focus group workshops. The research questions addressed by these workshops concerned possible issues associated with the implementation of the Descriptors within the Standards framework and on the evidence basis that might determine their achievement.

The analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data provided a strong basis that affirmed the role of the Descriptors in providing a definitive and holistic breakdown of what constitutes quality learning and teaching at each of the four Career Stages. The analysis of the commentary from Survey 2 provided strong support for the four Career Stage structure by identifying key aspects of practice that aligned with the Career Stage Descriptors in the Standards.

The qualitative data gathered through the Focus Group Workshops provided clear guidelines for the nature/type of evidence that might be used at each of the four Career Stages, and for planning the implementation of the Standards. The commentary from the workshops provided additional support for the four Career Stage structure of the Standards by identifying distinctly different types of evidence, or artefacts, that might indicate achievement of the Descriptors at each Stage. These artefacts become increasingly complex across the Career Stages.

One important outcome of the validation process was the production of a properly articulated set of Standards that can inform developments in quality teaching by establishing a platform for teachers' career paths. At a national level, the Standards framework delineates what teachers need to know, understand and be able to do for effective practice.

Overview of the Pilots

The range of issues identified in the commentary across both Surveys and the Focus Group Workshops indicated that the profession had many questions about implementation that needed to be worked through and resolved before taking the Standards to the implementation phase. Issues such as contextual variations in teaching and learning, access to resources, integration of the Standards with existing State and Territory processes, and integration of the teaching standards with leadership standards are but a few of the major considerations identified.

To address these identified issues, in May 2011, AITSL sought proposals from interested individuals, organisations and consortia with demonstrated capacity and ability to design, develop, undertake and report on a pilot study to trial the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within existing structures and practices. The aim of the Pilots was to determine what further is required to support implementation of the Standards. The SiMERR National Research Centre was engaged as a research partner to work with AITSL to guide and to provide oversight for the National Professional Standards for Teachers Pilots.

Seventeen organisations and groups were selected to conduct pilot studies representing a diversity of contexts across each State and Territory. The preliminary focus statements developed by each of the Pilot projects are provided below as a indication of the scope of the implementation phase. These statements build on the 'voice of the profession' which came through in the validation studies and, in particular, how the profession expresses its capacity to self-reflect, to engage in

ongoing professional learning, to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences, and to build a positive public profile of the profession.

1. Using the National Professional Standards for Teachers to inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teacher and their mentors.
2. Using the National Professional Standards for Teachers to investigate how Asia literacy can be evidenced by teachers and colleagues, and can support teacher development.
3. A process for teachers to align practice, evidence and the National Professional Standards for Teachers to school improvement goals.
4. Parental Engagement: Enriched teaching for effective learning.
5. Implementing the National Professional Standards for Teachers: Articulating issues and addressing challenges in context.
6. Using students' voices to inform the improvement of teachers' professional practice.
7. Engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers: Graduate teachers drawing on regional and remote teaching experiences during the transition to full registration.
8. Investigation of how the National Professional Standards for Teachers can be used by teachers to reflect on their practice and become learners of their own teaching.
9. Observation of teaching and learning to promote learning about the National Professional Standards for Teachers in Practice.
10. Development of Professional Learning Approaches for Teacher informed by the National Professional Standards for Teachers.
11. Engaging with the National Professional Standards for Teachers to inform individual, school and sector planning.
12. Investigating the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers to inform the development and selection of professional learning.
13. Using the National Professional standards for Teachers to further inform the development of teacher quality and teacher leadership in NSW DEC.
14. Existing practices of Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher in the interpretation and use of data related to NAPLAN testing.
15. To what extent does an online platform promote collegiate learning consistent with the National Professional Standards for Teachers.
16. Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander parents and communities in education.
17. Referencing the Victorian Institute of Teaching process for full registration to the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

A full description of the pilot project processes, from inception to completion, is provided in Section 2, *Overview of the Pilot Projects*.

SiMERR National Research Centre

In July 2004, the SiMERR National Centre received an establishment grant of $5 million from the Australian Federal Government. Since this time we have conducted over 140 projects around the country and supplemented these initial funds with over $15 million from other sources. SiMERR has a state and territory hub at universities in each state and territory. We refer to this research network as SiMERR Australia. http://www.une.edu.au/simerr/pages/index.php

SiMERR was established at the University of New England (UNE) in Armidale utilising a collaborative model involving groups of academics in each state or territory (referred to as state/territory Hubs). Nine universities were identified. These were the University of New England, Australian Catholic University (ACT), Deakin University, University of Tasmania, Flinders University and the University of South Australia, Curtin University, Charles Darwin University, and James Cook University.

The SiMERR National Centre provides a national platform to undertakes research projects that are of significance to education in Australia and that are particularly sensitive to those issues that impact on rural and regional areas. In particular, SiMERR carries out research and professional development activities with a focus on improving the learning outcomes of all Australian students, especially those studying in rural and regional Australia.

Currently, SiMERR is undertaking National and State projects in using quality assessment in schools, developing programs for persistently underachieving middle-school students, ways to integrate ICT into classroom instruction, most recently through the *Australia Korea ConneXion* project that links Australian and Korean schools through videoconferencing, online discussion and exchange visits. The Centre has successfully undertaken the largest national survey of rural and regional teachers, parents to help identify reasons and strategies to improve underperformance of students in rural and regional areas. SiMERR is currently evaluating schools identified as Centres for Excellence for the NSW Government through the Smarter Schools National Partnership initiative that has a focus of professional experience reform measures. The Centre has also been successful in securing a raft of grants from the Australian Research Council, DEEWR and the Federal Government in collaboration with state and territory governments.

Acknowledgements

The project team acknowledges the ongoing support of numerous groups and individuals during the conduct of the Pilot projects.

To the members of each Pilot project team (and the Professional Bodies they represent) we are appreciative of their preparedness to take up an opportunity to work with key stakeholders to trial the National Professional Standards for Teachers

in practice. Of particular value has been their willingness to work within and to accommodate very tight timelines.

To the members of AITSL we acknowledge the continuing close working relationship that has developed, the ongoing support that was offered in working with Education Systems and Professional Associations, and their involvement in Pilot site visits. In particular, we thank Margery Evans (CEO), Keren Caple (General Manager), Martin James (Manager – Policy and Programs), Gavin Pinnigton (Project Manager), Graeme Hall (Manager – Policy and Programs), Anne Loos (Manager – Policy and Programs), and Edmond Misson (General Manager).

To members of the SiMERR National Centre at the University of New England we extend a large thank you for your efforts in helping with the day-to-day running of the project, and the background administrative help that is always critical to the success of a large-scale undertaking. In particular, we acknowledge: Gerard Todd and Rachael Addlington (Online contact (*Moodle*) Support); June Billings (Travel Liaison and Report Preparation); Russel Glover (Finance and Contracts); and Rhiannon Wright (General Administration and Report Preparation Support).

Structure of the Summary Report

This Summary Report presents a synthesis of the seventeen pilot projects. It consists of a Preface, six Sections and associated Appendices. (The Appendices appear in a separate volume).

Section 1 provides specific information concerning methodological and general organisational considerations for working with the pilot groups. This section provides detail relating to the ongoing communication with pilot groups, particulars of site visits undertaken and the approach adopted for analysis of project final reports.

Section 2 contains an overview for each of the pilot projects. This discussion is structured to summarise the key processes undertaken by each group, namely:

1. organisation context,
2. the focus of the pilot,
3. specific research questions developed
4. participant engagement, and
5. pilot project methodologies.

Section 3 presents a summary of the findings from each of the pilot projects.

Section 4 provides a thematic discussion of the pilot projects. This discussion is presented under four theme headings that were identified from the way each organisation wrote about their pilot project. The themes identified were:

1. Alignment

2. Data Sources for Improvement
3. Growth and Learning within the Profession, and
4. Improved Outcomes

A summary of resources developed during individual pilot projects is provided in **Section 5** and **Section 6** offers some concluding remarks concerning the pilots and the findings from the research team.

References are provided in **Section 7** and Appendices to this report are contained in **Section 8** comprising:

1. Appendix A: Planning and Training Meeting Documentation
2. Appendix B: Site Visit Reports
3. Appendix C: Pilot Project Executive Summaries
4. Appendix D: Pilot Project Final Reports, and
5. Appendix E: Pilot Project Appendices
6. Appendix F: Resources Developed.

SiMERR Research Team

The Research team comprised members of the SiMERR National Research Centre and the School of Education, UNE:

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Gerard Todd, IT Manager
Rhiannon Wright, Administrative Assistant

1 Methodological and Organisational Considerations

Following the final date for submission to AITSL of Requests for Tender (RFTs) by organisations to undertake Pilot projects (15 June, 2011), a review and refinement process was completed prior to a 2-day joint SiMERR – AITSL planning and training meeting with successful groups in Melbourne (27-28 July, 2011). Pilot Projects commenced after this planning meeting with a completion date of 11 November, 2011. Final Pilot Project Reports were submitted to SiMERR and planning for a Pilot Forum commenced. Details of these stages are provided in the following sections.

1.1 Pilot Project Refinement (17 June, 2011)

The initial scoping of the Pilot Projects by AITSL provided for ten organisations to undertake trialling of the Standards. Due to the number of submissions received, seventeen organisations were ultimately selected. Successful Pilot submissions were drawn from each State and Territory and represented a comprehensive range of stakeholders from within the profession: regulatory authorities, statutory authorities, educational systems and sectors, associations, universities and schools.

A joint SiMERR – AITSL meeting was held (17 June, 2011) to discuss successful submissions with a view to providing advice to each organisation relating to the scope of projects, as outlined in original submissions. This opportunity to provide feedback represented the first formal communication between SiMERR and the Pilot groups. This feedback was provided in the first instance by email and followed up with phone conversations for points of clarification. It was considered important to be able to discuss with Pilot coordinators a refined, and achievable, focus for their project that took into consideration the timeline for undertaking Pilot projects within their respective contexts, structures and practices.

Based on the preliminary titles, project focus and planned stakeholder engagement that were detailed in the seventeen submissions, Pilots were assigned to one of four thematic groupings. These groupings were informed by key themes, such as *Collaboration with Colleagues in the Profession* and *Engagement of parents and the Community*, that emerged from the commentary provided by teachers in response to the two surveys that formed part of the Standards validation study conducted in 2010. The groupings for assigning Pilot projects were:

1. Teacher self-reflection
2. Professional development
3. Initial teacher education and registration
4. Parents, community and students

These groupings provided an overall organisational framework for the duration of the Pilot projects. In particular, they provided a basis for the main planning meeting with Pilots organisations (discussed in the next section) and for assigning personnel to participate in online and face-to-face contact with Pilot groups. These thematic

groupings are also used to structure the discussion about Pilot projects contained in Sections 2-4 of this report.

1.2 Melbourne Training Meeting (27 – 28 July, 2011)

Pilot groups met during a two-day training and planning meeting in Melbourne that had a two-fold purpose.

1. To provide a contextual overview of the place of the Pilot projects within AITSL's overall planning around implementation of the Standards.

2. To provide Pilot groups with a collaborative setting in which to:

- Develop a clear focus and overview of each Pilot
- Articulate research/focus questions
- Prepare a comprehensive management plan for the Pilot
- Clarify methodological issues and associated data collection protocols
- Identify stakeholder engagement, and
- Establish timelines, inclusive of identifiable milestones and reporting requirements.

During the planning meeting, SiMERR and AITSL personnel provided research and contextual advice. An Agenda for the two days is provided in Appendix A (i).

As a starting point in the refinement and elaboration of proposals, each of the Pilot groups was provided with a dot-point summary of the feedback that was prepared as part of the June Refinement meeting and which had previously been provided by email and discussed during phone conversations (Appendix A (ii)). Pilot organisations worked independently and collaboratively within the four assigned theme groupings to prepare progressive summaries. SiMERR and AITSL personnel who had been assigned to Pilot theme groupings provided support to each group throughout this process. A Powerpoint template was provided to document this activity along with a holistic management plan template (Appendix A (iv)). By the end of the two days, each Pilot group had prepared a preliminary overview of the planning for their project as a working document for projects to commence, where applicable, in the following week (Appendix (A iii)).

Early planning for the Pilot projects had identified a particular methodology, namely, the Most Significant Change methodology (MSC) (e.g., Davies & Dart, 2005; New Horizons) as being suitable for adoption by Pilot groups. It is a technique that monitors interventions, focuses on improvements and has been adopted in settings where more traditional research methods might not apply. The technique was developed "to meet some of the challenges associated with monitoring and evaluating a complex participatory rural development program in Bangladesh, which had diversity in both implementation and outcomes" (Davies & Dart, 2005).

Organisational change and the alignment of activities with valued outcomes are central to MSC and findings emerge as a result of the generation and analysis of

participant narratives. The technique has been described as 'the story approach.' MSC is also an example of a type of action research classified as highly participatory, which, according to Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998), is characterised by:

- Advancement of an action agenda for change
- Initial adoption of an important issue or stance
- Creation of a political discussion and debate so that change can occur, and
- Engagement of participants in active collaboration.

One important planning consideration faced by Pilot groups was the timeline needed for adopting any particular methodology without any loss to its integrity through substantial modifications. The timelines associated with applying MSC are generally much longer than the timelines established for the Pilot projects. In the words of one Pilot group:

The project team read 'The Most Significant Change Technique – A guide to its use' in preparation for the project. While the data was gathered and interrogated with the MSC methodology in mind a number of factors mitigated against using it fully. The main factor being that using an "iterative questionnaire and feedback approach" was precluded by the time frame of the project. [AEF Final Report, p.6]

Whilst the Pilot groups ultimately drew on a range of methodologies (detailed in Section 2 of this Report), they can be described in general terms as 'participatory' in that they reflected Kemmis and Wilkinson's identified characteristics by:

- Investigating instances of engagement with the Standards that would inform national adoption by the profession (i.e., Advancement of an action agenda for change)
- Applying a Standards framework that provides a nationally consistent language about what teachers should know and be able to do (i.e., Initial adoption of an important issue or stance)
- Gathering commentary from a range of education stakeholders about their engagement with the Standards (i.e., Creation of a political discussion and debate so that change can occur), and
- Facilitating opportunities for members of the profession across all career stages to provide colleagues with feedback about current practice (i.e., Engagement of participants in active collaboration).

In line with the participatory dimension of the Pilots, each group was also required to articulate the 'flow' of information about the Pilot project within their respective organisations. Two considerations were provided to focus this discussion:

- Communication of information within each organisation/institution during pilot participation, particularly to senior personnel
- Identification of key people/groups who need to know about the pilot and the type of message to be communicated

The approach adopted by each Pilot group was to be documented in a 'Stakeholder Engagement' statement to be submitted after the Training Meeting.

Time during the Training Meeting was also devoted to the format of the Final Report to be submitted by each Pilot group. The format for the Final Report was presented as comprising an Executive Summary of up to three pages, followed by a detailed report in the order of twenty pages (excluding any Appendices).

1.3 Pilot Projects Undertaken (1 August – 11 November, 2011)

1.3.1 Communication with Pilots

In addition to maintaining contact with Pilot groups through email, phone discussions and teleconferences, regular online contact was also established using *Moodle*, the University of New England's Learning Management System. It was arranged for each member of the Pilot groups to become a UNE affiliate for the duration of the Pilots in order for them to be able to log on to *Moodle* for meetings. Whilst a range of technical difficulties was experienced –including poor band-width and hardware availability, the online option allowed for members of Pilot groups, SiMERR and AITSL to participate jointly in a face-to-face online discussion and to share documents.

Face-to-face contact was also organised through site visits to all but one of the Pilot groups. One member from each of the SiMERR and AITSL teams took part in these visits, which ranged in duration from 1 hour to 3 days. The later was necessary in the case of the REFA site visit to the Murchison remote area network of schools in Western Australia.

The purpose of the site visits was to gain a contextual perspective of the Pilot study, to discuss progress and, where appropriate, to meet with participants of the studies. Preparation for site visits consisted of an Agenda sent to all Project teams prior to the visits and each member of the SiMERR and AITSL teams was provided with available background information for each Pilot comprising all materials relating to each Pilot up to the time of the visit. Areas address by the Agenda were:

1. Meet with the Pilot Team
2. Setting the scene
3. Progress to date
4. Where to next
5. Discussion with participants
6. Discussion with Stakeholders (senior personnel and reference group)
7. The Interim Report (Due to SiMERR 30th September)
8. General Research Issues to be Covered
9. Other Business

Following site visits, a report was prepared and a sample of these is provided in Appendix B.

1.3.2 Reporting

Pilot projects were documented in three reports to SiMERR. Report templates were provided to each Pilot group for:

1. A one-page Stakeholder Engagement statement, due 30 September
2. A three-page Interim Report, due 30 September
3. A Final Report of approximately twenty-five pages (excluding Appendices), due mid-November.

In addition to the Pilot teams and participants of the respective project, reference was made in the Stakeholder Engagement statements to a wide range of organisations and professional bodies that would need to become familiar with findings of the projects. These groups included:

- Employing authorities, such as, Departments of Education, Catholic Education Offices and Independent school associations
- Professional Associations
- Teacher Registration and Accreditation authorities
- Government Departments
- Curriculum and Statutory authorities
- Teacher Unions
- Professional Learning organisations/Institutes, and
- Higher Education Institutions.

The strategy mentioned most frequently for disseminating project findings was the provision of reports, either directly or via websites. Options, such as, discussion of findings at meetings/forums/conferences, or the setting up of working groups were less frequently suggested. The preference for one style of dissemination has implications for how key messages from Pilots are to be shared with the profession.

The Interim Report provided the opportunity for Pilot groups to report on progress of their projects, to present any preliminary findings and to raise any particular planning issues. The planning issues documented provide a mix of responses by both Pilot teams as they prepared for, and participants as they engaged with, implementation of the Standards in different contexts. In addition to challenges, such as achieving representative samples to participate in projects or mapping the alignment between State and national Standards, The planning consideration most frequently cited by Pilot teams was that of time. This aspect was qualified, with time being identified as a key issue for:

- Adequately testing resources being developed
- The collection of relevant evidence related to Descriptors
- Interpreting the breadth of information collected
- Establishing a resource base (both human and physical) to support project activities
- Participants to understand, commit to and take ownership of engagement

- Setting dates and incorporating activities into existing calendar of events/yearly plans

For participants, a key challenge could be described as one of 'perception.' This issue was succinctly referred to as a "tension between perceptions of where teachers think they are on the Standards continuum, and where their principal or colleagues think they are" (AEF Interim Report). Other instances included:

- teachers perceiving themselves to be at different Career Stages depending upon which Focus Area from the Standards they were considering
- teachers' perceptions of their capacity to mentor
- gaining a clear notion of 'leading' and what it means "to lead the practice of others", and
- the perception that incentives and imperatives will be needed if highly skilled and experienced teachers are to engage with the Standards.

Final Reports are discussed in Sections 2-4 and are included in Appendix C (Executive Summaries), Appendix D (Final Reports) and Appendix E (Report Appendices).

1.4 Pilot Project Forum (22 – 23 February, 2012)

As at the time of preparation of this Summary Report, planning for the Pilot Projects Forum is underway. The Pilot Projects Forum is to take place on Day 1 of a 2-day Forum in Melbourne being organised by AITSL. Organisations that have undertaken the Pilot Projects will have the opportunity to present an overview of their Pilot, to share findings, and to discuss implications for the implementation of the Standards both within their own contexts and, more broadly, for other stakeholders within the profession. Pilot organisations will be provided with a structure for the Summary presentations by SiMERR to allow for their preparation in advance of the Forum. These presentation summaries represent another Pilot Project outcome that can be shared with the profession via AITSL's website.

2 Overview of the Pilot Projects

This section provides supporting information to elaborate on a key aspect of the overall aim of the Pilot projects, namely, their trialing within existing structures and practices. An overview of each of the groups and organisations undertaking pilot projects is provided along with the Pilot focus, groups engaged, specific research questions and data collection. Pilots are discussed within the four thematic groupings.

2.1 Teacher Self-Reflection

2.1.1 Association of Independent Schools NSW (AIS NSW)

AISNSW is the peak body for independent schools in NSW. In this capacity it represents the interests of independent schools at the state and, where appropriate, national level.

The AIS provides a range of services for member and non-member schools and employs approximately 80 staff. These schools have a combined enrolment of approximately 175,000 students and include primary, secondary and Kindergarten to Year 12 schools. Schools have a range of different educational philosophies and religions as a basis for their education focus. All schools teach the NSW Board of Studies curriculum and in addition some schools teach the International Baccalaureate curricula.

Services provided to independent schools include advice and assistance on industrial and employment relations, occupational health and safety, professional learning for teachers, school managers and support staff, services for special needs students and teacher accreditation. In addition the AIS manages state and national grants on behalf of the schools in the independent sector including the Smarter Schools Initiative, Building Educational Revolution and Digital Education Revolution and targeted programs for students with disabilities.

AISNSW collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders in the education sector, including government agencies, non-government school organisations and regulatory bodies, both in NSW and at the national level.

The proposed focus area of the pilot project was mapping Standards to performance appraisal processes. It is intended that the standards be utilised in an online *Professional Review and Development System* currently being developed by the AIS in collaboration with Madison Cross Strategy consultants and Gold-Certified Microsoft Partner OBS.

This implementation, in schools, of the PR&D system will be supported by the AIS. AISNSW will provide professional support and development throughout the process and to all those within the school that have roles in the professional review and development process.

AIS undertook the pilot project in three Sydney metropolitan schools: two K-12 schools and a Pre-school to Year 6 setting.

The pilot study in the New South Wales Independent sector was focused on how the Standards can be used to support teacher understanding of school goals. The process involved teachers:

- mapping the Standards to school goals
- identifying actions for teacher practice aligned to the Standards
- recognising and identifying evidence that can be used to demonstrate improvement in teachers' professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement
- assisting teachers to evaluate their current professional knowledge, practice and engagement, and
- selecting areas for whole school and individual teacher professional learning and support.

The specific research questions for the study were:

Research Question 1: *How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?*

Research Question 2: *How does teachers' engagement with National Professional Standards for Teachers impact on their:*

- confidence to meet the school goals and
- preparedness to engage in self-evaluation as part of the appraisal process?

Three data collection instruments were designed to capture the data from the participating teachers in three schools. Two instruments comprised a teacher questionnaire and an executive questionnaire that captured quantitative data using a four-point likert scale: not at all, limited, moderate and high. In addition teachers could provide a written comment giving a reason for their rating. Focus group interviews were conducted with a sample of teachers identified by each school. Each focus group explored issues about the processes in which they were involved during pilot study.

The focus group meetings were structured around the following questions:

1. How did you feel about the Professional Review and Development System process that linked professional teaching standards, actions and evidence to the school goals? What did you feel that you gained from the process?
2. During the first phase you identified actions that would support teachers at your school to contribute to the school goals. You also identified evidence that teachers could provide about how they could meet the school goals. How did this process help you understand the school goals? What else would have helped you to better understand the school's expectations?

3. What would you like to happen as a result of completing the self-evaluation and meeting with your reviewer?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share about the process?

The focus group interviews were audio recorded with informed written consent from the participants.

2.1.2 Department of Education and Children's Services SA (DECS SA)

The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) is responsible for ensuring the provision of high quality children's services and public education throughout South Australia. With some 25,000 people working in just over 1,000 locations, DECS sites provide service to more than 180,000 young people and their families. DECS' strategic plan is aligned with the key drivers of South Australia's Strategic Plan, and incorporated agreement and partnerships with the Australian Government in the context of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australian, the national Productivity Agenda and the collaborative COAG partnerships.

Three other organisations were involved in this collaborative project: Catholic Education in South Australia (CESA); the Teachers Registration Board (TRB; and The South Australian Primary Principals Association Inc. (SAPPA).

Catholic Education in South Australia operates within the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie to meet the needs of families who choose an education based on Christian principle in the Catholic tradition. The Teachers Registration Board was established under the Teachers Registration and Standards Act, 2004, to regulate the teaching profession. The Board maintains a teacher registration system and professional standards to ensure members are competent and fit and proper person to have the care of children, thus regulating the teaching profession within Government, Catholic and Independent sectors. The South Australian Primary Principals Association Inc. exists to promote, support and influence primary education and the leadership of primary education in South Australia.

The proposed focus area of the pilot project was how teachers can be best supported to engage in professional conversations linked to purposeful reflection. The project was premised on the idea that the process of self-reflection results in teachers engaging in self-assessment at some level in order to improve practice.

Whilst the ability to reflect purposefully is a skill utilised across all career stages, this study focused particularly on early career teachers. DECS, CESA, TRB and SAPPA all have an interest in developing and retaining high quality early career teachers in the profession. The professional capability of reflecting on teaching and learning in order to recognise and describe quality practice as described in the Standards framework can support teachers to gather evidence of their practice and has potential benefits in registration and professional development.

DECS SA undertook its pilot project in fifteen sites in Adelaide including primary, middle, secondary and specialist schools.

The specific research question that was investigated in the project was:

Research Question: How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?

To explore this key question the two key components of the pilot were the:

1. Development of observation proforma resources

2. Identification of processes to scaffold reflection against the Standards

The Pilot was structured around three phases.

Phase 1: Introduction

A professional learning day brought all participating teachers and leaders together for an introduction to the Standards and the process of reflection through observation. An observation tool had been previously developed. This tool integrated the three domains and the seven Standards of the Standards framework and promoted an approach to observation that emphasised observation as learning as different from observation for assessment. The tool was made available to all participants with an invitation to modify and use it in their own context.

Phase 2: Implementation

Practising teachers and leaders in their local context and in alignment with established site based professional development practices:

- established partnerships between experienced and early career teachers to conduct classroom observations of practice
- trialled the use of the observation tool including a pre-observation conversation, observation and a follow up professional conversation.

Phase 3: Review and report

All sites were invited to a post-study workshop which was designed to celebrate and facilitate a shared review of participants' experiences and insights gained through the pilot.

Each site submitted a narrative describing:

- **processes** used to observe teaching and learning and to scaffold reflection with the Standards to develop teaching practice

- **evaluation** of how effective and useful the observation and reflection was against the Standards
- **understandings** that have emerged about the Standards and how they will be useful to teachers and leaders

At the final workshop, table conversations were documented to address the following questions:

- What processes were effective to scaffold participation in reflective and professional conversation?
- What are three or four most important elements of a successful observation?
- What are three or four most significant learnings or directions that should be taken from this pilot?

Perception data from participants was collected via an interactive voting process at the final workshop and an online checkbox survey that was distributed to all participants for feedback.

The data that was collected for the Pilot comprised:

- An online survey of participants – 20 respondents
- An Interactive Perception data survey
- Documented table conversations based on the following questions:

  1. What processes were effective to scaffold participation in reflective and professional conversation?
  2. What are three or four most important elements of a successful observation?
  3. What are three or four most significant learnings or directions that should be taken from this pilot?

- A two-page narratives of process, evaluation and understandings from each site

2.1.3 Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ)

Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) is the peak body representing and supporting the Queensland independent schools sector. Its membership comprises 190 independent schools serving a wide range of communities and educating over 110,000 students accounting for some 15 per cent of Queensland school enrolments*.

Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) is committed to supporting schools through a focus on the following:

- Effective management and administration of government programs
- Quality professional learning opportunities for teachers and school leaders
- Research and innovation

- Creation of strategic relationships with and between schools, and external agencies.

In 2010 ISQ administered Australian and State Government programmes, in accordance with principles and guidelines established by governments, and with a commitment to equitable, effective and efficient distribution of funds to schools. During 2010 program funds totalled over $31,969,016. In addition to the administration of school grants, ISQ provides a range of activities that add value in targeted areas. These include a comprehensive range of professional learning activities. In 2010, 191 professional learning activities/workshops were conducted with 3699 participants attending. 166 schools participated in professional learning activities offered by ISQ and 121 of those schools attended more than 5 professional learning activities.

Each year, ISQ facilitates a diverse range of projects on behalf of its member schools. These projects focus on the provision of quality professional learning opportunities research and innovation. They are designed to support schools in building their educational capacity in order to improve student outcomes. During 2011, Independent Schools Queensland is facilitating over 30 projects with over 250 school participants.

The intended focus area of the pilot project was the use of the Standards to inform professional learning. Three aspects of professional learning were identified for particular investigation and these were:

1. Planning directions and establishing priorities
2. Similarities and differences between contexts when teachers engage in professional self-reflection
3. Support practices for incorporating professional learning into practice

ISQ undertook its pilot project in ten sites that included metropolitan, as well as small and rural schools.

The Pilot was set up in two stages. The first stage involved the initial exploration of the standards and the use of the Self-reflection Tool developed by ISQ. The second stage followed the completion of the Self-reflection Tool and Professional Learning Growth Plans by the teachers.

The following specific research questions were employed at each stage:

Stage 1
1. **Research Question 1**: How effectively were project leaders able to work with staff to contextualise the Standards?
2. **Research Question 2**: How well did teachers engage with the Self-reflection Tool?

Stage 2
1. **Research Question 3**: Did the tool inform future direction for teachers, for their own professional learning? What patterns emerged within schools and across schools?

2. **Research Question 4**: How useful did schools find the data for strategic planning?
3. **Research Question 5**: How could ISQ use the information collected?

Following the application and school selection process, school leaders from the 10 participating schools were invited to attend a face-to-face meeting. In most cases two people from each site attended.

The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Discuss the aims of the Pilot and the requirements for participation
- Discuss timelines and deliverables
- Engage with the Standards and determine the nature of evidence that would indicate that a teacher was at a proficient level for each descriptor
- Provide feedback on the draft version of the Self-reflection Tool
- Share information about contextual issues at each site and establish possible networking opportunities between sites.

This meeting led to the refinement of the Self-reflection Tool and the creation of a supporting document that showed the nature of the evidence for each Standard and Descriptor that would show that a teacher was demonstrating a Proficient level. On the suggestion of school leaders additional questions were added to the Self-reflection Tool in order to provide richer demographic information. For example, leaders asked to have the question: How long have you been teaching at the school? added to the profile questions.

Data from the Self-reflection Tool was captured via Excel spread sheets and set up for analysis. During site visits records of interviews were kept and broad themes and main points noted.

2.2 Professional Development

2.2.1 Asia Education Foundation (AEF)

The Asia Education Foundation (AEF) was established by the Federal Department of Education in 1992 to lead, promote and support Asia literacy in Australian primary and secondary schools. The AEF is a joint activity of Asialink at the University of Melbourne and Education Services Australia. The AEF□s national office is located within Asialink with twenty-four professional and administrative staff. The AEF receives core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and leverages funding from a range of sources including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (AusAID, Australia-Indonesia Institute, Australia-Korea Foundation, Australia India Institute etc), education jurisdictions and philanthropic organisations to design, develop and deliver services for schools and education jurisdictions. AEF services include research on Asia literacy in schools nationally; pre-service teacher education and parent organisations; Australia-Asia student and teacher collaborations using ICT; professional learning in Australia and Asia for principals and teachers; provision of grants to schools; establishment of school business- partnerships and expert curriculum advice and support. The AEF has a comprehensive web portal to support Australian educators, www.asiaeducation.edu.au

The AEF has the support of thirty national education professional associations and peak bodies, all education jurisdictions, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership through its Advisory Board, project partnerships and the AEF□s Education Alliance for Asia Literacy. Over 100 businesses and their peak bodies collaborate with the AEF through the Business Alliance for Asia Literacy.

The AEF has a long history of developing programs for teachers and schools to achieve Asia literacy for all young Australians through their schooling. The AEF developed the *National Statement for Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools* (MCEETYA 2005). AEF work includes the development of support materials to assist schools and teachers in planning and implementing appropriate policies and program. Support materials include action-planning processes, indicators of an Asia literate school, audit tools to support curriculum planning including mapping teacher and community expertise and Asia content in the curriculum.

A number of key perspectives informed the focus of the Pilot investigation and these were:

- Asia Literacy is now a policy supported by the authorising document *The Melbourne Declaration of Education Goals for Young Australians* and enacted through the Asia Priority in the Australian Curriculum

- Exploring how the new priorities in the Australian Curriculum may be evidenced in the Standards and what emphasis will be placed on the Cross-Curriculum Priorities
- Wanting to explore how teachers on the ground perceived themselves on a career path on the Standards continuum
- Wanting to find out what practitioners were currently doing in the field to evidence their perception of their place on the continuum, and
- Wanting to know what support was being offered and provided at the school, systemic and organisational level for teachers wanting to plan a career path using the Asia literacy elements in the Standards by focusing on teachers' stories.

The AEF is keen to support teachers in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the Standards in relation to Asia literacy. And, to that effect created and then evaluated support materials in the form of a self-reflection tool. This self-reflection tool was used with four teachers/principal during the interviews and later re-evaluated.

Two specific research questions were developed for the Pilot study to explore how teachers define, implement and evidence their work using the Descriptors in the Standards framework and where they see themselves on the Standards continuum.

Research Question 1: What does Asia literacy mean for a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers?

Research Question 2: How can teachers be supported in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the National Professional Standards for Teachers in relation to Asia literacy?

Data were collected in line with the following sequence:

1. Teachers/principals were interviewed face-to-face
2. Interviews were taped
3. Taped interviews were transcribed
4. Transcriptions were then crafted into linear narratives based on the Descriptors in the Standards and cases were written using a number of sub-headings including: context, the interview and then the Descriptors in the Standards
5. First drafts were discussed and evaluated by the team and rewritten using a more uniform and systematic approach
6. Cases were discussed, analysed and re drafted by the project team
7. There were three iterations of the draft cases.

2.2.2 Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA)

Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA) is a national body whose purpose is to advocate effectively and network for the good of public education, to enhance the profession and to build the capacity of the Principalship and lead in enhancing student learning policy and practice

It is made up of the members of eight state and territory principal associations, representing over 2000 secondary public school principals responsible for educating some 70% of Australian secondary students. Presidents or vice presidents of state/territory secondary government principal associations form the ASPA Executive. As one of its activities, each year ASPA organises and manages a national forum held in Canberra. This forum usually has approximately 100 invited attendees, a number of whom come from overseas representing similar secondary principal organisations or institutes. In addition to this national forum ASPA's affiliates run their own annual conferences specific to their jurisdiction.

Finally, ASPA is a joint owner, with the other three peak national principal bodies in Australia, of Principals Australia (www.principalsaustralia.edu.au), formerly APAPDC. In addition ASPA forms partnerships with other peak principal groups and commercial organisations to enhance its reach and effectiveness.

The prime purpose and focus of the Pilot project was to:

- Provide a report detailing the challenges principals expect to meet in rolling out the Standards for teachers
- Identify support materials currently being used by principals when discussing with their staff about the standards
- Identify support and materials needed by principals to assist them implement the standards

Principals were selected by the ASPA Executive. The selection was based on maximising the chances of providing a range of contexts and critical information on how to implement the Standards. After taking into account the current situation that exists in schools regarding the Standards and the likelihood that a number of principals proposed to be interviewed may not have engaged at all with the Standards an online "pre-interview survey" was develop. This survey aimed to provide interviewed principals with an introduction to the Standards, the issues involved and to have them think about what challenges they may face when required to implement the Standards in their schools.

Each principal was then interviewed and topics covered mirrored those in the pre-interview survey to a greater or lesser extent. A list of the specific research questions used for this purpose are provided below:

1. What strategies do principals propose to use to engage staff in implementing the standards?

2. What kind of structures might they put in place to do this?

3. What kind of things do they need to know and understand before they can start implementing the Standards?

4. What kind of support do they think could be helpful? And what things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?

    (i)   Materials?
    (ii)   Training?
    (iii)   Personnel?
    (iv)   Other?

5. What are the professional learning needs for your school?

    (i)   Examples of strategies?
    (ii)   A general introduction for the whole staff?
    (iii)   What are needs specific to your school, leadership team, you as a principal?
    (iv)   What kind of follow up to the Standards will be needed?

6. What things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?

7. What barriers do you think there will be to implementing the Standards?

8. How prepared are you to implement the Standards? And how will the school context influence how the Standards are implemented?

Data from the study were collected via the pre-interview survey, audio taped and transcribed interviews, and notes from interviews of a group of far north Queensland principals.

Survey data was downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet to examine written responses of principals at different stages in their career. On the survey site, data were cross-referenced to examine, quantitatively, responses from early career principals and from principals later in their career to questions about their understanding of and readiness to implement the Standards.

Two people listened to two interviews and themes emerging were identified, discussed and agreed upon. Transcribed interviews were read and themes highlighted. Themes were then identified as challenges to be faced or a strength, weakness or opportunity presented by implementation of the Standards. Challenging themes were grouped into like categories and sorted according to their frequency of mention and reported on below.

2.2.3 Department of Education, Tasmania (DoE Tas)

The Tasmanian Leadership Development Team (TLDT) is made up of Managers of Learning, the General Manager responsible for School Leadership and a

representative from the Tasmanian Principals Association. They have responsibility to design and deliver leadership development project programs (e.g., the Leading Teaching and Learning Program (LTLP)) to teachers aspiring to be teacher-leaders and to principal and system leaders. The Program Manager is responsible to the Deputy Secretaries and is in regular contact with the DoE Secretary about leadership development in the state.

The number of leadership programs is expected to expand in 2012 with the aim that this program becomes one of three core Aspiring Leaders Programs available to all teachers in the DoE.

The development of the National Teacher Standards for teachers is timely. It will be used to help develop the learning experiences in this program. There has been some exposure of the National Standards for Teachers in the state but this will be the first time it will be used to guide professional learning in a formal sense.

The professional learning focus of the Pilot was developed to enable participants in a Leading Teaching and Learning Program (LTLP) to engage in an action research project. In the case of participants in the Pilot, issues may have been of concern to a single teacher, or a single class of students. Alternatively, the issues being investigated might be of school-wide or even system-wide concern depending on the context of the participant. The idea of the inquiry is that teachers examine their own practices with some understanding of the wider implications and underpinning literature. It was anticipated that the NPST might provide a framework for teachers to begin the process of identifying both what they might investigate and what they might do with the outcomes of their inquiry.

Two specific research questions were developed around the use of the Standards as a framework for professional learning. The research questions are based on two recognised attributes of exemplary teaching practice, namely work-based research into teaching and leadership, and professional conversations designed to invite teacher self-reflection.

Research Question 1: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?

Research Question 2: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a tool for teacher self-reflection?

Participants in the Teacher Leader Program were led through an investigation of the Standards as part of the first two days of the course and the Standards were placed in the context of a critical tool for both teacher evaluation and professional learning.

A template for inquiries was developed and distributed to all participants. After the two-day introduction participants in the Pilot planned and started to carry out their inquiries with email and phone support from course leaders. Participants met again

in late September and presented their inquiries to their peers using a consultant's protocol and the protocol conversations were built around providing guidance to the successful conclusion of each inquiry.

Each participant developed an A3 summary of their inquiry using a standard poster template. They also included any instruments they developed as part of their inquiry and provided their own interrogation of the data they collected. At a meeting in late October participants presented the outcomes to their peers and took away ideas to finalise their inquiries ready for inclusion in the final report for the Pilot project.

2.2.4 Department of Education, Western Australia (DoE WA)

The Western Australian Department of Education represents the broadest diversity of schools that exist in Australia, and therefore the challenge that our system faces is preparation of teachers that will be successful across diverse contexts and regions.

The Western Australian Institute for Professional Learning (the Institute) has been established to coordinate the Western Australian Department of Education's strategic objective of building a motivated, committed and skilled workforce, able to meet the challenges of providing all Western Australian children and young people with access to a public education system which is dedicated to the highest standards of student achievement. The Institute is the overarching body responsible for the coordination and delivery of professional development for teachers and educational leaders at all levels as well as the design, management and brokering of professional development for all support staff.

The Standards provide consistent expectations for the professional capacity of all teachers, regardless of context. The issue is to gain extensive feedback from all regions to ensure a collective understanding of the career stages to ensure that self-reflection and professional learning choices are consistent across the State.

The purpose of this pilot study was to examine the usefulness of the National Professional Standards for Teachers to provide a framework for:

1. Informing the development and delivery of professional learning
2. Mapping of a professional learning curriculum for the career development of teachers
3. Development of a self-reflection tool for teachers based on the Standards
4. Linking the results from the teacher self-reflection tool to relevant professional learning available through the Institute, and
5. Development of an evaluation tool linked to the Standard for course participants to comment on the extent to which course design and content assists them to progress through the career stages of the Standards.

After ministerial endorsement of the Standards in February 2011, the Institute undertook a program of extensive consultation and feedback with school leaders and teachers to determine their needs with regard to implementation of the

Standards. Through this consultation it was determined that self-reflection and links between the Standards and professional learning were considered high priority.

From this information three specific research questions were formulated.

> *Research Question 1*: *To what extent are the Standards useful for teachers to reflect upon their practice?*
> *Research Question 2*: *How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?*
> *Research Question 3*: *To what extent is it possible to align the current professional learning program to the Standards?*

A range of consultation groups were established and focus workshops held in metropolitan and regional areas over the course of the pilot study. These workshops resulted in a consultation group of 194 educators being selected as the focus group for the pilot study. This group has provided extensive feedback that has provided options for both quantitative and qualitative analysis, suggestions, and opinions to support the work of the Institute in implementing the Standards.

2.2.5 New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (the Department) is responsible for student learning in NSW government school at all stages of schooling from early childhood through to tertiary education. Improving the outcome of every student in NSW government schools remains the key objective of the Department. Students in NSW government schools have access to a rich and varied curriculum. Within the Department, more than 49,000 permanent full time teachers are responsible for the education of over 760,000 students in over 2,200 government schools, including pre- schools, primary and infants schools, central and community schools, schools for specific purposes, secondary schools and colleges and education centres.

NSW DEC is an endorsed provider of registered professional learning with the NSW Institute of Teachers for all elements and stages of the NSW Institute of Teachers *Professional Teaching Standards*. New Scheme Teachers in NSW (that is, those teachers appointed after October 2004 in all NSW schools) are required to achieve and maintain accreditation at Professional Competence with the NSW Institute of Teachers. This condition of employment is strategically supported by the Department through the provision of equitable state-wide access to quality registered professional learning.

Of the Department's approximately 49,000 permanent teachers and over 40,000 casual or temporary teachers, there are over 27,000 teachers seeking and/or maintaining accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers at the key stage of Professional Competence. New Scheme Teachers are required to demonstrate

Professional Competence across the seven elements described in the NSW Institute of Teachers *Professional Teaching Standards*. This involves demonstrating the ability to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills that underpin the *Professional Teaching Standards* and create, on a consistent basis, an environment where learning opportunities for all students are optimised.

Currently, the Department provides approximately 800 registered courses and programs aligned to the NSW Institute of Teachers *Professional Teaching Standards*. In the last twelve months, the Department has delivered over 7,000 sessions of registered professional learning state-wide covering all elements of the NSW Institute of Teachers *Professional Teaching Standards*. The Department has also developed a number of initiatives designed to build teacher capacity and leadership, including the creation of Teacher Mentor and Highly Accomplished Teacher positions.

In this pilot study, the Department set out to create an evidence base that would inform the development of strategies to ensure teacher quality and the professional learning required to engage its teachers in the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*, particularly at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead.

To focus its investigations, the pilot study specifically explored three research questions:

> **Research Question 1**: *In developing teacher quality and teacher leadership at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead: What are the professional learning needs of teachers?*

> **Research Question 2**: *How can high quality teaching practice be best evidenced in relation to the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within the context of NSW DEC settings?*

> **Research Question 3**: *What will be involved in engaging NSW DEC teachers in the National Professional Standards for Teachers, particularly at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead?*

The pilot study's design utilised mixed-method participatory methodology, gathering both qualitative and quantitative data. There were 710 survey respondents representing a range of key groups within NSW DEC. The largest group of respondents identified as classroom teachers (54%), however it needs to be noted that head teachers, assistant principals, specialist teachers, Teacher Mentors and Highly Accomplished Teachers are also classroom teachers. Responses were gathered from:

- small group consultations held with key stakeholders in the formative stages of pilot scoping and early survey development

- consultation with key stakeholders including principal groups and the Professional Learning Endorsement Advisory Committee to test survey methodology and design implementation strategies
- focus groups with representatives from key groups of teachers including Teacher Mentors, Highly Accomplished Teachers and identified 'expert' teachers to trial the survey and provide rich, qualitative responses through facilitated group discussions
- an online survey designed to gather qualitative and quantitative data, in relation to the pilot's three research questions.

2.2.6   New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT)

The NSW Institute of Teachers (the Institute) is a statutory body within the portfolio of the Minister of Education and Training. The Institute was established under the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* with subordinate legislation, *Institute of Teachers Regulation 2010*.

The Institute has responsibility to ensure that teachers who first teach in NSW on or after 1 October 2004 are accredited as described by the Act. Its charter is to advance the status and standing of the teaching profession. The Institute oversees a system of accreditation and recognition of a teacher's professional capacity against professional standards. It also provides a process for the profession to influence the quality of teacher training and continuing professional development.

The Institute supports the quality of teachers in NSW schools by:

- Advising the Minister on the development, content and application of the Professional Teaching Standards
- Advising and assisting teacher accreditation authorities in accrediting teachers
- Monitoring the accreditation process across all NSW schools
- Ensuring the Profession Teaching Standards are applied fairly and consistently
- Advising the Minister on the approval of initial and continuing teacher education courses and programs, and
- Advising the Minister on the approval of persons or bodies who may provide continuing professional development for teachers.

In addition, the Institute supports the accreditation of teachers at the levels of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership. The Institute works extensively with a wide range of stakeholders including employers and employer representatives, the unions, principal groups, parent groups, the NSW Board of Studies, Deans of Education, members of the Australasian Teacher Regulatory Bodies, DEEWR representatives and other Australian Government agencies.

The focus of the Pilot was an investigation of the use of the National Professional Standards for Teacher for teachers' professional learning. Of particular interest was how professional learning can assist teachers to maintain their practice at the Proficient Standard, so that they can continue to be registered (or accredited) to teach. In NSW, teachers must demonstrate that they have maintained their teaching

practice at the standard of Professional Competence (Proficient) and undertake 100 hours of professional learning over a five-year period. Half of this professional learning must be courses or programs that are registered with the Institute following an approval process.

2.2.7 Queensland University of Technology

The Queensland University of Technology (QUT) is a highly successful Australian university with an applied emphasis in courses and research. Based in Brisbane with a global outlook, it has 40,000 students, including 6,000 from overseas, and an annual budget of more than AU$500 million. Courses are in high demand and its graduate employment rate is well above the national average for Australian universities. Research within QUT has a solid record of success in solving problems for industry, the community in general and the education community. QUT has strived to foster and develop a research environment that focuses on areas of research expertise, collaborates well with external partners with an emphasis on outcome for both the commercial and public good. As a leading university of technology, QUT aims to strengthen its distinctive national and international reputation by combining academic strength and practical engagement.

The QUT Faculty of Education, with around 5,000 students and 200 staff, is one of Australia's largest providers of undergraduate and postgraduate education for teachers. The 2010 *Excellence in Research for Australia* (ERA) assessment recognised QUT Education as one of the top three Australian Faculties of Education in research. This initiative assessed research quality within Australia's higher education institutions using a combination of indicators and peer review by committees comprising experienced internationally-recognised experts. QUT's Faculty of Education is able to offer a comprehensive range of education specialist research expertise including early childhood, primary, middle years and secondary programs.

In addition to strong campus-based programs, QUT has examples of innovative partnerships demonstrating exciting models of teacher education. These include: Teacher Education Done Differently; the QUTeach@Redcliffe program; the Exceptional Teachers for Disadvantaged Schools program; and a Teacher Education Centre of Excellence partnership.

The Faculty has extensive links with organisation and universities in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and USA. QUT has also worked with aid agencies (AusAID, Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank) to implement learning and development programs that lead to social improvements. The Malaysian Ministry of Education has selected the Faculty to prepare their primary school teachers through a range of collaborative degrees.

The proposal for the Pilot was an investigation of the practices involve in the interpretation of student. The basis for this investigation was a particular Focus Area within Standard 5 (*Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning*) of the

National Professional Standards for Teachers, namely, Focus Area 5.4, *Interpret student data*.

The specific research question that underpinned this study was:

> **Research Question**: *What are the data-related practices that teachers at the three nominated Career Stages use?*

This question was elaborated further for each of the nominated Career Stages:

How do proficient teachers use NAPLAN data to:

1. analyse and evaluate student understanding of subject/content
2. identify what intervention is needed, and
3. modify their teaching practice as a result?

How do highly accomplished teachers:

1. work with colleagues in the analysis and use of NAPLAN data
2. evaluate learning and teaching
3. identify what interventions are needed, and
4. modify practices?

What practices exist in your school for the coordination of:

1. student performance, and
2. program evaluation using NAPLAN assessment data in order to improve teaching practice?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to address the core research question. Interviews for the study were conducted at a mutually accepted site and at a time convenient for the nine interviewees.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face for approximately thirty minutes and followed a sequence proposed by Cavana et al. (2001). The interviews began with the ritual greeting and some general conversation. Then, a brief synopsis of what the project was about occurred as a way of establishing rapport (Cavana et al., 2001). The semi-structured approach to interviewing was outlined to assure the participants that there were no right or wrong answers and they were encouraged to elaborate on their practices and processes in relation to the use of data. With the consent of the participants the interviews were audio-recorded allowing the researcher to concentrate on the interview and to acquire a full and accurate record. Each participant was asked the following closed questions to identify and log explicit facts about them. These questions were as follows:

1. How long have you been a teacher?
2. What subjects and/or Year levels do you teach?
3. Where, what else have you taught?

2.2.8 Rural Education Forum of Australia

The Rural Education Forum Australia (REFA) is a collective of eighteen national organisations which represent the consumers and/or providers of education services in rural and remote Australia. REFA's work recognises the importance and value of people in rural and remote areas being able to realise their full potential in their environment, and the fundamental importance of education in enabling them to do this. Two of its member organisations have contributed to the pilot – The Country Education Project Inc. (CEP, based in Victoria) and the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia (SPERA).

REFA's aims are:

1. To put rural and remote education firmly on the public agenda.
2. To influence policy development and program change.
3. To assist rural and remote communities to become better informed about the status, challenges and opportunities in rural and remote education and training.
4. To develop processes that enhance communication between and among the stakeholders in rural and remote education and training, and related sectors and services.
5. To advocate for support for providers and practitioners in the delivery of rural and emote education and training.
6. To celebrate and promote best practice in education and training in rural communities to those who invest in it, those who work in it, and those who are the recipients of it and to foster the value of committed, effective and reflective practitioners.
7. To advocate for improved and equitable information and communications technology infrastructure for rural and remote Australia.
8. To advocate for quality and sustained leadership at all levels in rural education.
9. To provide advice on the nature of specific challenges to rural education and assist in finding solutions to issues.
10. To create sustainable pro-active linkages between health and education in rural and remote communities.
11. To promote to all levels of government, the private sector and industry that the resourcing of education and training in rural and remote areas is an investment.

The professional context chosen for the Pilot was the Murchison Network that consists of eight remote schools located in an area the size of Victoria, 300 kilometres from Geraldton in Western Australia. The network schools are: Cue Primary School, Mount Magnet District High School, Meekatharra District High School, Mullewa District High School, Pia Wadjarri Remote Community School, Sandstone Remote Community School, Yalgoo Primary School and Yulga Jinna Remote Community School.

The network has a teaching staff of 65 (including principals), 474 students – of whom 396 are Indigenous. Five of the eight schools are classified Level 3 (numbers between 10 and 100).

The purpose of the pilot was to develop the capacity of the Murchison Network staff to use an on-line platform for professional learning and self-reflection and to evaluate the use of the National Standards for Teachers in this process. Currently the network does not use an on-line platform for staff professional development, therefore the aim of the study is to build staff intra network capacity and to embed the tool using the Standards as a framework.

The pilot project had three specific research questions:

> **Research Question 1**: In what ways does networking within and across schools in a remote setting enhance professional learning and dialogue?
> **Research Question 2**: Does an online platform have the potential to support collegiate learning within rural and remote locations?
> **Research Question 3**: Does a blended approach enhance collegiate mentoring in supporting individual professional learning as described in the Standards?

Over the period of the pilot, the network developed three online professional learning forums through the Country Education Project website. These were:

Firstly, a network-wide forum focusing on instructional learning and numeracy using the First Steps program as a focus. Key personnel in the network immediately saw the potential to expand the number to then include:

- A principal's network exploring leadership issues through the online forum and the interactive platform Blackboard Collaborate, and
- An early Years forum.

An initial training session was held for the network staff on the connections to and use of the CEP online platform. There was ongoing online support for the Murchison staff, as required, provided by CEP personnel. After realizing the potential on the network in-service day, the principals were provided with two training sessions on the use of Blackboard Collaborate. The teacher online forum was used for staff discussion, sharing of resources and professional support.

The network planned to employ a First Steps mathematics mentor teacher who was to drive the professional learning at individual school sites, the online forum being an important part of driving this learning. Unfortunately, this appointment could not be made until September 21, as a successful candidate could not be found.

The staff completed an online survey during the week of October 24 – October 28.

2.3 Initial Teacher Education and Registration

2.3.1 Australian Capital Territory Teacher Quality Institute (ACT TQI)

The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) was established under the ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act 2010 and commenced operation on 1 January 2011. The TQI Is working with ACT schools, teacher employers, universities, education stakeholders and national bodies to implement professional teacher registration, accredit teacher education courses and will lead the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in the ACT.

The ACT Teacher education Committee was established as part of the ACT implementation of the Teacher Quality National Partnerships to oversee teacher education initiatives including improved pathways into teaching, improved practicum and a range of in-service teacher education initiatives.

The TQI Board and the Teacher Education Committee comprises key education stakeholders in the ACT including the ACT Education and Training Directorate (ETD), ACT Catholic Education Office (CEO), ACT Association of Independent Schools (AIS), ACT education Union (AEU), ACT Independent Education Union (IEU), the University of Canberra (UC), the Australian Catholic University Canberra Campus (ACU) and principals from government and non-government schools.

The Faculty of Education at UC offers teacher education courses in early childhood, primary, middle school and secondary education. There are approximately 1000 full time equivalent pre-service teacher education students out of a total of 1450 full time equivalent students. The Faculty has been offering education course for 41 years. ACU's School of Education is part of the larger national Faculty of Education. ACU has a reputation as a leading provider of quality education. The Faculty values its unique position within the University and provides learning, professional development and research opportunities for prospective teachers, practising educators and leaders, education researchers and related professionals. The Faculty works with partners in schools, early childhood settings, communities, agencies and governments and is constantly seeking new and improved ways to support Australia's education system. Currently the Faculty provides for over 7,000 students, making it the second largest provider of teacher education programs in Australia.

The proposed Pilot was part of a larger initiative developed during 2011 for trialing in the ACT in 2012. The larger project was designed to address perceived problems associated with the current approach to professional experience by exploring the potential of a trial of jurisdiction-wide professional experience program that is based on Graduate Teachers Standards and which is supported by dedicated profession development program for mentor teachers.

A single research question was refined to incorporate the following aims of the ACT pilot:

- Use the National Teaching Standards as an analytical framework to enhance professional experience programs for both pre-service teachers and mentors through improved feedback and self reflection cycles
- Use the Standards to build common understandings and a shared language to enable and support professional conversations in professional experience programs
- Use the Standards to identify the core components of a professional experience program that is consistent across teacher education institutions in the ACT
- Promote teacher quality through shared professional responsibility and collaboration
- Use the Standards to develop work embedded assessment tools:
  - a template for the professional conversations about assessment
  - a rubric for the professional experience report format.

Research Question: How will Standards 1 (Know students and how they learn) and 6 (Engage in professional learning) inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors in the ACT?

The sample for the Pilot project consisted of nine pre-service teachers and nine mentor teachers. There were 3 Early Childhood placement pairs, one in a Preschool, one on a Kindergarten class and one on a Year 2 class. There were six primary placement pairs. One of these was a special education Learning Centre placement for students with a range of mild to moderate disabilities.

The sample included one male pre-service teacher, one male mentor teacher (not paired), one Indigenous pre-service teacher and one pre-service teacher with ESL background. The pre-service teachers ranged in age from early twenties to early forties.

The mentoring teachers ranged in age from mid-twenties to early fifties. The early childhood teachers had been teaching from 32 to 38 years (33 years average) and the primary teachers had been teaching between 4 and 26 years (15 years average).

The pilot used a case study approach with analysis of narrative data and also drawing on survey data. A case study approach was chosen because it enabled a focus on a specific real-life context with the ability to use a flexible range of multiple data collection sources to build a 'rich' or 'thick' (Kervin et. al., 2006) account of what is being studied. A case study approach also enabled in depth understanding of a specific situation that could be generalised to a broader context (Babbie, 2006) as the intention was also to identify elements that could be used in the future implementation of the Standards e.g. a model of professional conversations that could be used at further career stages.

The project incorporated the following activities:

1. Engagement of stakeholders

2. Establishment of sample/participants

3. Collection of baseline survey data

4. A workshop/professional learning day

5. Structured two week professional experience program using the tools developed in the workshop

6. Collection of post participation survey data

7. Initial data analysis to identify themes

8. Collection of narrative data (interviews and focus groups)

9. Analysis of narrative and survey data.

2.3.2 Charles Darwin University – Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board (CDU – NTTRB)

The Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development has been jointly established as part of the peak Northern Territory Government – Charles Darwin University Partnership Agreement. One of the aims of the Centre is to improve the student learning outcomes for young people in the Northern by providing high quality professional learning programs for teachers, based upon the national Professional Standards for Teachers with a particular emphasis on remoter schools.

The Northern Territory Teachers Registration Board (TRB) is an independent statutory authority created under the Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act. The Board reports directly to the Minister for Education and Training and works cooperatively with all employers of teachers, but is not responsible to any particular employer group.

A Territory-wide standards implementation group (the cross-sectoral *NT Implementation Group for National Professional Standards for Teachers*) has been established, chaired by the Director of the Centre for School Leadership, Learning and Development. This *Implementation Group* comprises representation form the three school sectors, the TRB, the Australian Education Union (AEU), the Independent Education Union (IEU), professional teaching associations and CDU.

The objective of this Pilot was to investigate the use of the Standards, for the Graduate and Proficient Career Stages, to inform teacher registration requirements and professional learning for teachers in remote locations in the Northern Territory. The focus of the pilot was for each participant to undertake the two following activities:

1. Identify and collect artefacts that would allow them to develop a portfolio of evidence for moving from provisional to full teachers registration in the Northern Territory, and

2. Determine the ways in which they could identify and collect evidence of their teaching performance, through their daily work, that could be used to meet specific Standards they identified from within the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

As such, participants concurrently focused on both the NT Standards and the National Standards.

The study involved the participation of nine provisionally registered teachers in schools in the Northern Territory. The teachers that agreed to participate in this study were drawn from both the government and non-government schools sectors. These teachers were located in regional, rural or remote urban, remote and very remote schools.

All the participants were aged in their 20s or early 30s. Three of the teachers had come to teaching with prior work experience in other jobs, while the other six were young teachers who had progressed directly through school and university into teaching. One teacher had only been teaching for four weeks, while other teachers were in their first six months to a year of teaching, and two other teachers were in their second year of teaching. Two teachers were male and seven were female. The teachers involved in this study, spanned primary and secondary education, and included one teacher in a special education school. All participants took part with the active support of their respective school principals.

All the teachers taught Indigenous students in their classes, with numbers dependent upon location of the schools. One very remote school in the study had a completely (100%) Indigenous student demographic.

The specific research question for the project was:

Research Question: In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?

The project commenced with a workshop that all participants attended. The purposes of the workshop were to provide the participants with:

- an overview of the research project
- time to identify and plan which focus area and Standards within the National Standards they would focus their efforts upon during the research period
- opportunity to map the National Standards and the NT Standards, and
- time to plan an approach to collecting evidence against the Standards they identified.

The participants identified the specific Standards in both the NT Standards and the National Standards, upon which they would focus their efforts during the project. Each participant left the workshop with a three-month plan prepared about how they would collect evidence of their work at their school that would meet the Standards they identified. All participants were encouraged to use a portfolio approach and in particular, an e-portfolio system, to record and annotate their evidence.

Interviews with the participants were conducted at the beginning, mid-way and at the end of the research period. The first interview was conducted as a group interview at the workshop convened at the commencement of the project. This first interview was a group interview. It was used to gather data about each individual's teaching background and aspirations. Two further interviews were conducted, and each individual's plan formed the basis upon which these two subsequent interviews were conducted.

2.3.3 Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT)

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) is an independent statutory authority and reports to the Victorian Parliament through the Minister for the Teaching Profession, Minister Hall. It is governed by a 20 member Council, with at least half the members practising teachers. Registered teachers elect ten Council members, and ten members, including the Council Chairperson, are Ministerial appointments. The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Institute Council and oversees a staff of 60 full-time equivalent people who are employed in the areas of Registration & Accreditation, Standards & Professional Learning, Inquiries and Litigation and Corporate Services & Communication. In addition there is a Manager, Governance and a Legal Advisor.

The key functions of the Institute are to:

- register teachers in Victoria
- approve initial teacher education programs
- develop, establish and maintain standards of professional practice
- develop, establish and maintain a professional learning framework
- develop codes of ethics and conduct
- investigate the conduct, competence and fitness to teach of registered teachers, and
- impose sanctions where appropriate.

There are currently 114,695 teachers on the Institute register working across all school sectors, in casual relief and emergency teaching and in other related areas of education. The Institute maintains close relations with a diverse range of stakeholders, including tertiary educators, principal organisations, education unions, parent organisations, professional teaching associations and representatives from the Department of Education Early Childhood Development (DEECD), the Catholic Education Offices and the Independent school sector. Consultation and

communication with teachers and other stakeholders about policy and procedures for registration are an essential part of Institute business.

The focus for the pilot was to investigate the use of the Standards to inform the professional learning required for registration. The investigation was to be undertaken with Provisionally Registered Teachers (PRT) and mentors who participated in a Supporting Provisionally Registered Teacher Project (SPRT) in 2011.

The Institute has developed and implemented a Supporting Provisionally Registered Teacher Project since 2003. Its purpose is to guide and support the development of professional practice of provisionally registered teachers in relation to the Victorian standards of professional practice for full registration. The Institute directed evidence-based process provides a guided framework for the collection of evidence of professional practice through three options, which focus on the reflective and collegial practice of beginning teachers in their schools and workplaces. (See supporting document *A Guide to Provisional Registration*) This process is underpinned by strong school-based induction including mentoring by experienced colleagues. The Institute provides two days of training annually for mentors in partnership with the DEECD and with the support of the Catholic and Independent school sectors.

The overarching question for the Institute was:

> **Research Question**: *How does the current process for full registration accommodate the Standards for teachers at the proficient level?*

The questions that further focused the investigation were:

1. How are the National Standards at the proficient level understood and used by provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) for full registration?
2. How are they used by mentors to support PRTs to do this?
3. How do the National Standards support the development of PRT practice?
4. What professional learning benefits are there for mentors?

The pilot project was contextualised within school settings and in the normal practice of beginning teachers. The sample of PRTs included primary, special and secondary teachers from Government, Catholic and Independent schools, located in metropolitan, regional and rural school settings.

- Six schools in the regional Victoria and nine schools in the Melbourne metropolitan area participated.
- Two workshops (1 metropolitan location; 1 regional location) were facilitated to:
  - interrogate the Standards
  - complete pre-assessment of the Standards for proficient teachers to provide benchmark data of PRT practice
  - consider focus for collaboration between PRT and mentor over an eight week period, and

- o develop an action plan in mentor/PRT teams.
- Schools were allocated to SPL managers for follow up contact, which included a site visit by two SPL managers. This included classroom visits to further understand the context in which the PRT works. Over half the schools were visited again to provide follow up on the action plan.
- Data collection included:
  - o pre- and post-assessment of PRT practice against the Standards' descriptors by PRTs and mentors and the collection of qualitative data about development of practice
  - o evaluative questionnaire completed by each PRT/mentor pair that focussed on the value of descriptors related to evidence of practice
  - o online survey for participants completed at the end of the process – separate surveys for PRTs and mentors, who were requested to assess against the National Standards and descriptors, and
  - o individual case studies, which included the collection of artefacts in relation to using the Standards in practice - focus on collegial practice.

PRTs and their mentors worked with the Standards during term three in August and September. The first four weeks of the term four were, then, used to evaluate professional learning, collect evidence and artefacts of teacher practice.

Participants used a modified version of Option 3 provided in the current guide to full registration for PRTs. They were requested to identify an aspect of their practice that they were seeking to develop to improve student learning.

2.4 Parents, Communities and Students

2.4.1 Australian Parents Council – Australian Council of State School Organisations (APC – ACSSO)

The Australian Parents Council and the Australian Council of State School Organisations (APC – ACSSO) represent the parents of the 3.3 million students attending government and non-government school throughout Australia. Both organisation have federated structures with affiliated school patent organisations drawn form All States and Territories and we therefore have the capacity to reach into the parent communities ain all schooling contexts that comprise the membership of our affiliated organisations. Both organisation operate with a combination of extensive voluntary effort supported by professional staff.

ACSSO was established in 1947 and APC in 1962. Both organisations commenced for the purpose of providing advocacy for their constituencies in respect of education and schooling policy. Both organisation are considered key national stakeholders in schooling and are represented on most national schooling policy groups and working parties. Over the past 20 years, ACCSO and APC have worked collaboratively to promote the importance of parents engaging positively and effectively with their children's schooling.

APC and ACSSO were instrumental in the development of the National Family-School Partnerships Framework, which in 2007 was endorsed by all Minsters for Education. In 2008, the Australian Government provided funding for the establishment of the Family-School and Community Partnership Bureau that is jointly governed and managed by ACSSO and APC.

An instance of the organisations' extensive research and project work has been the development or a parental engagement professional development module for teachers. This had been piloted with all first-year teachers and their mentors within the Australian Capital Territory's Department of Education.

The focus of the proposed Pilot was to be the ways in which teachers engage parents in teaching and learning, with a particular emphasis on identifying the relevant teaching knowledge, skills and practices that underpin teacher efficacy with respect to Focus Area 3.7 (*Engage parents/carers in the educative process*) and Focus Area 7.3 (*Engage with the parents/carers*) of the National Professional Standards for Teachers. To this end, the Pilot enlisted professional support and utilised the networks of the APC and ACSSO to plan and conduct seven focus groups

It was seen as important to ensure the focus groups were as diverse as possible, and genuinely representative of various parent and teacher constituencies. Such considerations meant ensuring that the focus groups:

- Were genuinely cross-sectoral and contained an even balance of parents and teachers from Government, Catholic and Independent schools

- Represented an even balance of parents and teachers
- Represented all of the four Career Stages for teachers
- Represented early learning, primary, and secondary schools
- Represented a cross-section of socio-economic circumstances
- Represented to the extent possible a cross-section of ethnicities and cultures

Each jurisdiction used their pre-existing APC and ACSSO networks to invite a number of participants to the focus groups, and each of the focus groups contained approximately 8-10 people. The focus group design intentionally included three focus groups that were a mixture of parents and teachers, two focus groups that contained only teachers, and two focus groups of only parents. The focus groups lasted for approximately two hours, and most were held in the afternoon or early evening.

A draft set of research questions (instrument) was developed to guide the focus group discussion, which were discussed with the steering committee. The instrument was provided to participants as an agenda at the beginning of the focus group as well as a copy of the relevant pages from the Standards. At the end of each session, participants were also given a copy of the *Family – School Partnerships Framework*. Each focus group followed the agenda and included an Introduction and Background given by the facilitator, followed by an invitation to discuss each of the following 3 questions (which are the research questions):

> ***Research Question 1a****: What do you believe are the important attributes, behaviours and processes for teachers when they engage with parents?*

> ***Research Question 1b****: How do these attributes, behaviours and processes show up differently across the four categories of teachers (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead)?*

> ***Research Question 1c****: What are some examples of what this looks like in practice?*

The facilitator ensured that approximately 30 minutes were spent discussing each of these three questions. The facilitator took notes during the discussion, and after each session summarised and synthesised key findings. During the focus group's discussions, the facilitator used questioning techniques to focus discussion in order to draw out areas of agreement, explore differences and elaborate ideas presented by participants. The process was based on the facilitator's independent analysis and synthesis of the discussion. The facilitator analysed the summary notes of the focus group discussion to identify common themes and differences, synthesise key findings and identify learnings.

2.4.2 Australind Senior High School (Australind SHS)

Australind Senior High School (ASHS) is a large regional education institute located 160km south of Perth in a stunning estuary environment on the Indian Ocean. The school has 982 students enrolled from Years 8 to 12. The student population is stable, yet diverse, with increasing numbers of Aboriginal, Maori and migrant students whose families are

drawn to the area for employment in the booming Western Australian mining sector. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value is 969, and student performance is consistently above statistically similar schools, especially in Numeracy.

The school provides a series of key academic programs, including, Thinking Science (University of Western Australia), Aviation, Jazz Performance and Composition, Japanese (Language Hub for the South-West Region) and a flagship Department of Education WA, Academic Specialist Program – *Mathematics and Philosophy*.

Australind SHS is also a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) with the ability to provide Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate I and II courses in, Business, Hospitality, Engineering, Building and Construction, Information Technology and Community Service (Child Care).

Strong international education partnerships have been developed with highly performing schools, Preston School (UK), Moka (Japan) and Jinan (China) to embellish research, Asia literacy and cross-curricular perspectives as outlined in the Australian Curriculum. Engagement with these schools is through student and teacher exchanges and regular professional discourse on teaching and learning.

ASHA has a rich tradition of research-based school improvement programs. The school has developed a culture of success that is measured against both student achievement and progress. Each of the school's improvement strategies is reviewed against key performance indicators including progress and achievement targets across a range of student assessment. In 2007, the school won a *Teaching Australia: Award for School Improvement* utilising a Department of Education (WA) program called *Assessment Literacy*. In this program, teachers were trained to analyse student performance information from a range or formative and summative assessments and then use the data to monitor student performance, differentiate learning and plan for classroom improvement.

The intended focus of ASHS's Pilot was engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers to build upon its school improvement plan practices by drawing on the student voice. Specifically, student surveys designed to inform teachers of their professional practice and video footage of lessons were to be used as data sources. For the purpose of this project, the focus was narrowed to the Professional Practice domain, more specifically, Standard 3 (*Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning*) and Standard 5 (*Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning*).

Feedback garnered from the student surveys was used to inform classroom planning with the aim of improving teachers' professional practice. Seeking feedback from students was deemed potentially confronting by teachers in the initial stages of the program. Thus, collaborative pairs of teachers were written into the project design. This resulted in six pairs being invited from six different learning areas to support one another, provide mentor support in some cases, observe classroom practice, analyse survey data and plan for improvement.

Six specific research questions were developed around the themes of improving student learning (Research Question 1-2), engaging the school community (Research Question 4), and priorities for professional learning (Research Question 5 and 6):

> *Research Question 1: How can the Professional Practice domain be used to audit current professional learning practices and structures?*

***Research Question 2**: How can students contribute to improved teaching and learning?*

***Research Question 3**: How can student feedback data assist schools to improve practice?*

***Research Question 4**: What summative and formative strategies can be used to engage the community and to monitor student feedback?*

***Research Question 5**: What are the three priority areas for improving teaching identified from student feedback?*

***Research Question 6**: What issues and challenges arise from the pilot for using the National Professional Teaching Standards to inform a school's professional learning program?*

The focus of the pilot was the investigation of how the student voice could be used to inform teachers' professional practice. To capture the student voice, the method of survey data utilising a four point, *Likert Scale* was employed.

The surveys were designed to translate the developmental stages of a specific focus area from the Standards into student-friendly language. Staff were given the opportunity to write survey questions linked to their selected Focus Areas. Eight questions were written for each of the Focus Areas selected for the Pilot in an attempt to elicit students' perspective of classroom evidence that would be reflective of the Lead Career Stage. Approximately 300 students completed surveys in hard copy format.

Hard copies of surveys were collated and filed and individual spreadsheets were created for each focus area, including a weighted mean score. A summary of weighted mean scores was created in a separate spreadsheet and conditional formatting applied. Conditional formatting was coded in the following way; less than 2.5 coloured in red (concern); between 2.5 and 3.0 coloured in yellow (neutral); greater than 3.0 coloured in green (good). This formatting provided an excellent overall picture of student voice and will become a valuable tool when providing feedback to teachers in future. Finally, individual teachers were provided with simple bar graphs that illustrate pre and post-survey data.

2.4.3 Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI)

The Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI) works with a number of school and community leaders across the country to improve the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Indigenous students. This Institute engages with school leaders, communities and education provides through two specific programs, namely, the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) and the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities (SSLC).

The Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) equips school and community leaders with the belief and capacity to play a part in transforming their own schools and communities. Intensive residential programs are run throughout the year providing a dynamic learning experience and an opportunity for participants to reflect on their own values, beliefs and practices, and to work with the Stronger Smarter team and colleagues to make a difference in Indigenous education. The SSLP commence with a leadership development forum focusing on: (i) collaborative and cultural competence, and (ii) leadership to facilitate the change, engagement with Indigenous communities and transformation learning contexts. Over the past five years, over 600 teachers, principals, education executives and community leaders have participated in the program.

The Stronger Smarter Learning Communities (SSLC) is a national network of high performance schools working to gain substantial improvements in Indigenous education and to build the capacity of educators, Indigenous staff, students and community leaders. Over four years, 60 school Hubs will be established across the country, each of which has 3-4 affiliated schools A total network of 200-250 schools involved in the network are engaged in building capacity of staff and community leadership to improve Indigenous education outcomes. The SSLC project is premised on building a critical mass of leaders and school communities with the capacity and belief to make positive change and impact on Indigenous education outcomes across the country.

The purpose of the Pilot project undertaken by SSI was to engage with teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In particular, teachers at varying career stage and development were to contribute to conversations and activities that explored the relevance of the National Professional Standards for Teachers when working in diverse Indigenous community settings:

- Metropolitan Queensland primary and secondary schools with a minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: A State and Senior High school in Queensland – both SSI Hub Schools
- Provincial primary and secondary schools on the North Coast of New South Wales, with significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: Two district High Schools in Western Australia – SSI Hub and Affiliate schools
- Very remote Kimberley schools catering for a majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students, families and community members: Two Public Schools and a High School in Northern New south Wales – one SSI Hub and two SSI Affiliate Schools

Two specific research questions were developed to explore the notion that community engagement needs to be understood by, and that is looks the same for, all stakeholders in a school community. The research questions focused on describing the attributes of an impressive teacher and how they facilitate and support community engagement from community, student and school perspectives. This recognises the symbiotic relationships generated by effective teachers and also

the strategies they put in place for building a school environment that fosters genuine community engagement.

> **Research Question 1:** *What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?*

> **Research Question 2:** *What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities?*

Workshop processes used in the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program were adapted for this pilot project to promote sharing of ideas, views and beliefs in order to elicit key messages and insights from a wide range of people. The physical environment was arranged to ensure everyone could participate, positioned to be at the same level with all participants comfortable and able to contribute.

Stronger Smarter Workshop Processes:

Setting the circle

Honouring all contributions from community, students and school personnel and ensuring all contributions are regarded by all as being of equal importance and value.

Check in and check out

At the beginning and end of each session working with teachers, parents or community a Stronger Smarter Institute ritual, known as *Checking in and Checking out*, is enacted to set the values for the processes and ensure everyone is aware their contributions are equally valued, honoured and accepted.

Continuum

Specific statements are made and participants physically situate themselves along a continuum from Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. The conversations that occur around these statements indicate individual's beliefs and assumptions and facilitate rigorous debate. Participants are free to adjust their position in response to alternative views that may influence their thinking.

Visualizing the attributes of effective teachers

Drawing on their own experiences participants represent what it felt like when they had a deadly (impressive) teacher, recalling what it felt like, then describing how the teacher made them feel. Drawing on the attributes demonstrated when building these relationships.

Never ending conversation (Northern NSW workshops only)

A conversation is started where each participant adds to the previous person's comment creating an ongoing dialogue around what is community engagement and why it is important. The process of the *Never Ending Conversation* was only used at the Northern NSW workshops as it was difficult to get people to engage and it was felt that the process required more time and practice before more constructive conversations occurred.

In two sites, surveys were given to teachers to complete. While these were small sample sizes they represented vastly different contexts. It was considered important to gauge whether there were substantial differences in teachers' perceptions of what community engagement is in a school with a minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students compared with a school where Aboriginal people made up the majority of the town's population.

2.5 Summary – Overview of Engagement with the Standards Framework

Within the *Teacher Self-reflection* theme grouping of Pilot projects, three state-wide jurisdictions (two independent and one government) undertook investigations to trial implementation of the Standards. The settings chosen for these investigations included Pre-school, K-12 schools, Primary, Middle, Secondary and Specialist Schools. Through surveys and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was drawn from graduate teachers, teachers across a range of career stages and leaders within respective schools. 'Leader' encompassed those who held positions of responsibility within particular disciplines, i.e., Head teachers or their equivalent, and those with a predominantly administrative role.

From the eight research questions developed by this group of Pilots, there were three elements in their overall focus. The first related to the processes of engagement with the Standards, such as, how well the Standards could be contextualised and how well this was done. The second related to the professional learning benefits that could result from engagement with the Standards, such as, informing future professional learning directions. The third related to strategic planning and how individual schools or systems/sectors could use the Standards to support progress towards specific goals or priorities. The research questions for this group were:

Research Question: How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?

Research Question: How does teachers' engagement with National Professional Standards for Teachers impact on their:

- confidence to meet the school goals and
- preparedness to engage in self-evaluation as part of the appraisal process?

Research Question: How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?

Research Question: How effectively were project leaders able to work with staff to contextualise the Standards?

Research Question: How well did teachers engage with the Self-reflection Tool?

Research Question: Did the tool inform future direction for teachers, for their own professional learning? What patterns emerged within schools and across schools?

Research Question: How useful did schools find the data for strategic planning?

Research Question: How could ISQ use the information collected?

Within the **Professional Development** theme grouping of Pilot projects, eight professional bodies that included associations, government education systems, regulatory authorities and universities undertook investigations to trial implementation of the Standards across a range of geographic locations. The settings chosen for these investigations included Pre-school, K-12 schools, Primary, Middle and Secondary Schools. Through surveys, interviews, professional self-audits, inquiry plans and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was collected through both face-to-face and online options and was drawn from graduate teachers, teachers across a range of career stages, teacher mentors and leaders within respective schools. 'Leader' encompassed those who held positions of responsibility within particular disciplines, i.e., Head teachers or their equivalent, those with a predominantly administrative role but who also taught, and principals.

From over twenty research questions developed by this group of Pilots, there were four key features in their combined focus. The first related to the extent to which teachers could identify with Standards, i.e., their relevance across career stages. The second related to the planning, structures and processes that could provide support for teachers and school leaders to engage with the Standards at both individual, school and network levels. The third related to the use of the Standards as a 'tool' to inform the collection of feedback about professional practice through activities, such as, self-reflection, priority planning or action research. The fourth related to the particular professional learning needs of teachers at the third and fourth career stages, with a focus on processes that might enhance teacher quality and teacher leadership. The research questions for this group were:

Research Question: What does Asia literacy mean for a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers?

Research Question: How can teachers be supported in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the National Professional Standards for Teachers in relation to Asia literacy?

Research Question: What strategies do principals propose to use to engage staff in implementing the standards?

Research Question: What kind of structures might they put in place to do this?

Research Question: What kind of things do they need to know and understand before they can start implementing the Standards?

Research Question: What kind of support do they think could be helpful? And what things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?

Research Question: What are the professional learning needs for your school?

Research Question: What things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?

Research Question: What barriers do you think there will be to implementing the Standards?

Research Question: How prepared are you to implement the Standards? And how will the school context influence how the Standards are implemented?

Research Question: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?

Research Question: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a tool for teacher self-reflection?

Research Question: To what extent are the Standards useful for teachers to reflect upon their practice?

Research Question: How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?

Research Question: To what extent is it possible to align the current professional learning program to the Standards?

Research Question: In developing teacher quality and teacher leadership at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead: What are the professional learning needs of teachers?

Research Question: How can high quality teaching practice be best evidenced in relation to the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within the context of NSW DEC settings?

Research Question: What will be involved in engaging NSW DEC teachers in the National Professional Standards for Teachers, particularly at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead?

Research Question: What are the data-related practices that teachers at the three nominated Career Stages use?

Research Question: In what ways does networking within and across schools in a remote setting enhance professional learning and dialogue?

Research Question: Does an online platform have the potential to support collegiate learning within rural and remote locations?

Research Question: Does a blended approach enhance collegiate mentoring in supporting individual professional learning as described in the Standards?

Within the **Initial Teacher Education and Registration** theme grouping of Pilot projects, three professional bodies that represented State-Territory teacher regulatory authorities and universities undertook investigations to trial implementation of the Standards across a range of geographic locations. The settings chosen for these investigations included Early Childhood, K-12 schools, Primary, Middle and Secondary and Specialist Schools. Through surveys, interviews, professional self-audits, inquiry plans and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was drawn from pre-service teachers, graduate (early career) teachers and teacher mentors within respective locations.

From the three research questions developed by this group of Pilots, there was a focus on the use of the Standards as a guide to the practice of pre-service and early career teachers as they made the transition into the profession as fully registered teachers, i.e., progress through mandatory requirements. The research questions for this group were:

Research Question: How will Standards 1 (Know students and how they learn) and 6 (Engage in professional learning) inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors in the ACT?

Research Question: In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?

Research Question: How does the current process for full registration accommodate the Standards for teachers at the proficient level?

Three key education stakeholder groups were represented in the **Parents, Communities and Students** theme grouping of Pilot projects, two with a national focus and the third a school. The participants selected were associated with Primary and Secondary Schools, and they provided feedback around teacher practice that was related to how they perceived teachers' engagement with the Standards. Through surveys, focus group sessions and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' comprised parents – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, from metropolitan, regional, remote and very remote locations, as well as students, teachers and mentor teachers.

From the eleven research questions developed by this group of Pilots, there were two key elements in their overall focus. The first related to the attributes of teachers across career stages, i.e., their practices and behaviours, that contribute to successful engagement with parents and carers. The second related to auditing

practices and how teachers work collaboratively with feedback to establish priorities for professional learning. The research questions for this group were:

Research Question: What do you believe are the important attributes, behaviours and processes for teachers when they engage with parents?

Research Question: How do these attributes, behaviours and processes show up differently across the four categories of teachers (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead)?

Research Question: What are some examples of what this looks like in practice?

Research Question: How can the Professional Practice domain be used to audit current professional learning practices and structures?

Research Question: How can students contribute to improved teaching and learning?

Research Question: How can student feedback data assist schools to improve practice?

Research Question: What summative and formative strategies can be used to engage the community and to monitor student feedback?

Research Question: What are the three priority areas for improving teaching identified from student feedback?

Research Question: What issues and challenges arise from the pilot for using the National Professional Standards for Teachers to inform a school's professional learning program?

Research Question: What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?

Research Question: What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities?

Across the Pilot projects then, in their responses to trialing the Standards, key emphases for engagement can be broadly summarised as:

1. processes of engagement with the Standards, such as, how well the Standards could be contextualised and how well this was done

2. the extent to which teachers could identify with Standards, i.e., their relevance across career stages

3. the planning, structures and processes that could provide support for teachers and school leaders to engage with the Standards at both individual, school and network levels

4. use of the Standards as a guide to the practice of pre-service and early career teachers as they made the transition into the profession as fully registered teachers, i.e., progress through mandatory requirements

5. particular professional learning needs of teachers at the third and fourth career stages, with a focus on processes that might enhance teacher quality and teacher leadership.

6. professional learning benefits that could result from engagement with the Standards, such as, informing future professional learning directions

7. strategic planning and how individual schools or systems/sectors could use the Standards to support progress towards specific goals or priorities.

8. use of the Standards as a 'tool' to inform the collection of feedback about professional practice through activities, such as, self-reflection, priority planning or action research

9. auditing practices and how teachers work collaboratively with feedback to establish priorities for professional learning

10. the attributes of teachers across career stages, i.e., their practices and behaviours, that contribute to successful engagement with parents and carers

3 Findings from the Pilots

An overview of the findings from each of the Pilot projects is presented in this section. The specific research questions for each Pilot are restated as a context and, as with the previous section, projects are presented within the four thematic groupings.

3.1 Teacher Self-reflection

3.1.1 Association of Independent School New South Wales

Research Question 1: How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?

Research Question 2: How does teachers' engagement with National Professional Standards for Teachers impact on their:

- confidence to meet the school goals and
- preparedness to engage in self-evaluation as part of the appraisal process?

A Grounded Theory approach was used for the study to gather inductively from the data how teachers and schools can use the Standards to inform future professional learning plans both for individual teachers and the whole school.

Teachers reported that a range of strategies assisted them to use the professional standards for teaching to focus and build a shared understanding of their school goals for improvement. "The PD sessions were useful in understanding more the philosophy of teaching and expectations of all stakeholders". Using the Standards to map to the school goals increased teachers' understanding of what the school goals mean in terms of their practice as a teacher, subject or stage coordinator or member of the school executive.

Teachers were actively involved in the critical conversations in somewhat unfamiliar areas of school practice such as school goals, what these mean in terms of classroom practice and how they can be demonstrated using a set of standards as a basis. This built teachers' sense of ownership and buy-in that empowered them as key actors in the process. "The staff came together to come up with suggestions [for actions and evidence]. We had a say, ownership of the outcome. This makes me feel good about the process."

The process of teachers using a standards-based approach to collect evidence of their current contribution to meeting the school goals raised a number of challenges. One challenge was related to how evidence could be collected. One teacher indicated that their effort towards meeting the school goals would be "hard to prove without observation". Another teacher reflected that "the goals seemed easy and

achievable but broad and thus, it is difficult to pinpoint my progress in achieving these goals. I need to know what the expectations are".

Teachers consistently reported that using the Standards provided a structure and foundation to support their collection of evidence to demonstrate their contribution to meeting the school goals for improvement. The process affirmed teachers' areas of strength while in a constructive way assisted them to identify areas for further development directly related to the school goals.

An analysis of the data highlighted three key drivers: capacity building; group solutions; and integrated professional learning strategies. These key drivers are reported below in the context of using the professional standards for teaching to improve professional practice and to contribute to the achievement of the schools' teaching and learning goals. These results align with Fullan's (2011) drivers for whole school reform.

1. Capacity Building

First, using the Standards for teaching assisted teachers to understand what contribution they could make to their school goals for improvement. Rather than focusing on accountability, the process built teachers' capacity to participate in a rigorous and supported activity for self reflection anchored in professional standards and evidence-based practice. The professional dialogue teachers engaged in assisted them to identify high priority actions they need to take to demonstrate aspects of their practice that contributed to meeting the school goals.

2. Group Solutions

In addition, the collaborative processes that included small group discussion and whole group synthesis of actions and evidence established clarity about the expectations of what teachers need to know in relation to subject content and expanding teachers' repertoire. Furthermore, teachers' and school leaders' interactions in the review interviews established that there can be flexibility in how individual teachers demonstrate the standards through their classroom practice while ensuring that, collectively, the scope of evidence communicates the expectations of what evidence demonstrates that the school goals have been met.

3. Integrated Professional Learning Strategies

Thirdly, teachers' engagement with the standards through collaborative and supported processes built ownership as well as trust to review their current contribution and future needs to meet school goals. These aspects of a school's social capital were developed and tested in the pilot project. This process resulted in an agreed set of actions and evidence that represented synergies between the school's expectations and the school's commitment to support professional learning directly related to achieving the school goals for improvement. Teachers reported a shift had occurred from a perceived fragmented approach to traditional forms of professional development to more coherent, focused and strategic activities within the school to support their future professional learning.

Mapping professional standards for teaching to school goals when conducted in a supported and collaborative environment represents a strategy lever for whole school change (Fullan, 2011). The process models the 'right drivers' to engage teachers and school leaders in cycles of continuous improvement that inspires teachers to work together in a collective effort to demonstrate high standards of practice. Using the Standards in this Pilot highlighted the need for program coherence between the school goals and future plans for professional learning and the structures and organisation that the school put in place to ensure that both the strategies and resources are targeted and effective. The Standards provided a strong structural framework to guide the development of the three schools' future professional learning plans.

3.1.2 Department of Education and Children's Services South Australia

Research Question*: How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?*

To explore this key question the two key components of the pilot were the:

1. Development of observation proforma resources

5. Identification of processes to scaffold reflection against the Standards

Qualitative and Quantitative data were collected from participants at the end of the pilot. These data were considered by the steering committee for common themes and identification of effective processes for observation and use of the Standards.

The pilot participants identified three significant directions for the future.

Firstly, from their experiences in the project, teachers and leaders considered the observation of teacher practice as a powerful professional learning activity. Despite some trepidation regarding the observation of colleagues, the overwhelming conclusion was that the observation tool was effective in both providing a platform for deep professional conversations and was an effective way of engaging with the Standards.

Secondly, the Standards provided both a common language for discussion of teaching practices and a continuum for growth in the profession.

Thirdly, the use of the Standards with the observation tool has the potential to influence school culture. Participants commonly described embedding professional learning and the Standards in whole school structures as having the potential to lift the profile and standards of the profession.

Pilot participants were asked to identify processes that were effective to scaffold reflective and professional conversation using the observation tool and the Standards. There were four processes that participants identified as foundational to the success of the observation and reflection process. They were:

- The importance of scheduling time for a pre and post-observation conversations so that there is ownership and clarity of focus, and timely feedback. This empowers the participants to engage in observation in an ongoing manner.

- The need to focus on a limited number of standards and descriptors during the observation and reflection. This allowed more focus and specificity in the observation and discussion.

- The purpose of the observation process must be clear to all participants. Discussions about what will be observed in the lesson and the planning that has occurred promoted this clarity for participants.

The importance of the quality of the relationships between the participants was stressed. 'Multi-level trust' was identified as essential for a collegial relationship that is non-threatening and professional, one that fosters discussion through the use of respectful genuine feedback in the "language of a trusted colleague".

The pilot has shown that the observation of teaching practice of colleagues is a powerful means of communication and professional learning for teachers and leaders.

An observation tool based on the Standards provided a focus and support for strategic feedback and reflection.

A three-part process that was defined by the observation tool and accompanying instructions promoted the use of observation as learning.

Teachers and leaders in this pilot unanimously valued the common language provided by the Standards as an effective platform to allow teachers to discuss their teaching experience professionally. The standard descriptors provide a rich language that teachers can readily access to talk about their teaching in practice. In this way the observation tool enabled teachers to identify strategies, discuss practice and work together to further their own achievement as professional educators and grow a professional learning community.

The observations conducted within the pilot, had a dual effect enabling both early career teachers and more experienced teachers to reflect on and discuss teaching practice. Many teachers in the pilot commented on the value of being challenged to articulate their theory and practice.

The processes employed by participating sites were collegiate and grounded in leaders and teacher's commitment to using observation and the Standards. It was noted by both teachers and leaders that formalising structures for observation of colleagues work has the potential to engage a whole school community in a discussion of exemplary practice.

3.1.3 Independent Schools Queensland

Research Question 1: How effectively were project leaders able to work with staff to contextualise the Standards?
Research Question 2: How well did teachers engage with the Self-reflection Tool?
Research Question 3: Did the tool inform future direction for teachers, for their own professional learning? What patterns emerged within schools and across schools?
Research Question 4: How useful did schools find the data for strategic planning?
Research Question 5: How could ISQ use the information collected?

The project involved the collection of both qualitative and quantitative forms of data throughout two stages of the Pilot. During the first stage, teachers used the Standards to reflect on their practice and then determine areas of strength and areas for improvement. This stage included the completion of an online self-reflection tool. During the second stage, common issues were identifies for targeted professional support. An analysis was undertaken of areas of strength and school leaders were supported to develop school plans for professional learning based on observed common elements. Teachers completed another survey to reflect on the usefulness of the process.

On completion of the survey by teachers, data were collected and collated in a series of linked spreadsheets so that an array of queries and profile graphs could be generated. The data sets were set up so that schools see the results of their own school but also see the overall results from the rest of the sample (429 participants). It was also possible to see a profile for an individual teacher.

Contextualising the Standards in terms of what evidence, in their school setting, would demonstrate proficiency was identified as a challenge during site visit interviews. All leaders commented on the need for additional support materials to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of each Standard. In terms of teachers' familiarity with the Standards, 198 teachers said that they were familiar, very familiar or extremely familiar with the Standards. This represents 46% of the total number of participants.

All school leaders commented that the Standards would help focus their conversations with staff about professional growth. They also felt that this would complement their current processes and that it would be possible to align the Standards with their current expectations for staff. All leaders commented that in general teachers were very positive about the process. Initially there was concern about whether or not the process would be linked to employment and pay scales. Once teachers trusted that the process was about professional growth planning they had a positive attitude.

The Self-reflection process was seen as positive and an important step in the process of Professional Growth Planning. It was also seen as useful beginning for further conversations about teaching practices. For example, 78% of teachers surveyed reported that they have undertaken more than 30 hours of professional learning during 2011. Table 1 on the next page shows the responses of those teachers who undertook less than 30 hours of professional learning. Significantly many of these teachers rated themselves at Graduate level for several standards with 72.7% of these teachers rating themselves at Graduate level for Standard 1.4.

The Data Analysis Tool which provided schools with profiles of their teaching staff was highly effective for identifying patterns and consequently for strategic planning at a school and sector level. School leaders identified a number of issues:

- the identification of specific areas for whole school Professional Learning
- an opportunity to target specific areas for individuals and ways to support staff
- a way to link staff members for mentoring
- identifying career pathways and opportunities for staff
- identifying possible reasons why some staff feel reluctant to take on new initiatives
- differentiation of Professional Learning to meet groups of teachers or departments
- a starting point for conversations about performance and a way to offer focused, positive feedback, and
- alignment with existing processes

ISQ has been able to use the information to identify specific areas that need to be included in the Professional Learning Program for the sector. A specific example is that ISQ will be offering training in the use of the Indigenous Bandscales that help teachers to identify the language and literacy needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Table 3: Teacher with less than 30 hours of Professional Development in 2011

Description	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students	0.0%	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%
1.2 Understand how students learn	0.0%	36.4%	63.6%	0.0%
1.3 Students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds	27.3%	54.5%	18.2%	0.0%
1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	72.7%	18.2%	0.0%	9.1%
1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities	18.2%	36.4%	36.4%	9.1%
1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability	27.3%	54.5%	9.1%	9.1%
2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area	0.0%	45.5%	54.5%	0.0%
2.2 Content selection and organisation	9.1%	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%
2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%
2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians	63.6%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%
2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies	9.1%	63.6%	27.3%	0.0%
2.6 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	0.0%	63.6%	18.2%	18.2%
3.1 Establish challenging learning goals	9.1%	18.2%	72.7%	0.0%
3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs	0.0%	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%
3.3 Use teaching strategies	0.0%	54.5%	45.5%	0.0%
3.4 Select and use resources	0.0%	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%
3.5 Use effective classroom communication	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%
3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%
3.7 Engage parents/carers in the educative process	18.2%	54.5%	18.2%	9.1%
4.1 Support student participation	0.0%	63.6%	27.3%	9.1%
4.2 Manage classroom activities	9.1%	45.5%	45.5%	0.0%
4.3 Manage challenging behaviour	9.1%	54.5%	36.4%	0.0%
4.4 Maintain student safety	18.2%	36.4%	45.5%	0.0%
4.5 Use ICT safely, responsibly and ethically	0.0%	72.7%	18.2%	9.1%
5.1 Assess student learning	0.0%	72.7%	27.3%	0.0%
5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning	0.0%	72.7%	27.3%	0.0%
5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements	0.0%	63.6%	27.3%	9.1%

5.4 Interpret student data	9.1%	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%
5.5 Report on student achievement	0.0%	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%

3.2 Professional Development

3.2.1 Asia Education Foundation

Research Question 1*: What does Asia literacy mean for a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers?*

Research Question 2*: How can teachers be supported in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the National Professional Standards for Teachers in relation to Asia literacy?*

The main methods used to interrogate data collected were:

1. The project team conducted interviews and received information (though interview or discussion with a third party).
2. The team would then meet as a group (either through teleconference or email) and discuss and compare findings, issues and challenges. The team used its professional tentacles to discuss the pilot study's processes and findings more widely.
3. The information received was mapped against the purpose of the project.

A series of three types of questions were used to elicit responses:

1. **General questions** were designed to reveal the kind of attributes an Asia literacy teacher might have.

2. **School-based questions** focused on how the implementation of Asia literacy in schools can be used to demonstrate what a teacher does in school and how this activity may be translated into the career path continuum in the Standards.

3. **Standards based questions** were intended to examine and interrogate the meaning for a particular context so that they could be used to identify where an individual stands and to determine any areas of further professional development that may be needed to assist in their achievement.

The educators who were interviewed grappled with the openness of the language of the Descriptors during the interview and in subsequent interviews and what it meant for them as Asia educators. Because there were no exemplars or definitions the teachers/principal spoke freely and laterally about what they had achieved in relation to what they thought the descriptors meant. Their work was evidenced in a range of ways: through their principals and colleagues, units of work, lesson plans and the presentation of a range of documentation. Because the Descriptors are not prescriptive they were interpreted in slightly different ways by the

teachers/principals interviewed, that is they brought their own knowledge, contexts and experiences to the analysis of the Descriptors.

Of note, is that while the principals/teachers generally agreed with the interviewee as to where they were on the continuum in the Standards, this was not always the case. 'Perceptions' and evidence of Standard attainment was a grey area in this pilot study and require further analysis.

However, what can be stated with tentative confidence is that what distinguishes a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the Standards is praxis. All four educators involved in this pilot have grappled with understanding the philosophy of Asia literacy and the need for Asia literacy and have enacted it in their own classrooms and school settings.

All of them have explored and engaged with Asia literacy and with a range of contemporary educational theories and policies, such as: the Asia Priority in the Australian Curriculum, Cooperative Learning, Inquiry Learning or Learning by Design to name a few. They have not stagnated in their professional growth and appear to be constantly searching for new ways to teach and learn. To that end, they have all participated in a range of professional learning to enable that praxis.

Proficient and Highly Accomplished teachers in the pilot study shared similarities in that they "initiated, engaged, analysed, participated, contributed, undertook or applied" (taken from the range of Descriptors in Standards 2 and 6) and they could evidence this through comprehensive portfolios of actions. A very strong message that came from the interviews is that what distinguishes Lead teachers in Asia literacy is that they are enablers. As such, Lead teachers may lead from the classroom and not be a principal or deputy principal.

Teachers need to be supported professionally through a range of approaches and agents, which may include:

1. **The continuation of programs that have a proven record of professional development in Asia literacy.** Principals and Deputy Principal in all schools across Australia need to continue to be professionally developed in Asia literacy through established programs such as the AEF managed *The Leading 21st Century Schools: Engage with Asia – An initiative for principals – Professional Learning Program*, a DEEWR funded, three-year project which has been delivered to over 500 principals across Australia. Building on this initiative would ensure that principals are aware of how to implement the Asia Priority and support teachers at a grass roots level.
2. **A revision of existing documentation in Asia literacy**. *The Asia Scope and Sequence – Engaging young Australians with Asia* documents produced by the AEF, could be revised to incorporate the new Asia Priority in the Australian Curriculum. The revised documentation could be used by teachers in conjunction with the Standards.

3. **Subject associations:** Cross-Curriculum priorities, such as the Asia Priority in the Australian Curriculum, are unique and new, and operate somewhat differently to Key Learning Areas. As such they need to be supported more strongly by <u>all</u> subject associations.

4. **Systemic support.** Support from systems, sectors and local teacher registration agencies to strengthen teachers understanding of the Cross Curriculum elements of the Australian Curriculum and how these work in concert with the Standards.

A number of key points and/or themes have emerged from a consideration of the data collected during this Pilot:

1. The Asia Priority in the Australian Curriculum needs to be given the imprimatur of its authorising document *The Melbourne Declaration of Education Goals for Young Australians* and needs to be included in the Standards as a reference point for all educators.

2. At this stage, teachers and principals are not engaged consciously and systematically with the Standards for Teachers.

3. Teachers need to be supported in a range of ways by a range of agencies in exploring how the Standards can be applied to Asia literacy and the Asia Priority.

4. What distinguishes a Lead teacher in Asia literacy is that they are enablers and evaluators and as such they can lead from the classroom as well as from Principal, Deputy Principal or other school leadership positions.

5. What links and distinguishes a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the Standards is praxis.

6. A more rigorously tested self-assessment tool needs to be developed to support teachers and principals.

7. The development of indicators or exemplars at each level in the Standards may aid all teachers in understanding how their career path in Asia literacy can be manifested through the Descriptors in the Standards.

8. The results of this pilot study are embryonic and require further development if they are to be tested and made useful and meaningful to teachers across Australia.

3.2.2 Australian Secondary Principals Association

1. What strategies do principals propose to use to engage staff in implementing the standards?

2. What kind of structures might they put in place to do this?

3. What kind of things do they need to know and understand before they can start implementing the Standards?

4. What kind of support do they think could be helpful? And what things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?

(v)   Materials?

(vi)   Training?

(vii)   Personnel?

(viii)   Other?

5. What are the professional learning needs for your school?

    (v)   Examples of strategies?

    (vi)   A general introduction for the whole staff?

    (vii)   What are needs specific to your school, leadership team, you as a principal?

    (viii)   What kind of follow up to the Standards will be needed?

6. What things do you think will help principals implement the Standards?
7. What barriers do you think there will be to implementing the Standards?
8. How prepared are you to implement the Standards? And how will the school context influence how the Standards are implemented?

Seventeen of the twenty-four principals individually interviewed filled in the pre-interview survey and provided their perspectives of the Standards and insights into models implementation. Cross-correlation of principals' thoughts about the implementation of the NPST versus their time as a principal were made and the results recorded and presented in the section on Results. Analysis of the survey data and the interview transcripts showed the broad agreement between the two modes of data collection.

Themes from the transcription of the audio-tapes of the interviews were identified, checked with the interviewer and categorised according to the type of theme. Comments made in the online survey were also read and combined with the themes from the transcriptions. In addition to the cross-referencing of views about the NPST against the principals level of experience, state/territory and region the majority of transcribed interviews was entered into a word frequency diagram generator, common words ignored and the final diagram checked for consistency with the major themes identified.

Most principals indicated that they would use current structures, policies and procedures to implement the standards: "We have [had] teacher standards in this state for many years now and would not view national standards as much [of] a change to what is already in place" or that they intended to use the standards as a "tool for encouraging teachers to reflect on their practice. They are also extremely useful for commencing 1:1 conversations with teachers as they provide a range [of] entry points that are clear and unemotive." Principals early in their career seemed not as clear about the processes they would use.

Many principals indicated that their current structures that exist include regular staff and executive/leadership team meetings where teaching practice is a focus. One of the most comprehensive responses was where a principal noted that they held

"Regular fortnightly professional learning sessions reflecting on teacher practice and promoting digital and personalised pedagogy**.**"

A number of principals indicated that they had a good understanding of the Standards with 11 out of the 17 respondents saying they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they "have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the National Professional Standards for Teachers?" However, the degree of understanding expressed in the survey by participants was not as evident in the interview. A concerning aspect of these results is the observation that only 1 principal early in their career agreed with this statement.

There were a number of areas – including materials training and personnel, which were canvassed by principals as being supportive of successfully implementing the Standards. The majority of comments in the Pre-Interview Survey related to the provision of professional learning and/or examples of implementation of the standards. One principal called for a "clearly understood framework for leading for improved practice."

A number of principals commented that Professional Learning is critically important as it will help to ensure consistency across schools and jurisdictions: "I have a great concern about how consistency will be established, maintained and ensured across the country."

Continued system support and in-service for principals and their staff were identified as essential for the implementation of the Standards. In particular, the importance of having tools or instruments to assist them or their leadership team have conversations with teachers about their teaching was acknowledged. Such tools related especially to classroom observations, self-evaluation (to give a beginning to the conversation), guides on how to develop a climate of co-operation, guides to the giving and receiving of feedback etc. A number of barriers were mentioned which basically stemmed from a lack of support from the system or a lack of things mentioned as being required to implement the Standards, e.g.:

- Teachers need to be very aware of what the standards are and what they mean for them
- Time, interest from teachers to buy in, alignment to performance and registration processes in states
- Possible Union activity
- Lack of high quality professional learning for principals and supervisors
- Time management within heavy workloads will be an issue. Interest levels of staff in the performance standards. Industrial issues
- In general discussions with staff:
  - Teachers concern over the intention of the Standards
  - Perception of how this is valued by the system, remuneration etc
  - A climate of add on and accountability without authority

- Lack of time, not enough Professional Learning and professional discussion because of competing topics/areas of professional development needing their attention, e.g. Australian Curriculum and understanding NAPLAN analytically are but two.

Principals were asked to self-asses their readiness to implement the Standards. It would appear that less experienced principals feel less prepared to implement the Standards and some states and territory principals feel likewise.

Principals thought the challenges that exist for the implementation of the Standards centred on a number of things that are listed in rank order in Table 2 below.

Table 4: Challenges

Challenges
Tools for
Self assessment
Reflection
Data gathering
Classroom observation
Culture – developing or changing
Professional growth
Supportive structures
Staffing profile
Engagement of teachers in the NPST
Incentive/imperatives for teachers
State Structures
Links to performance management
Language

3.2.3 Department of Education, Tasmania

Research Question 1: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?

Research Question 2: How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a tool for teacher self-reflection?

Each inquiry that formed part of the Pilot was summarised into a standard two-page template that can be linked back to a fuller A3 poster and/or inquiry design. The summary documents provided in the Appendices to the Final Report form the basis of that appear in Table 3 below. While the inquiries are qualitative and highly contextualized each has been examined for links not only to the research questions, but to the wider state and national contexts.

Table 5: Summary of comments and conclusions relevant to the use of the Standards as a framework to teacher inquiry and as a tool for self-reflection

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
1	A model that combines Cognitive Coaching and the AITSL Standards to assist teacher self-reflection and future career direction	The AITSL Framework and Cognitive Coaching approach complement one another. If you have the Standards, and techniques for coaching a staff member, then it will assist in performance management discussions. In using the AITSL Framework, leaders are able to understand their staff's strengths and areas for improvement very quickly and they can use this knowledge to plan future PL for their staff. Leaders can also self-assess their own leadership through the AITSL Framework and employ the Cognitive Coaching approach to their own thinking.
2	To monitor and to improve my teaching through Standard 5 (effective assessment and feedback processes).	Teaching standards are an objective, organized method of firstly evaluating our present standard then secondly planning goals to achieve growth. This objective assessment against credible and clearly defined skills can only enhance our profession and also support a truly transparent career path.
3	Teachers using data from student feedback surveys (linked to National Professional Teaching Standards) to self-reflect for improved student engagement and motivation.	The direct links made between the student survey questions and the National Professional Teaching Standards allows us to get very specific information about where to go with our professional learning and support to meet the needs of teachers. I can see that this information will be useful in assisting teachers reflect on their teaching practice, and undertake action learning. It will also be a useful tool in Leading for High Performance discussions in the teacher review process. It is evident that my school needs to look at: • Making Learning intentions clear • Assessment strategies • Feedback to students.

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
4	Using the National Professional Standards for Teachers as well as student feedback on teacher practice to assist in improving behaviour management, in particular the use of Restorative Practices, at our school.	Being able to refer to the National Professional Standards for Teachers as part of this process was extremely beneficial in that it allowed teacher to participate in identifying relevant, timely areas of focus in terms of their own professional development. The use of the NPST enabled the inquiry and resulting process to be widely applicable to teacher professional development and practice in our school. The use of the NPST enabled us to draw out particular areas of focus that were relevant to both our school priorities, the RP focus group and teacher professional development needs in our school.
5	Using the National Professional Standards for Teachers to reflect on their own practice, in particular the feedback criteria.	Other teachers in my learning area are conducting a similar process with their classes so it will be valuable to have a discussion about how we deal with feedback as a subject team and what we can do to improve. In conclusion: • Students value feedback • Students need tasks explained clearly • Students value high teacher expectations • Students want learning tasks to be meaningful • Assessments need to be carefully explained, both in terms of how they will be implemented and how the results are arrived at.
6	An evaluation and improvement of the mathematics teaching and learning program	The feedback provided by students through the first survey has been acted upon. Explicit links have been made for the students of the content of the mathematics program and real world application, and greater challenge has been provided to students through differentiation of the content of the program. On completion of the actions, students will be provided with a post inquiry survey to determine the effectiveness of the actions. The evaluation of the mathematics program has led to an awareness of the aspects that determine increases in student learning outcomes. The National Professional Standards for Teachers has provided an avenue for reflection, evaluation and refinement of the mathematics program.

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
7	What levels of feedback are being used in the classroom?	The knowledge I acquired throughout this research project has and will continue to impact on my teaching and mentoring practice. It has made me think far deeper about what feedback I am giving to students/colleagues; does it address the where and how they are going and where to next?
8	Investigation of how the National Professional Standards for Teachers can be used by teachers to reflect on their practice and how feedback during Mental Computation lessons can affect students' learning.	Throughout the inquiry process, I have been made more aware of my own teaching and the feedback that I am giving students. It has made me assess and critique my own teaching practice, give specific feedback and give it immediately after the behaviour occurs.
9	Embedding the AITSL standards into the Leading for High Performance processes and encouraging teacher reflection and goal setting against the standards.	Professional Conversations, conducted properly in a non-threatening, supportive and trusting environment can provide a great conduit for honest reflection & goal setting. These conversations have been effective in previous years, but had been undertaken with a set of structured questions that reflected school goals, without a strong emphasis on the individual practitioner.

Adding the National Professional Standards to this process was both productive and educational as it allowed staff to gauge within a national context their current level of work. It allowed for a more specific set of individual goals that had a developmental layer wrapped around them.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers is a document that offers schools and school leadership teams a great tool to assist with staff goal-setting and performance reflection. Embedded properly through the Leading for High Performance processes at a school-wide level could enable progress triggered by not only the external drivers on schools, but also the internal drivers for individual teachers that are reliant upon motivation and professional engagement. |

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
10	Integrating the National Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) as a positive planning tool for Individual Professional Learning Plans (IPLP) which will enhance understanding, direction and the learning culture within a school community.	For this model to be effective and worthwhile the timing of implementation each component needs to be gradual and deliberate. Too much information at any one stage could cause individuals to feel overwhelmed and/or negative about the Standards or the process. Even the time allocated on the calendar needs to be considered to ensure that the roll out does not clash with other stressors. Exciting opportunities building on this model could include: • Team of individuals in a school (or a network of schools) working together to achieve Proficient, Highly Accomplished or Lead on a particular standard • Encourage/ embrace student feedback on teaching • Increase professional observation and conversations opportunities across the school
11	How can a networked Professional Learning Community (PLC) engage graduate teachers in using the National Professional Standards for Teachers?	Schools need to be attentive to assigning mentors/coaches to beginning teachers – while a teacher may be give the impression of being an effective classroom practitioner are they competent in ALL the proficient teaching standards? There are benefits in conducting a dual coaching approach to working with the Standards: the networked PLC supports the collective learning and critical dialogue around the same message which can continue without the coach facilitating; while the one-on-one coaching brings the broad message down to the classroom context for the beginning teacher – the application of knowledge becomes personalised and feedback very relevant to each. Over the five sessions the teachers arrived at a collective 'ah-ha' moment. In becoming proficient with a fuller knowledge of how students learn and how to plan for this, they had a shared view that their assessment and feedback strategies needed to be better. To achieve this, they believe a teacher would have to be across more than one of the Standards and have access to a significant school leader, independent of their workplace, who could facilitate discussion.

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
12	The development of "throughlines" (Literacy, Numeracy, Communication and Health & Wellbeing) from our school curriculum in conjunction with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, to inform teaching, assessment and reporting at our school.	The high expectation of teachers in each of the career stages outlined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers has been well received in our school. This document has provided teachers with focus and also accountability of practice. The standards have been clear especially for our setting. They have provided us with excellent professional discussion and debate. The development of our throughlines was the original focus but as time has gone on it has been overtaken by the professional standards for teachers. It has become the default in our ongoing knowledge cycle and our professional practice. The standards have been linked back to our curriculum and have informed our assessment and data collection, providing feedback and reporting on student learning (Standard 5).

By a school linking their PL to the National Professional Standards for Teachers there is a platform for evidence-based outcomes when facilitating PL sessions for staff. The general feedback process has indicated a positive reaction to professional learning sessions linking in with the National Standards for Teachers. |
| 13 | Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning in year 8. Evaluate and improve teaching programs Standard 3.6 from National Professional Standards for Teachers | Using the NPS as a tool to assist all teachers move from Graduate to Proficient to Highly Accomplished could be a reasonable goal where no one person on a team is responsible for the team. I believe that most teachers are Proficient within the team and at times demonstrate aspects of Highly Accomplished teachers. It was obvious during discussions the valuable contributions each person makes in their classroom, however this is often not shared and celebrated with others and if so it is done in an ad hoc' manner. The successes individual teachers have with classes and particular students are often not celebrated or recognised due to the lack of team structure or system of communication. |

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
14	An investigation into improving students' narrative writing through the provision of timely feedback during the learning process.	Assessing, providing feedback and reporting on student learning is a "key element of quality teaching" (Standard 5 National professional Standards for Teachers, February 2011). Many students are now showing that they are enjoying writing more by their active involvement in the writing process. The teachers are writing alongside the students, modeling and sharing the writing process. The opportunity to think, question and talk and provision of more time to write are some of the factors that have increased engagement. Teachers involved in this inquiry have developed a more critical and reflective approach to the teaching of writing and have shown development in confidence and skill as teachers and leaders in writing throughout the school. Having now identified a potential whole school approach to improvement in writing we now intend to act as change agents and activists within our school.
15	Using feedback methods to develop students' Historical Knowledge, Understanding, Skills and General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum	Targeted feedback was effectively provided through self and teacher assessment using teacher designed rubrics, conferencing and self-analysis questions. Students were aware of the terms of assessment of learning and assessment for learning. The general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum were easily placed into a historical literacy unit. The inquiry achieved its intended outcomes. The research question of *What forms of targeted feedback (Standard 5.2: Provide feedback to students on their learning.) can be provided to students' to develop their historical knowledge, understandings and skills?* was achieved in the inquiry by utilizing rubrics, self-analysis and conferencing with students. The power of self-designed rubrics emerged in the unit when it was identified that numerous students had not achieved the skill of chronology.

Teacher No.	Inquiry Title	Comments and Conclusions
16	Investigation of how beginning teachers can utilise the National Professional Standards for Teachers to evaluate and develop their skills from graduate level to proficient level.	Universal agreement that the National Professional Standards for Teachers were a great idea giving a unified professionalism amongst teachers throughout Australia. Three areas in which professional development activities would most be of benefit to beginning teachers were 'assess student learning' (5.1) and 'manage challenging behaviour' (4.3) (both with 5 participants), followed by 'differentiate teaching to meet the specific needs of students across the full range of abilities'. Colleague teachers may best assist beginning teachers by sharing their own experiences – not 'this is how you must do it' but 'this is what I have found useful'. Advice, collaboration and observation.

It is clear from each participant's report that the Standards have provided a useful framework for their inquiries. In many cases the Standards have brought a degree of rigour to the action based research and a sense of authenticity around the foci and research questions. In this context, the Standards sit well alongside teacher's own thinking about what is important to develop in their practice and the established directions and goals of their school or workplace.

The high expectation of teachers in each of the career stages outlined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers has been well received in our school. This document has provided teachers with focus and also accountability of practice. The standards have been clear especially for our setting. They have provided us with excellent professional discussion and debate. (Teacher 12)

Throughout the inquiries, there are consistent and strong messages about the use of the Standards as a tool for teacher self-reflection. In a national context where the use of Standards over many years has been largely ad hoc, feedback from all sites suggest that teachers are ready to embrace a consistent and professional teaching language that can guide teacher, school and system development and planning.

Another strong through-line in the reports is that teachers also need tools for professional conversations, whether they are provided by formal participation in coaching and mentoring programs or are developed in a site specific way. The story that emerges is that the Standards are not an end in themselves. When they are coupled with a teaching and learning focussed policy setting, consistent state-wide professional learning plans, conversation tools, and the opportunity to participate in on-going classroom based reflection on teaching then a very powerful mechanism to improve student outcomes and teachers' teaching begins to emerge.

Professional Conversations, conducted properly in a non-threatening, supportive and trusting environment can provide a great conduit for honest reflection & goal setting. These conversations have been effective in previous years, but had been undertaken with a set of structured questions that reflected school goals, without a strong emphasis on the individual practitioner. Adding the National Professional Standards to this process was both productive and educational as it allowed staff to gauge within a national context their current level of work. It allowed for a more specific set of individual goals that had a developmental layer wrapped around them. (Teacher 9)

3.2.4 Department of Education, Western Australia

Research Question 1: To what extent are the Standards useful for teachers to reflect upon their practice?
Research Question 2: How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?
Research Question 3: To what extent is it possible to align the current professional learning program to the Standards?

Results from the online surveys together with anecdotal evidence and feedback from workshops was collected. The extensive information from these sources was coded in a qualitative research software program and subsequently categorised according to themes, either according to positive, cautionary or suggestive feedback.

Analysis of the coded responses provided a baseline for the direction of the Institute in addressing the implementation of the Standards. In direct response to the data analysis, the Institute initiated the following long-term projects:

1. The development of a tool for teacher self-reflection, linked directly to the Standards.
2. The mapping of available teacher professional development providing direct links to the appropriate career stages, focus areas and descriptors as articulated in the Standards.
3. A tool for teachers that provides easy access to lists of professional learning available through the Institute, connected to each Standard and Career Stage.
4. A generic course evaluation linked directly to the Standards.

Data analysis provides evidence that the legitimacy of using the Standards for the purposes of self-reflection is endorsed by this sample of existing teachers and school leaders. The respondents consistently recognised the practicality of explicit links between the Standards and self-reflection as a useful tool for performance management, a means of encouraging teachers to take personal responsibility and encouraging understanding of their own career development. It is essential that any form of online self-reflection can also be printed to complete off-line, or downloaded, completed and saved for personal use. This would encourage teachers

to treat the process as a personal development process and allow them to choose to use the tool as a support for performance management processes. Concern that there will be an inconsistent understanding of the Standards has led to a demand for Exemplars to be developed, that clearly demonstrate expectations at each career stage.

Respondents supported a Likert scale for the self-reflection, with the headings: '*working towards the Standard', 'meets the Standard'* and '*exceeds the Standard',* with a fourth heading allowing for lack of opportunity. It was determined that respondents considered four separate self-reflection tools should be developed, with clear links showing development to the next career stage and allowing for understanding of the big picture.

From this analysis, the Institute embarked upon a project to develop a tool for teachers to use for self-reflection based upon the recommendations of the focus group. Four separate tools were developed with identical formatting and layout. This ensures that teachers are able to select the next career stage and determine links between their current capacity and setting goals for improvement. There are three major areas of the tool.

1. **Self-reflection**

    The self-reflection itemises the Standards appropriate to the career stage chosen. Teachers are asked to select their capacity based upon a Likert scale of '*working towards the Standard', 'meets the Standard', 'exceeds the Standard',* and *unable to comment* (allowing for the lack of opportunity option requested by the focus group).

2. **Visual Representation**

    The results then populate graphs, which visually represent the teacher's development and areas for growth.

3. **Personal Learning Plan**

    There is also a personal learning plan attached which encourages teachers to analyse their self-reflection further; analysing strengths and weaknesses and allocating priorities for professional learning.

The self-reflection tools have been created in Microsoft Excel and allow for teachers to download and save locally on their own computers. It can also be printed and shared with line managers or colleagues.

Analysis of data confirms that the focus group was supportive of a tool being developed, linking the professional learning offered by the Institute, to the Standards. This undertaking was perceived as particular support for individuals to identify individual professional learning and as a link to performance management.

It was also ascertained that respondents were positive about the capacity for this undertaking to provide direction and simplify the process of accessing professional learning appropriate to individual needs. An essential element was considered to be direct online links from the tool, to enrolment, in chosen courses or programs.

The Institute reflected these results in the development of a professional learning tool, connecting professional learning and the Standards All professional learning offerings currently scheduled for the 2011/12 calendar were collated and categorised. The courses were then categorised according to the career stage(s) they targeted and their alignment to individual Standards. Course descriptions were also added to provide additional information This mapping process then formed the groundwork for the professional learning tool.

In an attempt at uniformity, the professional learning tool format aligns with that of the self-reflection tool. A home page allows teachers to select hyperlinks through which they are able to choose their pathway through the resource. There are three major areas of the tool.

1. **Home Page**

   The home page provides a list of all Standards within the chosen career stage. Teachers are expected to use their self-reflections to select the Standards for which they wish to find appropriate professional learning
2. **Courses linked to Individual Standards**

   Dependent upon the Standard(s) selected, a list of courses will be provided, with a description and online link for enrolment.
3. **Administration**

   To ensure sustainability of the tool, an administration section has been added in order to allow updates as new courses are introduced.
4. **All Courses**

   A hyperlink from the home page allows access to a list of all scheduled courses.

Data analysis confirms support for a comprehensive professional learning program, connecting self-reflection, course objectives and course evaluation through the Standards. However, the respondents recommended that consideration should still be given to presentation, course design and relevance to personal need.

A course evaluation tool was therefore developed linked to the Standards Participants are asked to rank the course or program according to explicit objectives drawn from the Standards. The course administrator is able to choose the applicable career stage from dropdown menus. Dependent upon the choice, all Standards, focus areas and descriptors applicable to that career stage are available in dropdown menus under the objectives. Adhering to feedback obtained from the focus group, generic questions have also been added to accommodate feedback on course design, methodology and venue.

The Institute has utilised the Standards to develop a comprehensive approach to linking professional learning, self-reflection, and course evaluation. Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected from focus groups across the state was used to inform the development of the necessary tools that support the strategy.

Participant feedback indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the notion that the Institute should develop a self-reflection tool for teachers based on the Standards, and saw the alignment with national direction as a positive step for school leaders in Western Australia and an opportunity to develop consistency and familiarity with the Standards. Respondents saw extensive benefit in linking professional learning with the Standards, determining that this initiative allows teachers to identify individual professional learning needs; link professional learning to performance management and areas of growth; assist with individual teacher goal setting and self-reflection; and identify whole areas of school need. Additional information gleaned from consultation groups indicates unanimous support to the notion that course evaluations of programs offered by the Institute are linked to the Standards.

Analysis of the responses provided a baseline for the direction of the Institute in addressing the implementation of the Standards. In direct response to the data analysis, the Institute initiated projects that were completed and implemented as a direct result of this pilot study. The Institute now has a professional learning program for teachers that is explicitly linked to the Standards, as well as a suite of electronic tools designed to assist teacher self-reflection, decision making, course evaluation and professional learning choices.

3.2.5 New South Wales Department of Education and Communities

Research Question 1: In developing teacher quality and teacher leadership at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead: What are the professional learning needs of teachers?

Research Question 2: How can high quality teaching practice be best evidenced in relation to the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers within the context of NSW DEC settings?

Research Question 3: What will be involved in engaging NSW DEC teachers in the National Professional Standards for Teachers, particularly at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead?

The findings from investigations undertaken within this pilot study draw largely on an analysis of trends evident in responses from the 710 teachers and school leaders who completed the online survey. As well, the themes identified in the rich discussion and commentary that took place at the formal consultation with principals and the focus group consultations with teacher groups have been considered in light of these trends. Findings were organised in relation to the pilot study's three key research questions.

Professional learning was a pervasive theme and high stakes issue evident across survey trends, responses and discussions in all pilot actions. The pervasiveness of the inclusion of professional learning in verbal and written responses suggests that NSW DEC school leaders and teachers see professional learning as integral to the

development of quality teaching practice and an essential aspect in continuing to improve and ensure teacher quality.

The need for professional learning was rated consistently across all seven Standards. For each of the seven Standards, most respondents signalled high or moderate level need for professional learning in order to assist teachers to meet the requirements at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead.

While all seven Standards were rated as having high professional learning implications, some rated slightly higher than others. The group of standards that rated most highly in order of mean scores: (Standard 5) *Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning,* (Standard 3) *Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning*, (Standard 1) *Know students and how they learn* and (Standard 2) *Know the content and how to teach it* would appear to be the four Standards that most closely focus directly on classroom teaching and learning.

Also related to professional learning, the pilot study sought to find out whether respondents viewed the Standards as a framework for improving the quality of teaching. Trends across all groups of respondents were positive. Far more respondents (55.80%) indicated that the Standards would be a framework for improving the quality of teaching than those responding in the negative (12.40%).

Regardless of whether responses were positive or negative, comments indicated that for the Standards to have a genuinely positive influence on the quality of teaching, there is a need for: support throughout the implementation process, authentic evidence gathering processes that are grounded in teachers' daily practice and consistency in the use of the Standards framework across the profession.

The pilot study also sought to understand the views of teachers and school leaders about the best ways to develop and evidence high quality teaching practice. Firstly, twelve professional learning strategies were listed for respondents to rate in terms of their effectiveness for developing high quality teaching practice. On a scale from not effective to highly effective, on average, respondents positively rated all twelve listed strategies. The two strategies that rated as the most highly effective were those that involved critical reflection on classroom practice and collaborative engagement with other teachers in developing lessons and resources.

Secondly, when asked about the most effective ways to demonstrate evidence of best practice, the two ways that were identified as the most highly effective were through *Peer observation and collaboration* and *Direct observation of classroom teaching and learning* with *Self assessment* being rated close to these two. When the twelve strategies are listed in order of effectiveness (as selected by survey respondents) the strategies fall into two distinct groups. The six that were identified as the most effective form a group where respondents appear to be sending a consistent message. Once again they are indicating a clear preference for strategies where the teachers themselves are central to the process, where the strategies involve collaboration with others, feature feedback from colleagues or students,

involve self assessment (and by implication reflection) and are very much classroom centred strategies.

The strategies identified in the bottom group of six are seen by respondents to be less effective ways to demonstrate evidence. These tend to be more external in nature, involve more formal feedback via referee reports and external observation, or feedback from surveys interviews and are those that feature comprehensive collection and compilation of evidence and annotated documentation

A major area of the NSW DEC's pilot study focused on the future engagement of teachers in the Standards, particularly at Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages. When presented with six different ways to introduce the Standards respondents identified the most useful way as *Engaging teachers in a scaffolded process that will assist them to develop evidence to meet the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead.* Closely following this as a useful way to introduce the voluntary career stages was *Engaging principals and executives in professional learning that will facilitate introduction of the National Professional Standards for Teachers. Accessing guides and professional reading* was rated by respondents as the least useful way to introduce the voluntary career stages.

The factors influencing teachers' decisions to undertake certification at Highly Accomplished and Lead were comprehensively probed. Of 17 listed factors, *Consideration of personal circumstances and commitments* (55.40%) was rated as the most important factor. Also considered very important was a group of other factors including: *Encouragement and support from school executives and personnel* (49.00%), *Cost of the certification process* (48.20%), *Perceived increase in the likelihood of obtaining permanency or promotion* (46.30%) and *Flexible management of work and time associated with the certification process* (46.60%). This group of high rating factors suggests that, at this point in the process of moving to the *Standards*, teachers' preoccupations about engaging in the process of certification are very much at an immediate, practical and personal level.

Alongside these largely personal considerations is the significance that teachers place on encouragement and support from school executives and key personnel. This is a particularly useful finding for NSW DEC and other jurisdictions for consideration in relation to the transition to the Standards.

When asked to identify the groups considered most crucial in supporting teachers to achieve certification, selections were more evenly spread, with the most crucial groups considered to be Teacher Mentors (19%) and Principals (18%). Again leaders were identified as key to providing support for teachers. It would appear that respondents who have knowledge of how the Teacher Mentor role currently operates in NSW DEC schools, see this role as critical to supporting teachers in the transition to Standards. Deeper interrogation into the factors that would enable or inhibit the implementation of the Standards revealed some trends consistent with previous findings as well as some new trends. The *Cost involved in certification* process was considered the most significant inhibitor (79.60%) with the requirement

of *Undertaking a rigorous process* (62.20%) also considered a factor that could inhibit implementation. As neither the cost or the process for the implementation of Standards has yet to be articulated, it is likely that respondents to this survey responded on the basis of their current experience of accreditation within the context of the NSW Institute of Teachers *Professional Teaching Standards*. Obvious trends emerge as factors enabling implementation with respondents identifying two factors as more enabling than others. These were the *Capacity to assume a role that is focused on developing teacher quality in others* (60.80%) and the *Relevance of the process of certification to a teacher's day to day work* (52.50%).

On the subject of actual individual engagement with the Standards, respondents were asked a very direct question about how they anticipated they would engage. Two very strong trends were consistently obvious across groups of respondents particularly when New Scheme and Existing Teacher groups were disaggregated. The first was the optimistic fact that respondents believed that they would primarily *Use the standards to inform their practice*. The second was the almost contradictory fact that almost as many respondents were unsure about how they would engage with the Standards.

3.2.6   New South Wales Institute of Teaching

3.2.7   Queensland University of Technology

Research Question: What are the data-related practices teachers at the three nominated Career Stages use?

The following process was undertaken for the transcription of data. Interviews were recorded on a digital recorder and downloaded onto the research assistant's computer for safe storage. The recordings were transcribed. Transcripts were checked by listening to the recordings again and comparing this to the written text. Errors were corrected. Pseudonyms were used on all transcripts to protect the anonymity of the participants. The pseudonyms used were as follows: P1, P2 and P3 for Proficient teachers, HA1, HA2 and HA3 for Highly Accomplished teachers and L1, L2 and L3 for Lead teachers.

By revisiting the interview recordings and re-reading the transcripts, the researchers became very familiar with the collected data. Using a third of the transcripts, the researchers established a process for coding the information. This encompassed vertical, line-by-line or statement-by-statement coding, according to the participant's comments. The data were then assigned to themes. Three people who worked independently established the themes: two academic researchers and the research assistant assigned to this project. This was done to improve credibility and confirmability. After working independently, the team then worked collaboratively, cross-referencing the themes and the sub-themes within to look for comparability. This whole process was conducted with a high degree of openness to new interpretations; it was a strongly iterative and comparative process of sorting and

resorting of data. The themes were continually reworked and refined until the final set was determined. Following this, files were set up for each of the identified themes and selected quotes or statements from the interviews were cut and pasted into these files.

Seven themes were identified and expanded to thirty sub-themes in relation to the core research question: *What are the data-related practices teachers at the three nominated career stages use?* Each question has been addressed using participants' quotations in order to tell the story of the use of NAPLAN data in relation to the themes and thirty sub-themes identified.

For the Proficient career stage, the approaches to the use of NAPLAN data are either hierarchical or on an ad hoc/individual basis. Where the approach is hierarchical, it is the Deputy Principal (DP) through Heads of Departments (HODs) who manage the process. P3 states: "In our science meetings we are told that there are … certain target areas that need to be addressed – they tell us to incorporate them [target areas] into our classes". She continues, "we just get a focus area to incorporate into our planning". This is a reaction to class point in time data. The teacher under the direction of the DP and HOD use the NAPLAN data to evaluate subject content and then target areas for improvement.

However, the other two proficient teachers organise themselves or work with other members of staff in an ad hoc fashion. P1 states, "I work with the teachers whose classes my students are included in". This particular teacher is a member of a Special Needs Department and works with the regular classroom teacher to "organise and plan individual programs". This is an example of individual point in time data. P2 does collaborate sometimes but usually works in isolation with her classes' data to identify "strengths and weaknesses and where class programs need to be adapted". She says "as a classroom teacher, I have implemented the programs that I have developed and set up". In her individual capacity, this teacher analyses the data from the school intranet by her own means – "you are free to use the data as you see fit" (P2). This is an example of this teacher's own manual manipulation of the data.

For the Highly Accomplished career stage teachers, the approaches to the use of NAPLAN data are either hierarchical or by means of collaboration with other colleagues. For two of these teachers it is the HODs, DP or the Deputy Data Analyst who are instrumental in the management of NAPLAN data. HA2 comments – "the data that is sent to us at my present school is used by HODs and the DP". However, she also implies the lack of a whole school approach by maintaining that "the data does not filter down to all teachers" (HA2).

HA1 sees the approach to the use of NAPLAN data in her school as collaborative. For her, teachers of Years 3 and 5 "sit with their teaching partners and use the data" She continues by saying that depending on the approachability of the teachers, "I would meet with the 4s and 6s and say, these are the curriculum areas that we are lacking in and we need to pick them up" (HA1). This teacher also models to her Year level

how she analyses the data so they can do the same for their classes – "I let my year level partners know". For this career stage, involvement in the use of NAPLAN data is a little more structured, whether this is through the hierarchy or by having teaching partners. Regardless of the approach used or who has this responsibility, all participants analyse the data in a similar fashion by looking for "gaps and weaknesses" (HA1). In one school, this happens by electronic means – "I can go onto *One School* any time and access data", whereas the other two schools do this manually. In all schools it is class point in time data that is investigated. An example of this is in HA3's school, where they use the data to determine cohorts for extension activities – "they [HODs] use the data to decide who goes into the Maths Extension class in Year 8."

The approach to the use of NAPLAN data is inconsistent across the participants' schools. Only two of the nine teachers interviewed, identified a whole school structured approach to the use of data. For most participants, their engagement with data either came as a directive through the hierarchy or by teachers working individually or collaboratively in an ad hoc fashion. Findings also revealed that various levels of the hierarchy use the data for various purposes, for example value adding or projecting forward. Every interviewee was aware of some type of intervention within his or her schools based on NAPLAN data, but once again, there was inconsistency in the participants' experiences. Only three teachers related the use of NAPLAN to accountability and it was only at the lead career stage where two teachers related data to school culture and identifying best practice.

All teachers at the Lead Teacher career stage maintain that in their schools, the use of NAPLAN data occurs either by a whole school approach or by a hierarchical approach, although there is some admission by L1 that this is not always successful – "data analysis is not always filtered down from HODs". Across the three participants' responses there are a variety of hierarchical levels in their school responsible for the use of data. These include the Principal, Head of Lower School programs (L3), Head of Curriculum (L2), the NAPLAN group, HODs and curriculum groups (L3). L3 in particular maintains that 'data analysis is every teacher's business ... every teaching staff member should be able to access and utilise NAPLAN data'. She continues by saying that "it's not one person's job, it's considered everyone's job and you have to be able to not only know where to get the data from but also what to do with it" (L3). For these lead teachers, they are either involved in the whole school approach or are a link in the hierarchy.

The NAPLAN data are analysed for many purposes. These include:

1. as an indicator of improvement – "we look at the data in relation to how we have done in previous NAPLAN tests" (L2),

2. teachers use NAPLAN data "in terms of how they [students] have gone against the National mean" (L3),

3. 'to compare classes against each other' or "to get the data for the schools in the area ... including feeder schools" (L2).

What is mentioned at this career stage that is absent in the two stages previously discussed are the use of data to change culture and to identify best practice. Changing the culture includes such practices as promoting competition, rewards, and encouraging a competitive spirit. Where best practice is identified, this is shared with staff at meetings.

3.2.8 Rural Education Forum of Australia

> **Research Question 1**: In what ways does networking within and across schools in a remote setting enhance professional learning and dialogue?
> **Research Question 2**: Does an online platform have the potential to support collegiate learning within rural and remote locations?
> **Research Question 3**: Does a blended approach enhance collegiate mentoring in supporting individual professional learning as described in the Standards?

Eleven findings emerged from a consideration of responses to the online survey completed by staff involved in the project.

1. The staff's enthusiasm and perception of the possibilities of the online platform did not change significantly over the period of the pilot.

2. The value of the online platform was seen as significantly supporting professional learning, enhancing collaborative practice, improving knowledge of available resources, assisting them to self-reflect upon professional learning, promoting professional dialogue within the school and most importantly, within the Murchison Network.

3. At the end of the pilot the majority of staff did not agree that the online platform promoted professional dialogue with colleagues from outside the network, save them time or promoted collegiate mentoring in support of their own professional learning.

4. Adequate time to plan, resource, in-service and learn is essential to the introduction of this platform into a network system. This is extremely important if the network wishes to then develop dialogue and collegiate learning outside the network.

5. Adequate time is needed to allow for connectivity to build a momentum, thus building towards significant staff engagement.

6. Recognition of the change transitional period is crucial to network-wide acceptance and use of the technology.

7. All principals in a network must accept and mentor the change.

8. There is a need to create a culture of network online professional learning.

9. The staff need constructive 'play-time' within the many forums. This time must have a real purpose.

10. To ensure staff engagement in the use of online technology, the professional learning must be linked to a network curriculum priority and to the level of the online expertise of the teacher.

11. The success of the principal forum points to the need to have:

   - a blended learning strategy
   - a mentor who is available and relentless
   - a real purpose
   - adequate time

3.3 Initial Teacher Education and Registration

3.3.1 Australian Capital Territory Teacher Quality Institute

Research Question: How will Standards 1 (Know students and how they learn) and 6 (Engage in professional learning) inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors in the ACT?

Data from both narrative and survey sources was analysed in terms of Early Childhood mentors and pre-service teachers and Primary mentors and pre-service teachers and organised around the previously identified themes.

The themes that emerged from the initial data collection and discussion at the workshop were:

   - Exposure to and understanding of the Standards by working teachers
   - Provision of evidence guides
   - Flexibility of templates for professional mentoring conversations
   - Mentoring training for teachers
   - Consistency of university practices for pre-service placements and assessment.

An overarching theme was the change in the language used by participants as the project progressed. There was a marked change in the quality and depth of the language used to describe evidence from the pre-survey to the post survey and through the collection of narrative data. By the end of the project participants had definitely developed a shared language and understanding that enabled them to reflect personally on their own achievement of the Standards and to be involved in

professional conversations that clearly linked the Standards to assessment of pre-service teachers.

All participants were concerned about the lack of exposure to and understanding of the Standards by working teachers. At the beginning of the pilot both mentor teachers and preservice teachers had little knowledge and experience of the Standards. After working with the Standards participants were positive about the use of the standards for assessment of preservice teachers and reported a greater understanding of the role and importance of the Standards to their careers. Most participants highlighted the need for teachers and preservice teachers to be given time to engage with the Standards.

The Draft Evidence Guide developed for this pilot was appreciated as a simple and useful reference document. Participants developed greater understanding of the types of evidence they could use and different ways of presenting and using evidence to support assessment against the Standards. This was reflected in the language used to describe evidence in the post survey and discussions. The need for a more specific evidence guide was identified and the continuing work of AITSL in development of such a guide was acknowledged.

Participants used the template for Professional Discussions developed in the workshop in a variety of different ways. This flexibility was seen as a strength as it catered for different contexts and the different ways that people operate.

The majority of participants in this pilot had done no specific professional learning in relation to mentoring and provision of feedback in the past three years. Experiences of mentoring and giving and receiving feedback varied considerably. After participation in this pilot, mentoring teachers used more complex language to describe a greater range of mentoring activities, with a greater emphasis on professional partnership and self-reflection by all parties to the mentoring relationship. Participants recommended all teachers who are mentoring preservice teachers have some initial training in mentoring and that additional training in specific skills be made available.

Participants from both universities saw the introduction of National Teaching Standards as an opportunity to increase consistency of courses, practicum requirements and assessment across all universities nationally. Participants from both universities stressed the importance of close relationships between university and school staff and clear, shared understanding of all requirements and expectations before the pre-service placement begins. Students from both universities commented that there should be a separate feedback mechanism for pre-service teachers to comment on their practicum experience directly to the university.

3.3.2 Charles Darwin University – Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board

Research Question: In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?

Data were collected from the three sets of interviews that were conducted with the nine participants in the study. The first interview was a group interview, conducted at the workshop held to introduce the project. The second interview was conducted individually by telephone. The third interview was undertaken during a site visit to each school. The interviews mostly used open-ended questions and were based around the participants initial plans. The data collected from each of these interviews was prepared as textual data and the major themes from the interviews were identified through a thematic analysis of the texts.

All the participants reported benefits from being involved in the project and for having the opportunity to plan and reflect upon the links between their teaching practices and the collection of evidence to meet both the NT Standards and the National Standards. Participants also discussed the importance of having a mentor. Some of the participants reported positive stories about the quality of the leadership and mentoring available to them within their school and beyond. Others could see the benefits of mentoring, and proposed ways of strengthening the mentoring available to them. Some participants questioned what constitutes 'evidence' and also questioned how do those assessing their evidence know if it is of an appropriate standard. The participants also commented upon the shortness of the project, indicating that they would have gained more from the project if there had been more time available to work on it. Some participants also critically commented upon the atomistic nature of the whole research project.

Seven key themes related to the research question emerged from participant commentary, which indicated that their involvement had:

1. **generated valuable and positive experiences for them;**

All participants commented positively about being involved in the Northern Territory Pilot. The main reasons reported for this positivity were that the provisionally registered teachers gained insights early in their teaching career, about:

- what sorts of demands the requirements for the collection and annotation of evidence to move from Provisional to Full registration is currently required, based upon the NT Standards
- the likely demands of the National Standards at the transition point from Graduate to Proficient, and the implications of these Standards for their careers and workloads, and

- the likely demands of National Standards at the later Career Stages, for their ongoing workloads as teachers.

2. **raised questions for them about the place of the NT Standards compared with the National Standards and about what constitutes evidence, and how evidence is deemed 'satisfactory';**

The participants planned for their processes of evidence collection to be focused within their daily work. As the teacher registration requirements within the Northern Territory until 2013 are based upon the NT Standards, there was more interest by the participants in this study, in the evidence required to meet these local Standards. Explicitly described transition processes from the NT Standards to the National Standards would be a useful strategy for building the capacity of early career teachers. This finding also suggests that what is required is professional development opportunities to assist early career teachers to build their understandings about what are the respective Standards; what constitutes evidence; and what strategies are likely to assist the collection of evidence.

3. **made them realise that collecting and annotating evidence of their teaching is time-consuming and requires planning;**

All the participants commented upon how time-consuming it was to collect evidence against the Standards, irrespective of which ones they were focusing upon. All participants commented they would have benefitted from being allocated time within the school day to collate and annotate their evidence. Furthermore, all participants indicated that they had found it valuable to meet together as a group from the outset of the project to familiarise themselves with the two sets of Standards and the requirements for evidence. They reported that the meeting had provided them with guidance about how to plan for the collection of evidence, and that this approach had enabled them to focus upon what is the nature of 'evidence' that they could collect in their daily work. All participants commented that having a plan to approach the collection of their evidence had been of assistance.

All the participants indicated that they had found it beneficial to plan an approach to collecting evidence against the specific Standards they had identified at the workshop. While most of the participants indicated that in the timeframe they had not been able to achieve their plans, they nonetheless reported the benefits of planning to collect evidence in their daily work.

4. **highlighted the respective, multiple and similar concurrent processes of accountability they were undertaking to demonstrate their capabilities as teachers;**

The participants reported that they were involved in three similar processes that were running concurrently:

1. meeting probation requirements

2. moving from Provisional to Full Registration based upon the NT Standards, and

3. piloting the requirements for the National Standards .

They also reported that for moving from the provisional to full registration and to meet the requirement of the National Professional Standards for Teachers both required they collect evidence of their performances as teachers.

Some of the participants also wondered about what processes would be in place in 2013 when they would be collecting evidence to move from Graduate to Proficient; from Proficient to Highly Accomplished and from Highly Accomplished to Lead based on the National Standards. They came to recognise that throughout their careers as teachers they would have to continually collect evidence to demonstrate successful performances.

5. **highlighted the importance of mentors to assist them to build their portfolios of evidence;**

All participants observed the importance of mentoring in their daily work, although there was considerable variance of experience between the participants concerning the degree to which they received formal mentoring support. Some teachers had mentors allocated to them, where this relationship was taken seriously by the experienced teacher, while other teachers reported a lack of regular mentoring. Nonetheless all participants reported that they valued the mentoring opportunities as they felt that such opportunities were necessary to enable them to meet the requirements of both moving from provisional to full registration; and for meeting their probation requirements.

6. **helped them to plan their strategy for presenting their evidence in advance of the formal introduction in the Northern Territory of the National Standards;**

This study highlighted for the participants, the foreseeable demands for the collection of evidence that is likely to be required to meet the planned introduction of the National Standards. As a result, several of these provisionally registered teachers indicated they would like to undertake their movement from Provisional to Full Registration using the NT Standards, rather than the National Standards. The reasons offered reflected the demands for evidence required to meet the 37 Standards included in each career stage of the National Standards compared to the 17 more holistic, Standards outlined in the NT Standards.

7. **raised workload implications for school principals and mentors.**

Several participants in this study commented upon the workload involved in providing school-based mentoring. The early career teachers in this study who mentioned this issue, commented that although they had been assigned a mentor, they were reticent to seek out their support as they recognised that the more experienced teachers in their schools were already heavily loaded, and had considerable responsibilities to the local communities. Their concerns were not to

add to the workloads of these experienced teachers. Other participants commented upon how seriously their school principals took the processes of supporting new teachers to move from provisional registration to being fully registered. In some schools in the Northern Territory, the majority of the staff are provisionally registered, and so the personnel requirements for school principals, are high. Where there is a significant turnover of staff each year, this demand is even higher. Some participants also commented that due to the large turnover of staff it was hard to build rapport suitable for mentoring.

Future work is required in the Northern Territory that can meaningfully inform the implementation of the National Standards. Areas in which future work could be undertaken include:

- Examining the types of professional learning support is required by new teachers about the respective accountability requirements they have to meet.
- Investigating mentoring strategies and ongoing mentoring support for new teachers and their principals.
- Identifying leadership strategies that provide support for new teachers.
- Determining strategies that illuminate the question, 'what is evidence'?
- Creating professional learning approaches about how to use eportfolio software to meet the requirements of the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

3.3.3 Victorian Institute of Teachers

Research Question: How does the current process for full registration accommodate the Standards for teachers at the proficient level?

Data were collected from online survey and discussions around PRT action Plans:

Survey 1 was designed to capture the initial responses of both PRT and mentor to the Standards, including each of the 37 descriptors. PRTs were requested to indicate their current level of proficiency. If any descriptors were seen as not applicable to their current situation they were requested to indicate this. Mentors were requested to indicate the proficiency of their PRT. As this was the first time that the participants accessed the Standards and descriptors, this was considered benchmark information.

Case Studies: PRTs and mentors developed an action plan that focused on an aspect of teaching that the PRT wished to develop in relation to improvements in student learning. As part of the school visits and follow up contact, PRTs developed and submitted evaluations of the plans, reflections on the impact of the change to practice and artefacts used in their practice.

<u>Survey 2</u> was termed an 'Evaluative questionnaire' and was provided to each mentor/PRT as part of the school visit. Each pair was requested to indicate which descriptors they were either able or unable to evidence within the case study.

<u>Surveys 3 and 4</u> were two online surveys developed using Survey Monkey for the participants to complete. One was developed for the PRTs and the other for the mentors. Within each, the first section was a repeat of the individual rating against the Standards for proficient teachers. This was designed for comparison with the benchmark information following up to eight weeks of focus and discussion on the National Standards.

From the pre-surveys, PRT's and mentor's assessments of proficiency against the National Standards' Descriptors were similar, although the mentor's rating was the same or higher than those of the PRTs in all cases. Mentors indicated that their PRTs were capable (<3 on a 5 point scale) against all Descriptors. PRTs, on the other hand, felt that they had not yet attained capability in 8 areas of focus of the National Standards. These were:

- 1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities

- 2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (most responses to this descriptor were N/A)

- 3.1 Establish challenging learning goals

- 3.3 Use teaching strategies

- 5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements

- 6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs

- 6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning, and

- 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities.

PRTs were far more confident of their capability against all Descriptors of the National Standards after working with them for eight weeks and their ratings were more comparable with the perceptions of the mentors. The mentors continued to rate the PRTs higher, but PRTs now felt they were capable against all descriptors at the level required to be proficient. The Descriptors that the PRTs still rated lower than their mentors were:

- 1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (note: most responses to this descriptor were N/A), and
- 3.7 Engage parents/ carers in the educative process.

Participants felt that the vast majority of descriptors were relevant to their action plans. There was a consistent response from both PRTs and mentors regarding the descriptors that were not applicable to the action plan being developed. A range of

Descriptors (2.4, 1.4, 1.6 and 1.3) was identified in both the pre- and post-assessment by PRTs and mentors as being not applicable.

Over the course of the project, mentors saw improvements in their PRT's professional knowledge and that the National Standards assisted the mentors to understand their own professional practice, respectively. Evidence from the evaluative questionnaire, the online survey and anecdotal comments provided as part of the school visits indicated that the National Standards for Proficient teachers assisted in the professional conversations about improving classroom practice. PRTs consistently voiced the view in school visits that the descriptors were valuable in understanding the Standards. Mentors used examples of the PRT practice to relate to the descriptors.

> *Constant referral to the National Standards helped me to maintain the focus and objectives of lessons, become more familiar with the National Standards and the practical application of them amidst the 'business' of a class, identify the extent to which I was already applying the **National** Standards and where I could improve.*

Mentors rated the PRTs more highly than the PRTs did themselves. Mentors generally thought that the PRT was at the level of the proficient teacher, PRTs less so. This information is consistent with data provided through the current process for full registration. Mentors' responses also supported the view that the PRTs developed their professional practice.

> *My PRT is continually developing her professional knowledge in a variety of ways including PD, collegiate discussions, PLT planning etc. The National Standards and the pilot project supported further development and focus for her.*

Mentors were positive that the project developed their professional knowledge:

> *The project ... allowed me to focus on certain aspects of my own teaching and learning and also confirmed my beliefs and understandings and practices. [It also] provided an opportunity for reflection on my own teaching practice and how my knowledge of teaching could be used to improve the teaching practices and professional learning of a junior colleague.*

These findings indicate the following.

- Teachers could use the National Standards in the current process for full registration. Whilst the sample was small, all teachers in all contexts were able to use the National Standards

- Evidence from both the PRTs and the mentors indicate that they responded positively to the process set in place for PRTs to gain full registration

- PRTs used the National Standards to support their practice. Mentors used the National Standards to support the practice of the PRT and in doing so supported the development of their own practice. This is consistent with findings of current practice
- The Standards:
    - provided a basis for improvement in practice
    - could be evidenced with reference to the majority of Descriptors. Some descriptors were more easily evidenced than others. Teachers' responses appeared to be correlated to the background and circumstance of the students they were teaching. It is acknowledged that this is set within the limits of small scale and tight timelines
    - were a good way to frame discussion between mentor and PRT about practice
    - supported mentor's reflection of their own practice
    - are seen by mentors as similar to the Victorian Standards

The National Standards can be set within the current process for full registration and will result in fulfilling the Institute requirements for provisionally registered teachers to attain full registration by meeting professional standards.

3.4   Parents, Communities and Students

3.4.1 Australian Parents Council – Australian Council of State School Organisations

Research Question 1a: What do you believe are the important attributes, behaviours and processes for teachers when they engage with parents?

Research Question 1b: How do these attributes, behaviours and processes show up differently across the four categories of teachers (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead)?

Research Question 1c: What are some examples of what this looks like in practice?

The research for this Pilot was qualitative. Analytical methods were used in two aspects of the Pilot. During the focus group's discussions, the facilitator used questioning techniques to focus discussion in order to draw out areas of agreement, explore differences and elaborate ideas presented by participants. The process was based on the facilitator's independent analysis and synthesis of the discussion. The facilitator analysed the summary notes of the focus group discussion to identify common themes and differences, synthesise key findings and identify learnings.

The data have been analysed and summarised into the key themes that emerged. In some cases, these themes have been attributed to either a 'teachers only' group or a

'parents only' group. In most cases the themes were not specific to either teachers or parents, and applied to both. Summary notes for the focus groups were analysed for commonalities and differences and key themes and findings were synthesised from the summaries.

Summary of Results from Parent Engagement Focus Groups:

Research Question 1a

In each focus group a uniform and commonly agreed set of attributes and behaviours emerged that participants believed teachers needed in order to foster effective parental engagement and support student learning. It was commonly agreed that teachers needed to have the following attributes, behaviours and skills (*top five points were*):

- Good communication skills
- Value and foster good relationships with students/parents
- Approachable, warm and friendly
- Able to model and develop trust
- Regard parents as partners in the education of their children, and engage in a collaborative process with the parents

Research Question 1b

Graduate Teachers are commonly (*top three points were*):

- More reactive to situations, students and parents, rather than pro-active
- Eager, energetic, diligent, passionate and enthusiastic about teaching
- Sometimes fearful of parents and uncertain how to engage and communicate

Proficient Teachers are commonly (*top three points were*):

- Able to make the shift from theory to reality
- More skilled at communicating with parents, and knowing when and how to contact them, including one-on-one conversations, phone-calls, emails
- More familiar with school policies, processes and protocols

Highly Accomplished Teachers are commonly (*top three points were*):

- More collaborative with parents
- Able to make interventions with children's learning and relationships with families
- Far more confident and skilled in understanding the curriculum

Lead Teachers are commonly (*top three points were*):

- More global, and have a whole school perspective
- Able to have collaborative, two-way conversations with parents, including seeking parents' opinions

- Able to be proactive and anticipate learning needs, such as assistance with literacy, numeracy, well-being

Research Question 1c

- Conducting phone-calls and/or interviews with parents early in the school year to get to know the parents, and to value and access the knowledge that parents have about their children
- Creating opportunities to give feedback to parents, especially if there are concerns about a student's progress
- Welcoming parents to assist in the classroom, and attending excursions and school camps

A number of additional findings not directly linked to each of the research questions was identified:

The Focus Group process:

- Most parents were enthusiastic about attending the focus groups, and found them stimulating and affirming – many lingered afterwards for quite awhile
- Discussion was slightly different with parents and teachers together, compared to when they were in separate groups. It was helpful having some of each type of group (teachers only, parents only, mixed)

The Standards:

- Teachers in some states / territories seemed more familiar with the notion of Professional Standards for Teachers than others. For example, NSW teachers were very used to working with standards
- Teachers were generally aware of the Standards, but parents were not
- Many questions were raised about the relationship and interplay of the Standards to teacher salaries and other industrial issues
- Nearly every focus group commented that both Standards 3.7 and 7.3 felt too 'reactive' and not sufficiently 'pro-active' to describe a teachers' work
- There was excitement by parents about the notion of the Standards providing a common and accessible language about the nature of teaching and learning, and about teachers' work

School / Parent Partnerships:

- Both parents and teachers uniformly commented on the vital role that the school principal plays in setting the tone of the school, and modelling a culture that values parents
- None of the focus group participants had previously heard of the *Family-School Partnerships Framework*, and they were very grateful to receive this resource for their schools which they believed would be useful

- Parents generally felt very affirmed as the 'first educators' of their children as a result of participating in the focus groups, and having their views sought

<u>Professional Learning</u>

A range of Professional Learning needs for teachers was identified and recommended for teachers. All or some of the following suggestions arose during each focus group (*top three points were*):

- Communication (Listening, Difficult Conversations, Conflict Resolution, Mediation)
- Mentoring new teachers (at Graduate and Proficient levels)
- Working with the Standards

The following six main themes consistently emerged from each of the focus groups:

1. All parents and teachers involved in the focus groups were unanimous that the Standards document is a good initiative, and were most enthusiastic about their potential for encouraging teaching practices that would lead to more effective parental engagement, and therefore support student learning

2. Parents regard themselves as the 'first educators' of their children, and want to be closely engaged in their children's schooling and learning, to increase their learning outcomes.

3. Teachers are respectful of the role of parents, and would like to closely involve them in their student's schooling and learning, in any ways that can increase students' learning outcomes.

4. The education endeavour is primarily all about relationships, which are grown by effective communication between principals, teachers, students, and parents. It was commonly agreed that strong and healthy relationships between teachers and parents were likely to result in increased student learning and engagement.

5. The attitude and skills of the school principal matters enormously and sets the tone for the school culture and all teacher-parent relationships and communication within the school community.

It was perceived that teachers at each of the four Career Stages have unique and differing skills and sensibilities associated with parental engagement, and that teachers at each stage could positively impact student learning by improving their relationships with parents. However, whilst it was seen that each career stage entailed a particular combination of strengths and weaknesses, most participants believed that Lead Teachers were likely to be the most skilled and able to establish successful parental engagement.

3.4.2 Australind Senior High School

Research Question 1: How can the Professional Practice domain be used to audit current professional learning practices and structures?

Research Question 2: How can students contribute to improved teaching and learning?

Research Question 3: How can student feedback data assist schools to improve practice?

Research Question 4: What summative and formative strategies can be used to engage the community and to monitor student feedback?

Research Question 5: What are the three priority areas for improving teaching identified from student feedback?

Research Question 6: What issues and challenges arise from the pilot for using the National Professional Teaching Standards to inform a school's professional learning program?

The focus of the pilot was the investigation of how the student voice could be used to inform teachers' professional practice. To this end, the collection of survey data utilising a four point, *Likert Scale* was undertaken. The analysis of student survey data in the pilot requires rationalising. It was very important to the project team that the survey data be used in a balanced way, as only one point of focus in the highly complex cycle of school improvement. It has yielded some excellent points for conversation and provided revealing yet sound feedback for our teachers. Analysis of the data was organised within three main categories:

1. Individual Teacher Data
2. Group Data
3. Summary Data

The Professional Practice Domain provided an excellent initial point of engagement with the Standards to consider what a Lead teacher should do in the classroom. This is what our participants referred to as 'the nuts and bolts of teaching' because in the early stages of the pilot the team was able to decipher the developmental stages of each focus area easily and more importantly link this information to classroom evidence. This is the key to any set of criteria designed to inform teaching practice. This clarity enabled teachers to map themselves to the Professional Practice domain and thus identify potential areas for improvement.

The role of the Mentor was important during this part of the process, as these partnerships were based within learning areas and with colleagues that participants felt comfortable with. This familiarity of the teaching context within the pilot enabled teachers to relate the Standards to their current practice and more importantly, envisage how improvement might be created and demonstrated.

A considerable amount has been learned from involvement with the pilot. Key issues will be outlined in the following:

- Question design: Far more research would need to be put into question design before using the data as a quality measurement tool. It is questionable whether students, at all times, clearly understood what they were being asked. Thus, further research could focus more on gaining consistency in student response to the Standards.
- Maintaining adequate resources: To continue the program with the same level of intensity will be challenging in the future. Pilot funding from AITSL gave us the flexibility to provide ample time for workshops, classroom filming, collaboration sessions and planning time over a condensed period.
- Unsuitable time frame: The pilot was conducted in a compressed time frame and out of alignment with the teaching and learning cycle of improvement. In our context, the initial survey would have been best implemented at the beginning of Term 2. This would give teachers the opportunity to build relationships with students and to compile rich data about their learning. Conversely, students would have experienced their teachers' professional practice and be able to provide informed feedback.

It is not surprising that the surveys were extremely revealing for teachers. In many cases they illustrated issues in professional practice that the teacher had identified during the mapping process; in some cases issues were unexpected. From an administrators point of view the aggregated data exposed issues that may be reflective of wider problems in teaching and learning; in some cases the data confirmed issues that we knew already existed. The common factor with all of these findings is that the data were extremely useful to inform the need for improved teaching and learning; the feedback could also be quite targeted.

Although only one of our pilot team explicitly attended to Focus area 3.7 (Engage parents/carers in the educative process), the data were revealing and supported concerns that we have about parental disengagement from the teaching and learning process and whole school decision making. In fact, all eight responses of the survey were of 'concern'. The response to the student data included a range of formative strategies including regular emails, letters home (including assessment schedules), commentary in diaries and formulation of a set task where parents and students conducted a cooking experiment together. Although many teachers in the school use a combination of these strategies, a more structured whole school approach to seeking parental support and feedback is required.

A great advantage of the Standards is that individual teachers can recognise areas for improvement and seek professional learning opportunities to improve student performance. However, an aggregation of the data has revealed some key areas that could be prioritised and thus better resourced:

- *Focus area 3.3 – Use teaching strategies*: The first set of surveys revealed many areas of 'concern' with regard to the limited use of teaching strategies

across a range of classrooms. Many students indicated that teachers spent most of their time talking in front of their classes, did not engage the students regularly in group work, were not able to clearly link lessons to real life scenarios and were limited in their ability to equip students with a variety of ways to solve complex problems. However, encouraging data were evident in the second set of surveys where percentage distributions in the 'neutral' and 'good' categories combined increased from 59% to 75%. The school will continue to prioritise this area to improve teacher quality.

- *Focus area 3.4 – Select and Use Resources:* A priority area for our school is implementation of ICT into the curriculum in a contemporary and engaging way. We also need to be cognisant of supporting resources that may appeal to a variety of students' interests and learning styles. We also have an aging workforce and for many of these teachers, students will be far more advanced in their knowledge and understanding of ICT.

- *Focus area 3.1 – Establish challenging learning goals*: The data indicate students clearly recognise that their teachers hold high expectations for them, acknowledge good effort and they generally feel well supported. However, when students were asked if they knew explicitly what their current ability level was for a particular subject or what targets/goals had been set for achievement, the responses were of 'concern'. This is essential information for teachers to diagnose and to communicate to students. It forms the basis for formative assessment and differentiated learning.

The main implication for our school is the revelation that we need to redesign our professional learning program to be more flexible in what we deliver and when. If the Standards are to be used as a working document (rather that a shelved document), teachers need to see the value in them. This places the onus on teachers to use the Standards as their map of development and conduit to professional learning and thus improved professional practice.

Clearly, through the very act of surveying students, we are simultaneously increasing our transparency of teaching practice with students and parents. It is doubtful that either group of stakeholders has been exposed to the mechanics of classroom practice in more traditional forms of school improvement programs that are teacher focused. With continued development of the program, it is inevitable that students and parents will become more educated about what good teaching and learning should look like in the classroom and be able to communicate with teachers through this discourse. It may be confronting for teachers to have this knowledge base increase because with it will come greater accountability for teachers and administrators.

3.4.3   Stronger Smarter Institute

Research Question 1: What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?

Research Question 2: What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities?

Surveys were completed by staff at two schools in an attempt to gain a snapshot of their teaching experience, a baseline from which to gauge their self assessments and to ascertain whether there were marked differences in perspectives from such different contexts.

The survey data were interrogated at a very basic level recognising that the teachers in both the Queensland and Western Australian samples had limited exposure to the Standards, so their responses were subjective and further descriptors or criteria need to inform their self-reflection or ratings, to ensure accuracy and to allow comparison. The text-based responses that formed part of the school data sets also revealed interesting perspectives.

The voices of community, students and teachers were honoured, drawing on consistent themes and using quotes or information gleaned from the workshops to capture and represent the key messages. The data captured through the workshop processes including the conversations, the survey responses, and the artworks have been scrutinized to highlight the messages that were raised across the different sites.

Research Question 1 – attributes of teachers and school leaders

While some people recalled the role the teacher played as a sports or dance teacher, what makes an impressive teacher is not about what is taught but about the interactions with students and how they are made to feel. The workshops elicited positive stories and the clear messages about constructive influences of impressive teachers that can be taken from the comments. However, the opposite is also true and the dramatic impact of negative interactions that have a lasting effect were also raised.

Research Question 2 – strategies and processes required for successful engagement

The data collected does not reveal a set of skills or processes that can be ticked off or achieved but rather an ongoing process to be built upon. This process involves genuine relationships between, individual teachers and parents and carers, as well as whole school and community initiatives that are inclusive and which are developed with community as partners. The visualisation activities explained the attributes of teachers seen to impact on students resulting in quality relationships. These factors such as showing you care, respecting students, making them feel

welcome and helping them to be the best they can be, can also be attributed to effectively working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers.

The responses provided by all stakeholders during the pilot project overwhelmingly demonstrated that the impressive teacher made it clear to students that they cared. The feelings associated with these recollections were often very colourful and positive. Interestingly most students easily identified a teacher who has had or is currently having a significant impact on them.

A connectedness paradigm has been used to describe activities that many schools engage in, such as, extra curricular activities designed to promote a positive school culture. The schools that participated in this project could list initiatives within their schools as evidenced by the examples of community engagement offered by community, students and teachers from their own experiences.

Perhaps this is the most important factor that schools are often busy attempting to engage community and to 'foster a school spirit' without fully capitalising on the connectedness and ensuring shared understandings have been co-created to leverage community ideas. Real engagement occurs when equal partners in a reciprocal relationship work together and fully understand the purpose, processes and intended outcome. Often with the best intentions, schools implement programs that are important to schools without explaining the purpose or seeking advice from community in the first instance.

Another rewarding aspect of the workshops resulted from the inclusion of students in the process. Not only did they contribute valuable information and ideas but that they expressed such gratitude about being consulted and commented on being respected and valued.

Primary students at one of the Queensland Public Schools commented in their feedback that they were proud to be part of this group and that their involvement in the project may instigate an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their school to participate in a leadership group. A secondary student in Western Australia said in his feedback "This is really worthwhile and I felt valued because it was the first time the school wanted to know what I thought".

Community members at all sites were also appreciative of their involvement and the opportunity to contribute. Schools could build on this goodwill and use these processes as the foundation of building stronger partnerships.

3.5 Summary of Findings

Based on the data collected by Pilot groups and the way each interrogated their data sets, commentary around each of the research questions was constructive and advisory. Table 4 provides an indication of this commentary for selected research questions, with full details contained in individual Pilot reports.

Table 6: Sample Commentary for Selected Research Questions

Pilot Group	Research Question	Sample Commentary
ACT TQI	How will Standards 1 (*Know students and how they learn*) and 6 (*Engage in professional learning*) inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors in the ACT?	At the beginning of the pilot both mentor teachers and preservice teachers had little knowledge and experience of the Standards. After working with the Standards participants were positive about the use of the standards for assessment of preservice teachers and reported a greater understanding of the role and importance of the Standards to their careers. Most participants highlighted the need for teachers and preservice teachers to be given time to engage with the Standards.
AEF	How can teachers be supported in identifying their place on the continuum of the career stages in the National Professional Standards for Teachers in relation to Asia literacy?	Proficient and Highly Accomplished teachers in the pilot study shared similarities in that they "initiated, engaged, analysed, participated, contributed, undertook or applied" (taken from the range of Descriptors in Standards 2 and 6) and they could evidence this through comprehensive portfolios of actions.
AIS NSW	How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?	Teachers reported that a range of strategies assisted them to use the professional standards for teaching to focus and build a shared understanding of their school goals for improvement. "The PD sessions were useful in understanding more the philosophy of teaching and expectations of all stakeholders".
APC – ACSSO	What do you believe are the important attributes, behaviours and processes for teachers when they engage with parents?	It was commonly agreed that teachers needed to have the following attributes, behaviours and skills (*top five points were*): • Good communication skills • Value and foster good relationships with students/parents • Approachable, warm and friendly • Able to model and develop trust • Regard parents as partners in the education of their children, and engage in a collaborative process with the parents

Pilot Group	Research Question	Sample Commentary
ASPA	What strategies do principals propose to use to engage staff in implementing the standards?	Many principals indicated that their current structures that exist include regular staff and executive/leadership team meetings where teaching practice is a focus. One of the most comprehensive responses was where a principal noted that they held "Regular fortnightly professional learning sessions reflecting on teacher practice and promoting digital and personalised pedagogy."
Australind SHS	How can student feedback data assist schools to improve practice?	The data indicate students clearly recognise that their teachers hold high expectations for them, acknowledge good effort and they generally feel well supported. However, when students were asked if they knew explicitly what their current ability level was for a particular subject or what targets/goals had been set for achievement, the responses were of 'concern'.
CDU – NTTRB	In their daily work, in what ways can graduate teachers located in regional and remote schools in the Northern Territory, demonstrate their engagement with the National Professional Standards for Teachers, at the transition from Graduate to the Proficient career levels, and in their movement from Provisional to Full Registration?	All participants reported that they valued the mentoring opportunities as they felt that such opportunities were necessary to enable them to meet the requirements of both moving from provisional to full registration; and for meeting their probation requirements.
DECS SA	How can observation and reflection be used to promote learning about the Standards in practice?	Teachers and leaders considered the observation of teacher practice as a powerful professional learning activity. Despite some trepidation regarding the observation of colleagues, the overwhelming conclusion was that the observation tool was effective in both providing a platform for deep professional conversations and was an effective way of engaging with the Standards.
DoE Tas	How useful is the National Professional Standards for Teachers for informing and guiding action research and inquiry?	In many cases the Standards have brought a degree of rigour to the action based research and a sense of authenticity around the foci and research questions. In this context, the Standards sit well alongside teacher's own thinking about what is important to develop in their practice and the established directions and goals of their school or workplace.

Pilot Group	Research Question	Sample Commentary
DoE WA	How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?	Respondents saw extensive benefit in linking professional learning with the Standards, determining that this initiative allows teachers to identify individual professional learning needs; link professional learning to performance management and areas of growth; assist with individual teacher goal setting and self-reflection; and identify whole areas of school need.
ISQ	How effectively were project leaders able to work with staff to contextualise the Standards?	All school leaders commented that the Standards would help focus their conversations with staff about professional growth. They also felt that this would complement their current processes and that it would be possible to align the Standards with their current expectations for staff.
NSW DEC	In developing teacher quality and teacher leadership at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead: What are the professional learning needs of teachers?	For each of the seven Standards, most respondents signaled high or moderate level need for professional learning in order to assist teachers to meet the requirements at the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead. The group of standards that rated most highly in order of mean scores: (Standard 5) *Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning,* (Standard 3) *Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning*, (Standard 1) *Know students and how they learn* and (Standard 2) *Know the content and how to teach it* would appear to be the four Standards that most closely focus directly on classroom teaching and learning.
NSWIT QUT	What are the data-related practices teachers at the three nominated Career Stages use?	For the Proficient career stage, the approaches to the use of NAPLAN data are either hierarchical or on an ad hoc/individual basis. Where the approach is hierarchical, it is the Deputy Principal (DP) through Heads of Departments (HODs) who manage the process. P3 states: "In our science meetings we are told that there are … certain target areas that need to be addressed – they tell us to incorporate them [target areas] into our classes".

Pilot Group	Research Question	Sample Commentary
REFA	Does an online platform have the potential to support collegiate learning within rural and remote locations?	The value of the online platform was seen as significantly supporting professional learning, enhancing collaborative practice, improving knowledge of available resources, assisting them to self-reflect upon professional learning, promoting professional dialogue within the school and most importantly, within the network.
SSI	What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?	While some people recalled the role the teacher played as a sports or dance teacher, what makes an impressive teacher is not about what is taught but about the interactions with students and how they are made to feel.
VIT	How does the current process for full registration accommodate the Standards for teachers at the proficient level?	Mentors' responses also supported the view that the PRTs developed their professional practice: *My PRT is continually developing her professional knowledge in a variety of ways including PD, collegiate discussions, PLT planning etc. The National Standards and the pilot project supported further development and focus for her.*

It is not surprising that engagement with the Standards became more specific during the course of each investigation. Table 4 on the next page provides an overview of elements of the Standards that have been elaborated during Pilot projects. During the Pilot planning stage for the projects, generalised references were frequently made to "using the Standards" as a way of investigating research questions. In some cases, specific Focus Areas were identified to fine-tune these investigations, e.g., Focus Areas 3.7 and 7.3 were the basis of the investigation undertaken by the Australian Parents Council to gain feedback about how teachers engaged with parents/carers, and Focus Area 5.4 was the emphasis chosen by Queensland University of Technology to explore how teachers approached the use of national assessment data.

Coverage of each of the three Domains of the Standards framework resulted from a reference to the following Standards and Focus Areas, references which reflect an emphasis on teaching and learning:

Professional Knowledge and *Professional Practice* Domains: Standard 1 (Know students and how they learn), Standard 2 (Know the content and how to teach it), 3 (Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning), and Standard 5 (Assess, provided feedback and report on student learning).

Professional Practice and ***Professional Engagement*** *Domains: Focus Areas: 3.1 − 3.7; 4.1 − 4.5; 5.1 − 5.5; 7.3*

During the Pilots implementation stage, participant engagement with the Standards provided the opportunity for a broader range of particular Focus Areas to be investigated. The depth of treatment was often determined by the instrument or tool that formed part of the Pilot methodology or that were chosen by participants in their individual inquiry designs. For example, the use of Surveys as self-reflection tools encompassed every Focus Area within the Standards document, as was the case with the Department of Education, Western Australia. In other contexts, particular Focus Areas were selected for elaboration, as was the case with the ACT Teacher Quality Institute, Australind Senior High School, or the Department of Education, Tasmania. A clear indication from Table 4 is the extent to which specific Focus Areas of the Standards were incorporated into investigations during the implementation (participant engagement) stage.

This additional detail, coupled with the two quotes below, further suggests that engagement with specific Focus Areas of the Standards initiates productive professional learning.

Professional Conversations, conducted properly in a non-threatening, supportive and trusting environment can provide a great conduit for honest reflection & goal setting. These conversations have been effective in previous years, but had been undertaken with a set of structured questions that reflected school goals, without a strong emphasis on the individual practitioner. Adding the National Professional Standards to this process was both productive and educational as it allowed staff to gauge within a national context their current level of work. It allowed for a more specific set of individual goals that had a developmental layer wrapped around them.

When I applied the standards to my subject area, it was clear what evidence I needed to collect . . . working together allowed me to discuss with secondary teachers especially the types of evidence needed.

Table 7: Overview of Standards Elements Addressed in Planning and Implementation Stages of Pilot Projects

Pilot	Instrument/Tool	Standards Element Addressed	
		Pilot Planning Phase	Pilot Implementation Phase
ACT TQI	Survey	Standard 1; Standard 2	Focus Areas: 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3
AEF	Interview		Focus Areas: 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4
AIS NSW	Questionnaire		Focus Areas: 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
APC – ACSSO	Focus Group	Focus Areas: 3.7; 7.3	Focus Areas: 3.7; 7.3
ASPA	Questionnaire		
Australind SHS	Student Survey	Standard 3; Standard 5	Focus Areas: 3.1; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5; 3.7; 5.1; 5.2
CDU – NTTRB	Evidence of Practice Plan		Professional Knowledge; Professional Engagement
			Focus Areas: 1.1; 3.3; 3.5; 3.6; 4.2; 4.3; 5.1; 5.5; 7.3
DECS SA	Lesson Observation Tool		Focus Areas: 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
DoE Tas	Student Survey		Focus Areas: 1.5; 5.1 – 5.3
	Graduate Teacher Survey/Self-audit (Within a range of Inquiry Design Templates)		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 6.1 – 6.4; 7.1 – 7.4
DoE WA	Self-reflection tool		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 6.1 – 6.4; 7.1 – 7.4
ISQ	Professional Growth Plan		Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice Domains; Focus Area: 5.3
	Self-audit		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
NSW DEC	Survey	Focus Areas: 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5	Focus Areas: 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5
NSWIT			
QUT	Interview	Focus Area: 5.4	Focus Area: 5.4
REFA	Survey	Professional Engagement Domain	Professional Engagement Domain
SSI	Survey		Focus Areas: 3.7; 7.3
VIT	Survey/Self-audit		Focus Areas: 1.1 – 1.6; 2.1 – 2.6; 3.1 – 3.7; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.5; 6.1 – 6.4; 7.1 – 7.4

4 Thematic Discussion of Pilots

Thematic analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) was performed to identify the presence or absence of recurring themes and sub-themes within and across the final pilot project reports. The identification and refinement of themes and sub-themes was an iterative process, involving repeated close reading of the data. A sample of the final reports was analysed and coded by two researchers to ensure intercoder reliability, which refers to "the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion" (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002, p. 589). Intercoder reliability is an essential component of thematic analysis: "if the coding is not reliable, the analysis cannot be trusted" (Singletary, quoted in Lombard et al., p. 588).

The thematic analysis resulted in the identification of four themes:

- Alignment;
- Data Sources for Improvement (Working with Feedback);
- Growth and Learning within the Profession; and
- Improved Outcomes.

Notwithstanding the commitment to strive for intercoder reliability, it is acknowledged that there is scope for interpretation in coding textual data. Qualitative themes and/or the statements being coded may not necessarily be mutually exclusive, which can result in defensible instances of multiple coding. In the discussion that follows, elaboration and/or justification is provided where multiple coding is possible.

It is important to note that the thematic analysis is based on the pilot authors' representations in the final pilot reports; the thematic analysis does not confirm the veracity or legitimacy of the representations. Also the thematic analysis examined what was explicitly included in the reports; it did not examine silences and it did not make inferences, despite how readily inferences could be made in some instances.

4.1 Alignment

This section draws on content from the final pilot project reports that highlighted instances of 'alignment'. The theme of 'Alignment' designated the 'congruence', or 'correspondence', or lack thereof between professional practice(s) and the contextual backdrop.

The contextual backdrop was conceived to include the *apriori* requirements and/or expectations of overarching guidelines, such as policies, community expectation or an institution's aspirational goals. Professional practice(s) encompassed individual engagement with and/or implementation of requirements inherent within the context, such as integration of the Standards into planning for professional learning opportunities within a school's improvement cycle. Professional practices were also designated to include the design and conduct of the pilot itself.

In this instance, the alignment of the pilot project with the contextual backdrop included relationships between the pilot project and previous, concurrent or planned research projects. Four sub-categories were identified for this theme:

1. school/system priorities and individual teacher needs
2. existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice
3. local and network practices, and
4. other research influences.

The perceived conduciveness of the Standards to interpretation was germane to this and other themes, and conflicting views were conveyed: the openness was presented as both an enabler and an inhibiter. When viewed as an enabler, the openness of the language was presented as an opportunity that, for example, could expand the range of ways that teachers could align individual professional learning needs with school improvement goals, etc. When viewed as an inhibiter, the openness of language was presented as a source of ambiguity that could reduce or prevent alignment.

Similarly, the perceived explicitness of the Standards was also relevant to this and other themes, and it, too, was presented in conflicting ways. For example, some pilot reports praised the explicitness of the Standards, claiming that alignment would be facilitated by unambiguous understandings. However, negative views represented the perceived explicitness of the Standards, in some instances, as prescriptiveness, which could reduce the potential benefits of alignment to compliance or result in the Standards being viewed as minimal benchmarks. Views regarding the openness or explicitness of the Standards are relevant to this and other themes and will recur in this and subsequent discussions in Section 4.

4.1.1 School/System Priorities and Individual Teacher Needs

The alignment or lack thereof between school/system priorities and individual teacher needs frequently referred to the use of the Standards to align teachers' professional learning with a school's goals.

4.1.1.1 *Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection*

The alignment of school/system priorities and individual teacher needs was a major component of the AIS NSW pilot project. Specifically, the alignment of school priorities and individual teacher needs underpinned the first research question: "How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?" (AIS NSW, p. 6). Consequently, the methodology and discussion of findings consistently addressed the alignment of school priorities and individual teacher needs.

The methodology, for example, involved teachers using the Standards to evaluate "their practice in relation to the school goals", identify "individual professional learning to improve their practice" and contribute "to the design of a whole school professional development plan" (AIS NSW, p. 7). During the implementation stage, when teachers were using the Standards to align school goals and teacher

professional learning, a school executive commented on the constructive aspect of interpreting the Standards: "It was interesting to see how the Standards were interpreted differently which lead to great discussions amongst the staff" (AIS NSW, p. 13).

The pilot concluded that the "The Standards document is a useful resource to support teachers' understanding of their school goals" (AIS NSW, p. 20).

4.1.1.2   Group 2: Professional Development

The alignment of school/system priorities and individual teacher needs was identified in the pilot project report from DoE TAS. This pilot involved 16 separate action research projects on diverse topics and the principal researchers of the pilot commented that from across the 16 projects "the Standards sit well alongside teacher's own thinking about what is important to develop in their practice and the established directions and goals of their school or workplace" (DoE TAS, p. 4).

In addition, Action Research Project 10, entitled "Integrating the National Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) as a positive planning tool for Individual Professional Learning Plans (IPLP) which will enhance understanding, direction and the learning culture within a school community", could be regarded as specifically addressing the alignment of school priorities and individual teacher needs. Therefore, the alignment of school/system priorities and individual teacher needs was classified as having a medium presence in the pilot.

4.1.1.3   Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

None of the pilot project reports from this group explicitly addressed the alignment of school/system priorities and individual teacher needs.

4.1.1.4   Group 4: Parents, Community and Students

None of the pilot project reports from this group explicitly addressed the alignment of school/system priorities and individual teacher needs.

4.1.2   Existing Processes, Policies, Priorities and Professional Practice

The alignment of existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice was the most frequently coded sub-theme. It was present as a substantial sub-theme in all of the pilot projects reports. In many instances, the alignment involved the articulation of the Standards to existing processes, such as teacher appraisal, teacher registration, mentoring programs, community engagement, and the development and evaluation of professional learning courses.

The alignment of the Standards to professional practice included frequent references to educators' knowledge or lack of knowledge of the Standards and to the evaluation of teachers' practice. This sub-theme also accommodated perceived alignment and non-alignment between the Standards and key curriculum documents, such as the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) and *The Australian Curriculum* (ACARA, 2011).

4.1.2.1   Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The alignment of the Standards with existing processes was raised by all three organisations in the Teacher Self-Reflection Group, which collectively resulted in the identification of a wide range of school processes. AIS NSW aligned the Standards with school improvement processes; ISQ identified that all schools associated with the pilot wanted to align staff appraisal processes with the Standards; and principals participating in the DECD SA pilot suggested that the Standards could be productively aligned with:

- Induction conversations for new staff
- Support for deprivatised teaching and the development of professional learning committees
- Align it for teachers coming off probation to provide feedback to teachers and principals
- Pre meetings/prior to observation and de-brief after the observation enhance the process.
- To support performance development discussions
- Use by an AST 2 to plan their mentoring role
- Step 9 discussions and review
- TFEL conversations and exploration. (DECD SA, p. 14)

Further, ISQ reported "The school leaders found that aligning the Standards to their current practices was not difficult" (ISQ, p. 35).

Two organisations within the Teacher Self-Reflection Group raised educators' familiarity with the Standards. ISQ reported "50% of the schools associated with the pilot had already been engaging to some degree with the Standards prior to the Pilot" (ISQ, p. 35) and that 198 (46%) of participant teachers indicated that they were "familiar, very familiar or extremely familiar with the Standards" (ISQ, p. 20).

DECS SA reported that a smaller proportion (37%) of the participants indicated that they had a detailed familiarity with the Standards at the beginning of the project, but that the proportion increased significantly to 96% at the end of the pilot.

4.1.2.2   Group 2: Professional Development

The alignment of existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice had a high presence in all pilot projects within the Professional Development Group, yet the alignment was addressed in diverse ways, which included educators' levels of familiarity with the Standards, the articulation of the Standards with other key education documents and articulation of existing processes with other Standards frameworks.

Educator's familiarity with the Standards was raised by the AEF, ASPA and NSW DEC. In contrast to the alignment reported by ISQ and DECD SA, the AEF, ASPA and NSW DEC reported considerable non-alignment, that is, a considerable lack of familiarity was reported. Specifically, the AEF reported "teachers and principals are not

engaged consciously and systematically with the Standards for Teachers" (AEF, p. 23). Similarly, ASPA contended that:

> many principals will not have engaged with the National Standards for Teachers … and will be unaware of the implications both positive and negative of the Standards for them, their staff and their school communities. There is a significant danger that many principals, especially in regional and remote areas, will ignore or pay scant attention to the Standards. It is essential that principals are provided with the support and encouragement necessary to ensure the successful roll-out of the Standards. (ASPA p. 3)

In addition, NSW DEC reported that only 39% of "respondents indicated that they had either an 'extensive' or 'sound' understanding of these [National] Standards with 3% of that figure rating their knowledge as extensive" (NSW DEC, p. 25).

The alignment between the Standards and key curriculum documents was central to the AEF project. Specifically, the AEF contended non-alignment between the Standards and the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) and *The Australian Curriculum* (ACARA, 2011) on the basis that Asia Literacy was not explicitly mentioned in the Standards.

In order to redress this non-alignment, the AEF "undertook a pilot study to trial the use of the Standards with a focus on developing a case study on how Asia literacy in Australian schooling can be supported by their use" (AEF, p. 5). Thus, this aspect was classified as substantial in this pilot. The alignment between the Standards and other education documents was also raised in the ASPA pilot, although it had a minor presence in the pilot.

For other pilot projects within this group, the alignment of existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice was central to the research aim, rational or design. For example, alignment of existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice was integral to 10 of the 16 action research projects that comprised the DoE TAS pilot.

Finally, other pilots researched the alignment between the Standards and professional development. This was a central component of the DOE WA project which investigated the extent to which the Standards are useful for teachers reflecting on their practice, the usefulness of the Standards for establishing priorities and planning professional development for teachers across the career stages and the extent to which it is possible to map its current professional learning program to the Standards.

The alignment of the Standards to professional development priorities and planning was also a substantial aspect of the NSW DEC pilot and also a key recommendation of the QUT pilot, which determined that professional development was necessary to

address inconsistencies in practice within career stages in relation to high-stakes testing data.

4.1.2.3 Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The Initial Teacher Education and Registration Group focused on alignment between the Standards and two existing processes: the ACT TQI pilot investigated the use of the Standards to enhance aspects of initial teachers' internship placements, whereas the CDU and VIT pilots both investigated the use of the Standards in the movement from 'graduate' to 'proficient' teacher status (although the State/Territory-based terminology used in each pilot differed). Consideration of the collection and nature of appropriate evidence and the role of mentors were key features in all three pilots.

The ACT TQI investigated how Standards 1 and 6 "inform and enhance the work embedded assessment and feedback for pre-service teachers and their mentors" (ACT TQI, p. 12). The findings indicated that mentors and initial teacher education students wanted professional experience/internship assessment to be aligned with the Standards. The findings further indicated that use of the Standards to guide feedback was constructive and professionally rewarding for both the initial teacher education students and the mentors.

Both the VIT and CDU & NT TBR pilots investigated the alignment of the National Standards with existing registration process and the attendant evidence demands. The findings of the VIT pilot indicated "there are no major issues with transference of the Victorian Standards to the National Standards, within the current process for full registration" (p. 21). In contrast, the findings of the CDU & NT TRB pilot noted that several of the 'graduate' teachers involved in the pilot decided to apply for 'proficient' status earlier than intended so that they will be required to meet the evidence demands of the NT's 17 Standards, rather than the 37 National Standards.

The ACT TQI pilot identified non-alignment concerning teachers' familiarity with the Standards: "All mentor teachers and pre-service teachers noted the lack of working knowledge of the Standards among working teachers in the ACT" (ACT TQI, p. 6) and "All participants were concerned about the lack of exposure to and understanding of the Standards by working teachers " (ACT TQI, p. 27).

4.1.2.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

APC-ACSSO, SSI and ASHS investigated alignment with existing processes involving parents, communities and students, respectively. The APC-ACSSO pilot principally investigated career-staged professional practices referenced to the Standards for teachers working with parents; the SSI investigated the attributes of teachers and school leaders whose professional practices effectively engaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities; and ASHS investigated how student voice could be used to inform teachers' teaching practices in order to promote student learning.

Thus, alignment with existing processes was central to each pilot. This was emphasised in the ASHS pilot report: "we were determined to run the pilot study within existing school structures and in alignment with the school improvement cycle" (ASHS, p. 5).

Additionally, the SSI and APC-ACSSO pilots noted the alignment or non-alignment associated with knowledge or lack of knowledge of the Standards. According to the SSI pilot report, "It must be noted that the teachers across both sites had limited prior knowledge of the National Professional Standards for Teachers … There is a need in all sites to introduce the Standards and to engage teachers with the Standards" (SSI, p. 23).

Similarly, the APC-ACSSO pilot reported "Teachers in some states / territories seemed more familiar with the notion of Professional Standards for Teachers than others" (APC-ACSSO p. 15). It was also reported "Teachers were generally aware of the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*, but parents were not" (APC-ACSSO, p. 15).

4.1.3 Local and Network Practices

The alignment of local and network practices involved shared understandings and expectations. The alignment was directly related to the pilot organisations' contexts and included, for example, alignment between/across the network of independent schools in Queensland, universities/schools and university/university in ACT, schools and local communities.

4.1.3.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The alignment of local and network practices had a medium presence in the pilot project of one of the organisations in the Teacher Self-Reflection Group, but was not addressed in the pilot projects of the other two organisations within the group.

ISQ collated Standards-referenced data on personal areas of strength and future growth from teachers in the 10 participating schools in order to determine ways to support the schools collectively. ISQ reported "School leaders saw the benefits of participating [in the Pilot] as networking opportunities across a range of schools to share ideas and best practice" (ISQ, p. 7). ISQ also maintained that it was essential that the organisation understands the professional learning needs of teachers across the network of schools in order to plan and deliver the most effective programs possible" (ISQ, p. 9).

4.1.3.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The alignment of local and network practices had a low to medium presence in the pilot projects of three organisations in the Professional Development Group: AEF, ASPA and REFA.

The AEF reported the opportunity for the organisation to "provide leadership for teachers, states and territories, systems, sectors and other organisations" (AEF, p. 27), thus creating a robust Asia Literacy network.

On the other hand, ASPA drew attention to the challenge of aligning local practices. Specifically, ASPA reported "A point was made in the interviews that schools from a low SES background or with large numbers of students and parents from a language other than English background would have trouble engaging their communities in discussions about the Standards" (ASPA, p. 18).

The presence of issues of alignment was highest in the REFA pilot project, which investigated the ways in which networking within and across schools in remote settings in Western Australia can be enhanced using an online platform. The pilot also involved networking with Country Education Inc in Victoria. Thus, the pilot was described as "an excellent example of two states collaborating, and through their work, informing the national learning community" (REFA, p. 9).

4.1.3.3   Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The alignment of local and network practices had a high presence in ACT TQI pilot project, but was not a feature of the CDU / NT TRB or VIT projects.

The focus on initial teacher education students' internship brought alignment between universities and schools into sharp relief. The alignment focused, in part, on the need for shared/common expectations of and professional learning experiences for initial teacher education students undertaking professional experience placements and internships, irrespective of where they were undertaking their initial teacher education courses and placements.

The pilot design drew on the Standards to promote alignment of practices, especially in relation to feedback and assessment. The pilot reported that the participants "saw the introduction of Standards as an opportunity to increase consistency of courses, practicum requirements and assessment across all universities nationally" (ACT TQI, p. 7).

4.1.3.4   Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The alignment of local and network practices was central to the Pilot projects of all three organisations in Group 4 (ASHS, APC-ACSSO and SSI) and each of the pilots, notwithstanding their distinctiveness, emphasised the importance of local and network practices to student learning.

The ASHS pilot report presented a multi-faceted discussion of local and network practices that was underpinned by the belief that "a broad range of outstanding expertise exists within local school communities" (ASHS, p. 29). Consequently, ASHS recommended that "geographically close schools should collaborate (network) with the aim of sharing best practice, expertise and build[ing] a common set of understandings" (ASHS, p. 29).

In addition, ASHS reported its professional networking at the international level. Specifically, ASHS has established education partnerships with Preston School (UK), Moka (Japan) and Jinan (China) to enhance research, Asia Literacy and other cross-curricular perspectives, and professional conversations, which result in improved outcomes for teachers and students.

The ASHS pilot also demonstrated engagement with parents: firstly in allaying fear arising from the research design, which involved videoing students; and secondly in relation to the findings, which confirmed ASHS's concerns about "parental disengagement from the teaching and learning process and whole school decision making" (ASHS, p. 23). This finding reinforces ASHS original contention that "the results from the pilot will help to inform decisions about future summative and formative strategies needed to engage our wider school community" (ASHS, p. 13-14).

The APC-ACSSO pilot project, which investigated differentiated strategies used across the career stages concerning parental engagement, indicated the Standards' potential to encourage teaching practices that would lead to positive and productive relationships with parents.

The pilot reported the participants' "strong belief that good relationships and communication between principals, teachers, students and parents matter enormously, and have a major impact on students' learning" (APC-ACSSO, p. 3) and the excitement of parents about "the notion of the Standards providing a common and accessible language about the nature of teaching and learning, and about teachers' work, which some parents mentioned would prove very helpful to them when speaking with teachers" (APC-ACSSO, p. 15).

The SSI pilot project research questions directly addressed engaging local community and the report discussion acknowledged factors relating to shared understandings and expectations that inhibited alignment at the local level, e.g. "Parents and Community have often had very different experiences of the education process than schools provide today" (ISS, p. 19). The discussion also problematised the notion of 'community':

> Before developing programs designed to engage community there is a need to understand the unique role many play in 'growing up' a child and therefore to consider who needs to be engaged. Once assumptions about who to engage have been challenged and resolved, the appropriate people can be identified and worked with to develop meaningful relationships from which to proceed. (SSI, p, 17)

Nevertheless, the concluding summary of the pilot report captured the essence of positive alignment with the local context through shared understandings and expectations: "Real engagement occurs when equal partners in a reciprocal relationship work together and fully understand the purpose, processes and intended outcome. " (ISS, p. 25)

4.1.4 Other Research Influences

Instances of alignment between professional practice, where professional practice comprised the design and conduct of the pilot *per se*, and previous, concurrent or planned research projects was observed in the pilot reports from AIS NSW, APC-ACSSO, ASHS, DoE TAS, NSW DEC, and SSI. These organisations positioned their pilots in relation to other research projects in diverse ways that served several purposes. In each case, the alignment contextualised the research.

For example, the DOE TAS pilot comprised 16 Action Research projects undertaken by individual teachers and this set of research projects was a subset of a broader Teacher Leader Program. The alignment often served additional purposes beyond contextualisation, for example, explicit positioning was used in some cases to support the rationale for the pilot.

In the case of ASHS and APC-ACSSO, both organisations linked their pilots in response to needs/opportunities that had been identified in other research projects.

The ASHS pilot positioned itself, in part, as a response to Hattie's (2003) observation that teachers rarely regard student feedback as reflecting on their practice, but as a reflection on the students, their home backgrounds, etc, which established a warrant for the pilot methodology.

The APC-ACSSO pilot was positioned as a response to a "2008 study by Monash University [which] found that 82 per cent of teachers felt the need for more professional learning in the area of parent and community involvement (Doecke et al., 2008)" (APC-ACSSO, p. 5). Thus these projects sought to redress an opportunity and a need, respectively, that had been identified in the extant research literature.

4.2 Data Sources for Improvement (Working with Feedback)

This section on data sources provides a brief overview of the data sources utilised by the pilot projects and how the organisations dealt with obtaining data. The section addresses data collection from:

1. school and/or system;
2. student voice;
3. community; and
4. universities and initial teacher education students.

Unlike other sections in the discussion of the thematic analysis, this section does not break the discussion of data courses into the pilot groupings.

4.2.1 School and/or System

School and/or system data were utilised across all pilot projects. In most instances, this was the sole source of data: e.g. AEF, AIS NSW, ASPA, CDU& NT TRB, DECD SA, DOE WA, ISQ, NSW DEC, REFA and VIT. However, these pilot studies drew on different apects of the school and/or system for their data, such as teachers at

different career stages, mentor/mentee pairs, or school executives, and some pilots involved several hundreds of participants while others involved less than ten. Thus, great variety existed among pilots that drew exclusively on school and or system data.

Each of these pilots involved educators researching other educators and some organisations, e.g. NSW DEC, were able to draw on well-established organisational processes and resources, which facilitated the ease with which the research was conducted. However, educators researching educators is not always straightforward, as noted in the DECD SA pilot. Peer observation created "some trepidation" (DECS SA, p.9) that needed to be overcome.

4.2.2 Student Voice

'Student voice' has been designated as data provided by school students; the collection of data from initial teacher education students is dealt with in Section 4.2.4.

Student voice was utilised in the ASHS, SSI and DOE TAS pilot projects, each of which contended that student voice is an under-utilised data source that can provide a unique perspective. The process can also be rewarding for students, as reported by the SSI pilot:

> Not only did they [students] contribute valuable information and ideas but that they expressed such gratitude about being consulted and commented on being respected and valued. (SSI, p. 25)

> This is really worthwhile and I felt valued because it was the first time the school wanted to know what I thought. (Student quoted in SSI, p. 25)

Some challenges that working with student voice can create, however, were reported in the ASHS pilot report. Specifically, the pilot reported that parents expressed concern about videoing students, which needed to be addressed before the pilot could proceed. Additionally, the pilot reported that the prospect of using student voice was confronting for teachers initially and that teachers raised the following concerns.

- Are we passing too much power over to students?
- Can students assess how well a teacher is performing?
- Can students be trusted to answer surveys respectfully?
- Are we exposing ourselves to scrutiny by students and community members?
- Will students intentionally give negative feedback to teachers they did not like? (ASHS, p. 5)

4.2.3 Community

The APC-ACSSO and SSI pilots utilised data from the wider community: the APC-ACSSO pilot project involved parents and the SSI pilot project involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community members. Both pilots reported that the community members were appreciative of their involvement and that there were positive outcomes for the community members as a result of the involvement. However, the SSI pilot project problematised the notion of community and a participant succinctly expressed the issues:

> Who is community? Sometimes our students in the high school are in the parenting role. Maybe the school needs to consider the role of those students and informing them of arrangements or seeking advice from them... more questions need to be asked to ensure the right people are advised and consulted. (Teacher quoted in SSI, p. 17 WA)

Thus, researchers need to carefully consider carefully who constitutes 'community'. Furthermore, the SSI report acknowledged that such consideration applies beyond engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities given that Australia is a pluralistic society in which many different family structures exist.

4.2.4 Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students

The ACT TQI and QUT pilot projects utilised data from initial teacher education students, who reported positive professional growth and learning from their involvement in the pilots. Universities have well-established protocols for research projects involving students, however, the ACT TQI pilot reported timing constraints arising from university timelines for research projects involving initial teacher education students.

4.3 Growth and Learning Within the Profession

This section draws on content from the final pilot project reports that highlighted instances of 'Growth and Learning within the Profession'. The theme of 'Growth and Learning within the Profession' designated professional development of organisations, groups and/or individuals. This theme is closely aligned with the sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes'.

Eight sub-categories were identified for this theme:

1. self-reflection/;self evaluation
2. strategies/evidence;
3. professional conversations;
4. support structures;
5. planning and research;
6. paradigm shift;
7. aspirational goals; and
8. continuity of practice,

4.3.1 Self-Reflection/Self-Evaluation

Self-reflection and/or self-evaluation, which are closely aligned categories were present in almost all pilot project reports. Self-reflection and self-evaluation are closely aligned processes. The thematic coding process followed Zimmerman's designation of 'self-evaluation', i.e. "comparisons of self-observed performances against some standard, such as one's prior performance, another person's performance, or an absolute standard of performance" (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 68). Self-reflection, on the other hand, was understood to be a broader process of careful consideration of oneself that does not involve comparison to a standard, e.g. careful consideration of one's motivations or aspirations. However, whilst these distinctions were maintained in the coding process, the terms were used more flexibly, sometimes interchangeably, in the pilot reports.

4.3.1.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

Self-reflection/self-evaluation had a high profile in the pilot projects of all three organisations in the Teacher Self-Reflection Group: AIS NSW, DECD and AIS NSW. Each of the pilot projects aligned self-reflection/self-evaluation to the Standards, although the alignment was constructed in very different ways.

For example, DECS SA investigated how observation and reflection can be used to promote learning about the Standards, whereas ISQ used the Standards as an absolute standard of performance against which teachers compared their own performance and AIS NSW used the Standards as a tool to "to assist teachers to reflect on [evaluate] the extent to which they are supporting the school to achieve the [school improvement] goals (AIS NSW, p. 5).

4.3.1.2 Group 2: Professional Development

Self-reflection/self-evaluation was addressed to some level in most of the pilot projects conducted within Group 2. Self-reflection and/or self-evaluation were regularly aligned to the Standards and, again, the alignment was constructed in different ways.

The DOE WA pilot project, for example, evaluated the extent to which the Standards are useful for teachers to reflect upon their practice. Thus, the Standards were positioned as a tool to support self-reflection. This approach was affirmed by pilot participants, who "agreed that self-reflection should be explicitly linked to the Standards, and would result in an efficient form of reflection and allow teachers the opportunity to take personal responsibility for their own development" (DOE WA, p. 12). However, concern was expressed regarding the potentially detrimental effect of interpretation on self-reflection:

> An additional cautionary theme was a genuine concern that teachers
> would self-reflect according to their own understanding of the stages
> and that there needed to be consistency across the state to ensure

that all teachers and line managers were aware of the expectations of the Standards at each career stage. (DOE WA, p. 14)

The use of the Standards as a tool to facilitate or guide self-reflection/self-evaluation was also present to varying degrees in the pilot projects conducted by AEF, ASPA, DOE TAS and NSW DEC. The REFA pilot project, however, identified the online platform that they developed as a tool to support self-reflection.

4.3.1.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

Self-evaluation referenced to the Standards was central to the VIT pilot project and had a medium presence in the ACT TQI pilot project.

The VIT pilot methodology required provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) and their mentors to map the PRTs practice to the Standards and surveys were administered to PRTs and their mentors to capture evaluation data for each of the 37 Standards.

Similarly, the Standards were used to provide feedback to initial teacher education students undertaking their internship in the ACT TQI pilot study and one participant commented: "Having the National Standards available gives me the opportunity to assess where I am as a pre-service teacher and how to make leaps and bounds in becoming a QUALITY teacher" (ACT TQI, p. 19, emphasis in original).

4.3.1.4 Group 4: Parents, Community and Students

Teacher self-evaluation was integral to the ASHS pilot project in order to ensure that the processes involved in the pilot project were aligned with the school improvement cycle. Self-evaluation referenced to "set criteria, represented by the Standards" (ASHS, p. 10) was used to assess teachers' performance and inform professional learning requirements as part of the school improvement cycle. Thus, the Standards were used as a self-evaluation tool that was strategically aligned to the professional growth and learning of teachers and the school.

Self-reflection was also raised in the SSI pilot project, which investigated the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education. Although self-reflection was not an integral component of the pilot project, the pilot identified the importance of self-reflection by and of all stakeholders: "successful engagement required *teachers, students and community members to reflect* on their own experiences, beliefs and assumptions" (SSI, p. 13, emphasis added).

4.3.2 Strategies / Evidence

The pilots investigated strategies for and evidence of growth and learning within the profession from various perspectives, including the demonstration of professional growth during the transition from 'provisional/graduate' to 'full/proficient' registration and the promotion and evaluation of the professional growth of initial

teacher education students and their mentors during internships, each of which involves professional growth of individuals.

However, professional growth and learning can operate at both individual and organisational levels. These levels can be interconnected through the use of strategies that promote individual professional learning that is aligned to the professional growth of an organisation.

Evidence of growth and learning within the profession was also investigated from various perspectives across the pilot projects. Various perspectives included how evidence (frequently Standards-based) could be collected in everyday work practices and used to demonstrate teachers' professional growth and learning, and how evidence for particular descriptors could be differentiated to demonstrate progression through the Standards' differentiated career stages continuum.

4.3.2.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

Strategies for and evidence of learning and growth within the profession were present in various degrees in the pilots of all organisations in Group 1: AIS NSW, DECD SA and ASPA.

The use of evidence to demonstrate how and the extent to which teachers were contributing to the professional growth of their schools had a medium presence in the AIS NSW pilot. Here, the Standards were used to identify appropriate career-staged evidence "that demonstrates the extent to which they [teachers] are assisting to school to meet its [improvement] goals" (AIS NSW, p. 5). Consequently, the pilot included consideration of the nature of evidence, the identification of career-staged evidence and its presentation, following which the pilot reported "Teachers consistently reported that using the Standards provided a structure and foundation to support their collection of evidence to demonstrate their contribution to meeting the school goals for improvement" (AIS NSW, p. 16).

The DECD SA and ASPA pilot projects, on the other hand, included consideration of the strategies to promote growth and learning of educators within the profession. Both pilots acknowledged the integration of the Standards within and alongside widely used strategies such mentoring and observation of exemplary practice.

4.3.2.2 Group 3: Professional Development

Strategies for and evidence of learning and growth within the profession were present in various degrees in half the pilots of all organisations in Group 2: AEF, ASPA, REFA and NSW DEC.

Both strategies for and evidence of learning and growth within the profession were present to a high degree within the NSEW DEC pilot project. Specifically, the NSW DEC pilot project investigated career-staged strategies to promote professional growth and learning across the Standards' continuum, particularly at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages, and it was reported that: "Teachers felt that

success would be enhanced by … using the Standards to shape their own professional learning pathways based on their own needs and contexts" and that "Professional learning for school executive to facilitate the promotion and implementation of the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* was seen as imperative" (NSW DEC, p. 19).

The NSW DEC pilot study was also addressed the matter of evidence directly and in several different ways. Firstly, the pilot project was designed to build an evidence base that could be used to inform professional learning and secondly it investigated how quality teaching could be evidenced in relation to the Standards.

In contrast, the AEF pilot project focused primarily on evidence that teachers could provide to substantiate self-evaluation of their professional growth relative to the Standards' continuum, whereas the ASPA and REFA pilot projects focused mainly on various strategies that could be used to promote professional growth and learning.

Across all four pilots, however, it is possible to discern how strategies for and evidence of professional growth and learning within the profession are being mutually mapped to and informed by the Standards.

4.3.2.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

Strategies for and evidence of learning and growth within the profession were central to the pilots of all three organisations in Group 3: ACT TQI, CDU & NT TRB, and VIT.

The CDU & NT TRB and VIT pilot projects both focused on the transition from 'provisional/graduate' to 'full/proficient' registration. Thus, both pilots addressed learning and growth within the profession directly. Both pilots addressed how the Standards were understood and used by provisionally registered teachers, sources of Standards-based evidence, and the ways in which evidence of teaching performance could be identified and collected.

In a related manner, the VIT pilot project investigated the ways in which the Standards could promote and be used to assess the professional growth and learning of initial teacher education students during internship.

4.3.2.4 Group 4: Parents, Community and Students

Growth and learning within the profession was a major feature of the ASHS pilot project and a relatively minor feature of the SSI pilot project.

Growth and learning within the profession was addressed at two interconnected levels in the ASHS pilot project, which investigated the use of strategies such as observation of and collaborative reflection on videos of teachers' professional practice and the use of student feedback to promote teachers' individual professional learning and growth in ways that were explicitly aligned with the

school's improvement goals, thereby promoting the professional growth of the school.

Strategies for and evidence of growth and learning within the profession were ancillary to the ISS focus on the identification of attributes of teachers who demonstrate exemplary professional practice in the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education. Nevertheless, in relation to professional growth and learning, the general discussion in the pilot report germanely noted "schools have a responsibility to support teachers to build their capacity and confidence to engage with parents and carers. Strategies, such as, pairing new graduates with a community member often provides that mentoring support and can become the basis of developing nurturing relationships" (SSI, p. 19).

4.3.3 Professional Conversations

4.3.3.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

Growth and learning through professional conversations was present to various degrees in the pilot projects of all three organisations in Group 1. Investigation of professional conversations was integral to the VIT pilot project, had a high profile in the DECD SA pilot project and was raised within the ISQ pilot project.

The capacity of the Standards to facilitate, focus and enrich professional conversations was acknowledged in all three pilot reports. For example, the ISQ pilot reported that "All school leaders commented that the Standards would help focus their conversations with staff about professional growth" (ISQ, p. 4) and the DECD SA pilot reported that the "standard descriptors provide a rich language which teachers can readily access to talk about their teaching in practice" (DECD SA, p. 10). The DECD SA pilot project also noted the essential conditions for professional conversations to occur, such as the establishment quality relationships and multi-level trust.

The language of the Standards, which has been noted elsewhere in relation to other themes and sub-themes, was also reported to facilitate professional conversations. Specifically, DECD SA noted the importance of the 'common language' of the Standards in supporting professional conversation: "The common language of the Standards provided clarity and the process was seen as affirming and effective in encouraging teachers to reflect and discuss their practice" (DECD SA, p. 3).

4.3.3.2 Group 2: Professional Development

Growth and learning through professional conversations was present in the pilot projects of three organisations in Group 2 (DOE TAS, ASPA, REFA). Each of the projects identified the importance of tools to support professional conversations.

Unlike the emphasis in Group 1, which focused on the Standards' capacity to facilitate professional conversations, ASPA reported that professional conversations "are critical to implementing the Standards successfully" (ASPA, p. 24). Thus, whilst

Group 1 presented the Standards as a tool to facilitate professional conversations, ASPA reversed this relationship by presenting professional conversations as a tool to assist in the implementation of the Standards.

Further links between Group 1 and Group 2 can be located in the DOE TAS report description of one of the action research projects undertaken in pilot. Like DECD SA in Group 1, the DOE TAS action research project noted the importance of essential conditions for professional conversations, such as trust, and made explicit the relationship between professional conversations, professional growth and the Standards:

> Professional Conversations, conducted properly in a non-threatening, supportive and trusting environment can provide a great conduit for honest reflection & goal setting … Adding the National Professional Standards to this process was both productive and educational as it allowed staff to gauge within a national context their current level of work. It allowed for a more specific set of individual goals that had a developmental layer wrapped around them. (DOE TAS, p. 12)

4.3.3.3   Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

Growth and learning through professional conversations was present to a high degree in the ACT TQI pilot and to a medium degree in the VIT pilot.

Specifically, the ACT TQI pilot developed and trialled a conversation template, which incorporated the Standards in its design to support professional conversations between initial teacher education students and their mentors. The VIT pilot, on the other hand, gathered feedback concerning professional conversations using several strategies and reported that "Evidence from the evaluative questionnaire, the online survey and anecdotal comments provided as part of the school visits indicated that the National Standards for Proficient teachers assisted in the professional conversations about improving classroom practice" (VIT, p. 18).

Despite the differences in approach and context, both pilots report use of the Standards as a tool to promote professional conversations either directly or by being embedded into 'secondary' tool. Furthermore, participants in both pilots appraised the use of the Standards to facilitate professional conversations positively: e.g. the VIT pilot reported that provisionally registered teachers "felt that working with the National Standards was valuable in relation to discussions with their mentors on professional practice to improve student learning" (VIT, p. 17).

In addition, the ACT TQI pilot reported a 'cyclical' aspect to the use of professional conversations to promote growth and learning. Specifically, the pilot reported a "marked change in the quality and depth of language" (ACT TQI, p. 6), indicating that the use of professional conversation to promote professional learning can be discerned in the nature of subsequent conversations.

4.3.3.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

Professional conversations to promote growth and learning were central to the SSI pilot methodology, which included "workshops intended to facilitate dialogue that explored beliefs and assumptions and to reveal individual and group perspectives from community, students and school personnel" (SSI, p. 9). Thus, the conversations were used to promote growth and learning of the pilot participants. In addition, "the schools involved could build on the conversations that [had] been started and use the information to explore further some key concepts of community engagement" (SSI, p. 5), potentially resulting in further professional growth and learning at the individual teacher and school levels.

The use of professional conversations to promote growth and learning was also an aspect of the Australind pilot project. The use of professional conversations was a component of the numerous strategies employed in the project, such as mentoring and collaborative planning for improvement. Also, as mentioned earlier, Australind reported existing practices that promote professional growth and learning through professional conversations, such as regular professional discourse on teaching and learning with highly performing schools in the UK, Japan and China.

4.3.4 Support Structures

Support structures were designated to include non-human resources associated with professional growth and learning. The support structures could include resources that assist professional growth and learning, such as self-reflection tools, or resources that are used to gauge professional growth and learning, such as self-evaluation and course evaluation tools. Many of the pilots involved the development of such tools, although this sub-theme accommodated existing tools and yet-to-be-developed tools that were identified in the pilots as being necessary or desirable.

4.3.4.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

Both DECS SA and ISQ developed and trialled resources within their pilot projects.

DECS SA developed and trialled an observation proforma to promote teachers' professional growth and learning. Specifically, the observation proforma was designed and developed for "early career teachers to observe the National Professional Standards for Teachers in the practice of more experienced teachers". It was "made available to pilot participants to use and adapt as they felt suited their context" (DECD SA, p. 11) and the pilot concluded "that the observation tool was effective in both providing a platform for deep professional conversations and was an effective way of engaging with the Standards" (DECD SA, p.9).

ISQ developed and trialled three resources within its pilot project: an electronic self-reflection tool, a professional growth planning template and a data analysis tool. The electronic self-reflection tool and professional growth planning template were both explicitly linked to the Standards and the data analysis tool stored responses entered into the electronic self-reflection tool in a searchable master file, which enabled

planning based on overall statistics for schools. The data analysis tool could also be adapted so that schools could add additional fields that may pertain to their contexts, e.g. Christian values.

4.3.4.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The role and/or use of support structures related to professional growth and learning was evident to various degrees in the pilot projects of six organisations in Group 2: AEF, ASPA, DOE TAS, DOE WA, NSW DEC and REFA. The role and use of support structures was presented from different perspectives.

For example, both the DOE TAS and ASPA pilot projects presented the Standards themselves as a tool to promote professional growth and learning:

> A number of principals mentioned that they intend to use the Standards as a "tool for encouraging teachers to reflect on their practice. They are also extremely useful for commencing 1:1 conversations with teachers as they provide a range [of] entry points that are clear and unemotive" (ASPA, p. 12).

ASPA also identified tools that would be most useful if developed, e.g. a 'getting started' kit for staff at various levels in the Standards' continuum and interactive online tools. The ASPA pilot report also presented the view that AITSL should commission or develop support structures.

Other pilot projects developed and/or trialled a wide range of support structures. DOE WA, for example, developed and trialled (i) a teacher self-reflection tool that was linked to the Standards, (ii) a tool that identifies professional learning courses that are linked to the Standards and career stages, and (iii) a course evaluation tool linked directly to the Standards. In relation to the second tool, "91% of respondents were of the opinion that there should be different [self-reflection] tools for each of the four career stages" (DOE WA, p. 13).

Other support structures that were developed included four case studies from the AEF and an online survey containing a section on the identification of professional learning needs (NSW DEC).

4.3.4.3 Group 3:Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The development of Standards-based structures to support professional growth was central to the ACT TQI pilot project: "Using the Standards as a framework and reference point, the key elements of the pilot in the ACT context … [included the] creation of tools that can be used in the implementation of the Standards for the assessment of pre-service teachers". Specifically, a template for professional conversations was developed as a work embedded assessment tool. When trialled, it was reported that the template supported professional conversations effectively and its use was especially valued during 'difficult' or 'sensitive' professional conversations.

The VIT pilot project, on the other hand, positioned the Standards as a 'tool' in one of its research questions: "How do the Standards support the development of PRT [provisionally registered teachers'] practice? (VIT, p. 8).

4.3.4.4   Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

None of the pilot project reports from this group explicitly addressed the role and/or use of support structures in relation to professional growth and learning.

4.3.5   Planning and research

4.3.5.1   Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

Planning and research in relation to professional growth and learning had high and medium presences in the ISQ and AIS NSW pilot projects, respectively. Planning was central to both research questions in the ISQ project:

- Research Question 1: "To examine the use of the Standards in *planning* directions and establishing priorities for teachers' professional learning across a range of settings and contexts".
- Research Question 2: "To investigate if self-assessment against the Standards identifies any patterns that can inform *future planning* at a school and sector level". (ISQ, p. 11, emphasis added)

The pilot reported, "All school leaders commented that the data will be very useful for strategic planning" (ISQ, p. 29).

Planning and research to support professional growth and learning had a medium presence in the ISQ project, which involved the use of the Standards "to support teachers to understand the actions they can take to assist the school to meet the goals and identify professional learning that will support their achievement of the goals". Thus, participants in the pilot used the Standards to identify future learning and support plans to the mutual professional growth of individual teachers and the schools in which they work.

4.3.5.2   Group 2: Professional Development

The pilot projects of all three organisations in Group 2 addressed the use of the Standards to underpin planning and research that promotes growth and learning within the profession. This was a major aspect of the DOE TAS pilot, which comprised 16 teacher action research projects that used the Standards as a "research and teaching practice framework" (DOE TAS, p. 3). The pilot reported "the Standards can be a powerful tool for teachers who want to research their own teaching and we have ample evidence that when teachers gather valid data about their work, and respond to it, then we will see improvement in teaching and a consequent improvement in outcomes" (DOE TAS, p. 4)

The use of the Standards to underpin planning aligned to growth and learning within the profession was also evident in the DOE WA and NSW DEC pilot projects.

One of the three research questions in the DOE WA pilot project addressed this sub-theme directly: "How useful are the Standards in establishing priorities and planning for the professional development of teachers throughout their career?" (DOE WA, p. 4).

Similarly, the NSW DEC pilot investigated the professional learning needs of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers. Planning was an aspect of this project and one participant commented, "We need to ensure a culture of planning and development underpinned by the Professional Teaching Standards (Highly Accomplished Teacher quoted in NSW DEC, p. 18).

4.3.5.3   Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

Both the CDU & NT TRB projects investigated the transition from provisional/graduate to full/proficient registration. Consequently, both pilots provided an opportunity for provisionally registered participant teachers to plan their strategy for presenting evidence, etc., in the registration process. This is elaborated in the Section 4.3.8.3 Group 3: Continuity of Practice.

4.3.5.4   Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

Growth and learning within the profession was aligned to planning at both the individual and school level in the ASHS pilot project. The alignment of the pilot project with the ASHS's school improvement cycle, linked the project into the school's planning process for improvement/professional growth of the school. At the individual level, data from the student surveys was used to inform classroom planning with the aim of improving teachers' professional practice (ASHS, p. 10).

4.3.6   Paradigm shift

Paradigm shift was designated to incorporate fundamental change in thinking and/or practice, which in some instances found expression in the reports through the notion of 'culture change'.

4.3.6.1   Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

A paradigm shift concerning the approach to professional learning was reported by participants in the AIS NSW pilot report: "Teachers reported a shift had occurred from a perceived fragmented approach to traditional forms of professional development to more coherent, focused and strategic activities within the school to support their future professional learning" (AIS NWS, p. 18).

4.3.6.2   Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme of paradigm shift found expression through the notion of culture change in the REFA and NSW DEC pilot projects.

The REFA pilot investigated the use of the online environment to support teacher professional learning in rural and remote locations. This constituted a fundamental

change in practice and, following analysis of the feedback from participants, the pilot reported that "There is a need to create a culture of network online professional learning" (p. 5).

In contrast, the 'culture change' reported in the NSW DEC referred to changes in certification: "there has been a 'cultural shift' taking place in schools whereby Existing Teachers will find the process of certification new, while for New Scheme Teachers familiar with the process, it will be an advantage" (NSW DEC, p.18). The converse of this, i.e. non-participation in change, is elaborated in Section 3.3.8 Continuity of Practice.

4.3.6.3   initial Teacher Education and Registration

Changes constituting a paradigm effect were acknowledged in the ACT TQI pilot report. Specifically, the report acknowledged fundamental professional and industrial changes in progress or effected in the ACT by the formation of the TQI and introduction of national registration of teachers and the Standards. The pilot reported:

> The implementation of registration and the National Professional Standards for Teachers … in the ACT is a major change in the professional and industrial landscape for ACT teachers. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) was established in 2010 and is currently establishing its position within the profession in the ACT. Prior to 2011 individual employers (ACT Education and Training Directorate, Catholic Education Office and Independent schools undertook their own qualification and police checks for employment and their own assessment of proficiency for employment. There was no central registration body or process.

The changes in response to national registration investigated by the CDU & NT TRB and VIT pilot projects do not constitute paradigm shifts given that each context is moving from one standards-based process to another.

4.3.6.4   Group 4: Parents, Community and Students

The design the ASHS pilot study constituted a paradigm shift within the school. Notwithstanding an established history of research within the school, this was the first research project that utilised student voice. This constituted a fundamental change for students, parents and teachers, which will be elaborated in Section 4.

The motivation for utilising student voice reflected and supported a concurrent paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning and teaching. The pilot reported "a paradigm shift was needed in our school to move from, largely, teacher-centred to more student-centred teaching and learning. Thus, student voice was included in our analysis of classroom performance" (ASHS, p. 13).

4.3.7 Aspirational Goals

The theme of aspirational goals was designated to refer to notions of 'building' or 'extending', which could apply to individuals, groups and organisations. However, when examining the pilot project reports for instances of 'aspirational goals', it was noted that this was invariably expressed in relation to teachers' progression across the continuum of career stages.

The thematic analysis, however, drew a distinction between the progress of teachers through (i) the necessary transition from provisional/graduate to full/proficient career stages and (ii) the voluntary transitions from proficient to highly accomplished and/or highly accomplished to lead career stages. The latter voluntary transitions were coded as 'aspirational goals', whereas the former necessary transitions were coded as 'continuity of practice' (see section 4.3.8).

Investigations that sought to develop further knowledge about practices and evidence concerning career stages that did *not* apply this knowledge to the *process* of career progression were classified as 'continuity of practice'.

4.3.7.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

None of the pilot reports from organisations in Group 1 engaged the sub-theme 'aspirational goals' as designated above.

4.3.7.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme of 'aspirational goals', as outlined in section 4.3.7, was represented in the pilot reports of three organisations in Group 2: NSW DEC, AEF and DOE WA.

'Aspirational goals' was dealt with the greatest depth in the NSW DEC pilot report, which addressed enablers and inhibitors to teachers pursuing career advancement at the voluntary level. Consideration of the enablers involved acknowledgement of systemic support; the NSW DEC report contextualised the pilot within its system-wide focus on "providing a high quality continuum of professional learning for aspiring, newly appointed and experienced school leaders" (NSW DEC, p. 8).

Within this context,

> the pilot study was designed to provide an evidence base that would strategically inform: the way in which NSW DEC engages teachers in the achievement of the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead in the National Professional Standards for Teachers. (NSW DEC, p. 12)

Participants within the pilot identified "engaging teachers in a scaffolded process that will assist them to develop evidence to meet the career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead" as the most useful way to support aspiring teachers. A pilot participant commented, "If support structures are put in place, more teachers will be

interested in completing this process. This will lead to greater acceptance of the process" (Teacher Mentor, quoted NSW DEC, p. 42).

The NSW DEC pilot also investigated the inhibitors to teachers pursuing certification at the voluntary career stages. The findings indicate that potential inhibitors include non-supportive school culture, the rigorous requirements if there is inadequate support and cost. The pilot reported anticipated non-participation in voluntary certification as a consistent theme.

- "I don't think that Existing Teachers who don't require certification will voluntarily take this up as there is no incentive at this stage" (Teacher Mentor, quoted in NSW DEC, p. 47).
- "Those who are in the latter stages of their careers may not be keen to invest the time and energy" (Principal, quoted in NSW DEC, p. 47).

Nevertheless, it was reported "approximately 42% of respondents believed that teachers will be interested in achieving accreditation at Highly accomplished and Lead" (NSW DEC, p. 46). This was seen to be particularly the case for New Scheme Teachers: "New Scheme Teachers will be more likely to continue this process because for them, a culture has been created of being accredited for Standards" (Teacher Mentor, quoted in NSW DEC, p. 18).

The AEF pilot project also addressed enablers and inhibitors to career progression, with specific attention to evidencing professional practice of Asia Literacy. In relation to the enablers, the AEF sought to investigate support that "was being offered and provided at the school, systemic and organisational level for teachers wanting to plan a career path using the Asia literacy elements in the Standards by focussing on teachers' stories" (AEF, p. 12), which resulted in the development of four case stories. In relation to the inhibitors, the AEF highlighted a perceived conflict between the necessity to provide evidence of teaching the Asia Priority and the lack of explicit reference to Asia Literacy in the Standards.

Finally, the DOE WA pilot project engaged the sub-theme of 'aspirational goals' by developing four tools that enable "teachers to select the next career stage and determine links between their current capacity and setting goals for improvement" (DOE WA, p. 19).

4.3.7.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

None of the pilot reports from organisations in Group one engaged the sub-theme 'aspirational goals' as designated in Section 4.3.7.

4.3.7.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

None of the pilot reports from organisations in Group one engaged the sub-theme 'aspirational goals' as designated in Section 4.3.7.

4.3.8 Continuity of Practice

The 'Continuity of Practice' sub-theme was designated to include: the necessary transition from provisional/graduate to full/proficient registration; elaborations of differentiated evidence and practice that are mapped to the career stages to increase descriptive knowledge; identification of professional learning that is germane to specific career stages; and ongoing processes that require continuous maintenance and refinement, such as community engagement. Continuity between state/territory and national processes has been elaborated previously in Section 4.1.1: Alignment of existing processes, policies, priorities and professional practice.

4.3.8.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The 'continuity of practice' sub-theme had a medium presence in the AIS NSW pilot project. Although the pilot's research questions were not explicitly linked to the sub-theme of 'continuity of practice', the methodology involved a systematic mapping of practice and evidence to the Standards' continuum of career stages. Specifically, the AIS NSW pilot project designed a questionnaire that was administered to teachers and school leaders in order to capture data that linked "actions and evidence to specific career stages in the professional standards for teaching" (AIS NSW, p. 19).

4.3.8.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The pilots of three organisations in Group 2 – AEF, NSW DEC, and QUT - explicitly addressed the 'continuity of practice' sub-theme and the approach was quite different in each case.

The mapping of differentiated Asia Literacy practices linked to career stages was central aspect of the AEF pilot and which was explicitly addressed by one of the pilot's research questions: What does Asia literacy mean for a Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher as defined in the National Professional Standards for Teachers? (AEF, p. 5).

Similarly, the QUT pilot project focussed on the differentiated practices concerning the interpretation, analysis and implementation of NAPLAN data across the career stages.

The NSW DEC pilot, on the other hand, employed a sustained approach that investigated the sub-theme of 'continuity of practice' from a range of different perspectives, including the identification of professional learning needs at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages and the investigation of strategies that support the transition from provisional/graduate to full/proficient registration.

4.3.8.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme of 'continuity' has a medium presence in the VIT pilot project.

The overarching research question investigated how "the current process for full registration accommodate[d] the National Standards at the Proficient level" (VIT,

p.5). Whilst this is consistent with the designation of the sub-theme, as outlined above, this aspect of the VIT project was coded as 'alignment' in Section 4.1.2.3. However, other aspects of the VIT pilot can be coded within this sub-theme without duplicating coding that occurred elsewhere. This includes the focus questions: "How are the National Standards at the Proficient level understood and used by provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) for full registration?" (VIT, p. 5).

'Continuity of practice' was central to the CDU & NT TRB pilot project, which investigated provisionally registered teachers' identification and collection of artefacts to support the transition from provisional/graduate to full/proficient registration. This was explicitly addressed in both research questions.

- Identify and collect artefacts that would allow them [teachers] to develop a portfolio of evidence for moving from provisional to full teachers registration in the Northern Territory; and
- Determine the ways in which they could identify and collect evidence of their teaching performance, through their daily work, that could be used to meet specific Standards they identified from within the National Professional Standards for Teachers. (CDU & NT TRB, p. 9)

4.3.8.4   Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

'Continuity of practice' was as a major sub-theme in the APC-ACSSO pilot project. Like the AEF and QUT pilots, the ACP-ACSSO pilot project sought to investigate differentiated practices across career stages, which was reflected in the primary research question for the pilot: "What are the common practices of teachers and school leaders at each career stage that lead to effective parental engagement to support student learning?" (APC-ACSSO, p. 3).

The SSI pilot project also included 'continuity of practice', although it was approached in an entirely different way from the other pilots. The SSI pilot presented the sub-theme from the perspective of the imperative to maintain and develop ongoing community engagement practices.

4.4   Improved Outcomes

4.4.1   Improved Outcomes for Schools

4.4.1.1   Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Schools' was present in the pilot projects of two of the organisations in Group 1: AIS NSW and DECD SA, although each Pilot represented it to varying degrees.

The sub-theme had the greatest presence in the AIS NSW pilot project, where it was incorporated into the first research question: "How do the National Professional Standards for Teachers assist teachers to understand their school goals for improvement?" The pilot methodology involved teachers in using the as a basis for

"contributing to the design of a whole school professional development plan" (AIS NSW, p. 7) and the pilot concluded that "[t]he Standards can be mapped to school goals to identify action and evidence to support the development of a culture of continuous improvement" (AIS NSW, p. 20).

'Improved Outcomes for Schools' had an incidental presence in the DECD SA pilot project, which developed a Standards-based observation tool "to explore observation and reflection on teacher practice using the National Professional Standards for Teachers" (DECD SA, p. 3). Whilst the focus of the pilot was on the professional growth and learning of early career teachers, the pilot reported and that "the use of the Standards with the observation tool has the potential to influence school culture" (DECD SA, p. 10) and that "[m]any of the pilot participants indicated intentions to use the observation tool as an ongoing strategy to build a culture of reflection and embed the National Professional Standards for Teachers into school practices" (DECD SA, p. 4).

4.4.1.2   Group 2: Professional Development

'Improved Outcomes for Schools' had a medium presence in the DOE TAS pilot project, which comprised 16 separate action research projects that investigated the use of the Standards in various situations. The principal pilot investigators summarised the overall purpose of the pilot as follows: "What we are searching for in this Pilot are manageable ways to develop internal accountability in schools for educational improvement using the Standards". In addition, 'Improved Outcomes for Schools' was also explicitly addressed by one of the action research projects which was entitled "Integrating the National Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) as a positive planning tool for Individual Professional Learning Plans (IPLP) which will enhance understanding, direction and the learning culture within a school community" (DOE TAS, p. 12).

'Improved Outcomes for Schools' had a minor presence in the ASPA and DOE WA pilot projects.

The ASPA pilot project reported that "principals praised the explicitness of the Standards when describing good teaching practice and felt they would assist with transforming schools" (ASPA, p. 12).

The DOE WA pilot reported that participants "saw extensive benefit in linking professional learning with the Standards, determining that this initiative allows teachers to … identify whole areas of school need (DOE WA, p. 21).

4.4.1.3   Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Schools' was not addressed by the pilot projects undertaken in this group.

4.4.1.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Schools' had a minor presence in the ASHS and SSI pilots.

Specifically, the ASHS pilot project, which investigated the use of student voice to inform teacher practice, reported that "using the Professional Practice Domain as an agent for bringing about far more individualised professional learning is of great advantage to schools" (ASHA, p. 21).

The SSI pilot project reported that "the schools involved [in the pilot] could build on the conversations that have been started and use the information to explore further some key concepts of community engagement" (SSI, p. 4).

4.4.2 Improved Outcomes for Teachers

4.4.2.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Teachers' had a major presence in the AIS NSW and DECD SA pilot reports. 'Improved Outcomes for Teachers' is explicitly addressed in one of the research questions in the AIS NSW pilot: "How does teachers' engagement with National Professional Standards for Teachers impact on their:

> a. *confidence* to meet the school goals and

> b. *preparedness* to engage in self-evaluation as part of the appraisal process?" (AIS NSW, p. 6, emphasis added)

The pilot concluded that not only did teachers report greater confidence, they reported other affective gains such as empowerment, ownership and trust.

'Improved Outcomes for Teachers' was central to the design of the DACD SA pilot, which developed and trialled observation tools to support early career teachers. The pilot reported improved understanding and skill at using observation among the early career participants and also reported positive affective gains: "The process gave people the opportunity to enhance and affirm their confidence in their profession" (DECD SA, p. 4).

4.4.2.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Teachers' was present in the DOE TAS, REFA and NSW DEC pilot projects.

Of the 16 DOE TAS action research projects, at least 5 projects reported demonstrable improved outcomes for teachers, e.g., (i) "The knowledge I acquired throughout this research project has and will continue [to] impact on my teaching

and mentoring practice" (DOE TAS, p. 12) and (ii) the Standards have "provided teachers with focus and also accountability of practice" (DOE TAS, p. 13).

The REFA pilot, which investigated the use of an online platform to support teacher professional learning, reported positive outcomes for the participating teachers across the career stages:

> The majority of graduate teachers agreed that the use of the online platform eased their sense of professional isolation, provided them with access to a variety of resources and improved their rapport with teachers in the network. (REFA, p. 18)

> The majority of highly accomplished teachers agreed that the use of the online platform improved their ability to initiate professional learning dialogue and support colleagues to evaluate and modify their teaching practices. (REFA, p. 21)

> The majority of lead teachers agreed that the use of the online platform improved their ability to evaluate the term's professional learning, model and share innovative practice, increase their mentoring role, improve their understanding of inclusive learning environments and to revise future network professional learning. (REFA, p. 22)

The NSW DEC pilot, which investigated various issues concerning professional learning linked to the Standards reported that "there is the relatively positive view that Standards are seen as a framework for improving teaching practice" (NSW DEC, p. 51) and also noted, in the formal consultation stage, principals identified that teachers would engage with the Standards to gain permanent employment.

4.4.2.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

'Improved Outcomes for Teachers' were present in the pilot projects of all organisations in this group: ACT TQI, CDU & NT TRB and VIT. Improved outcomes for participating mentors were noted in the ACT TQI and VIT pilot projects. For example, the ACT TQI pilot reported that:

> Early childhood mentor teachers said they were more comfortable/confident asking for and receiving feedback after participation in this pilot. As a group they also demonstrated greater improvement in confidence in providing feedback to pre-service teachers who are not fulfilling expectations. (ACT TQI, p. 25)

Similarly, a mentor in the VIT pilot commented:

> The project ... allowed me to focus on certain aspects of my own teaching and learning and also confirmed my beliefs and

understandings and practices. [It also] provided an opportunity for reflection on my own teaching practice and how my knowledge of teaching could be used to improve the teaching practices and professional learning of a junior colleague. (Mentor quoted in VIT, p. 19)

Corresponding improvements were also reported for the provisionally registered teachers being mentored. For example the CDU & NT TRB pilot project reports positive feedback from the provisionally registered teachers and "The main reasons reported for this positivity were that the provisionally registered teachers gained insights early in their teaching career" (CDU & NT TRB, p. 18).

4.4.2.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

Improved outcomes for teachers were central to the ASHS pilot, which used student voice to inform teachers' learning and teaching practices. The pilot's purpose was "to improve teacher and thus student performance" (ASHS, p. 4) and "to build the capacity of teachers" (ASHS, p. 4).

Improved outcomes for teachers were not central to the SSI pilot, but were noted as a flow on effect from engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education. For example, it was reported "A teacher from Western Australia talked about how building relationships with the community increased his knowledge and improved his capacity to teach" (SSI, p. 16).

4.4.3 Improved Outcomes for Students

4.4.3.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Students' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.4.3.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Students' was present in the DOE TAS and NSW DEC pilot reports. Several of the action research projects in the DOE TAS pilot explicitly addressed improving outcomes for students and the pilot's principal investigators report:

> The work undertaken in this Pilot, and the earlier AITSL Pilot into the professional standards for principals, provide valuable insights into how professional learning that is aligned with school and system priorities as well as the professional needs and aspirations of teachers and leaders can contribute to sustained improvement in teaching and in student learning. (DOE TAS, p. 7)

'Improved Outcomes for Students' also arose incidentally in the NSW DEC pilot project, which principally investigated the nature and provision of differentiated

professional learning for teachers. However, the pilot reported, that during the formal consultation phase, "Principals identified that teachers would engage with the *National Professional Standards for Teachers* to focus on the core business of teaching and learning that would result in improved student learning outcomes (NSW DEC, p. 17).

4.4.3.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Students' was present as an aspect in the VIT pilot methodology.

Specifically, "PRTs [provisionally registered teachers] and mentors developed an action plan that focussed on an aspect of teaching that the PRT wished to develop in relation to improvements in student learning" (VIT, p. 12) and the findings indicate that "PRTs felt that working with the National Standards was valuable in relation to discussions with their mentors on professional practice to improve student learning" (VIT, 17).

4.4.3.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Students' was acknowledged in the reports from all organisations in this group.

The ASHS pilot's purpose was "to improve teacher *and thus student performance*" (ASHS, p. 4, emphasis added). Similarly, APC-ACSSO reported "All parents and teachers involved in the focus groups … were most enthusiastic about their [the Standards'] potential for encouraging teaching practices that would lead to more effective parental engagement*, and therefore support student learning*" (APC-ACSSO, pp. 17-18, emphasis added). In both instances the sub-theme of 'improved student outcomes' is derivative rather than being the direct focus.

4.4.4 Improved Outcomes for Wider Community

4.4.4.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for the Wider Community' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.4.4.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for the Wider Community' had a minor presence in the REFA pilot, which reported that almost half of the respondents indicated that the online platform "promoted professional dialogue with colleagues outside the network (47.5%)" (REFA, p. 17).

4.4.4.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for the Wider Community' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.4.4.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for the Wider Community' had a medium profile in the APC-ACSSO pilot.

Although the focus of the pilot was on the identification of practices used by teachers at different career stages to engage parental involvement in education, the parents' desire for improved outcomes was sustained throughout all aspects of the report. It was also reported that the use of the Standards has the capacity to result in improved outcomes: "All parents and teachers involved in the focus groups … were most enthusiastic about their [the Standards'] potential for encouraging teaching practices that would lead to more effective parental engagement (APC-ACSSO, pp. 17-18).

The sub-theme of 'Improved Outcomes for the Wider Community" also had a medium profile in the SSI pilot. Although the focus of the pilot was on the identification of the attributes of and the practices used by teachers with demonstrated exemplary skills in the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities, the desire of the stakeholders for improved outcomes was sustained throughout all aspects of the report.

4.4.5 Improved Outcomes for Networks and Associations

4.4.5.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme of 'Improved Outcomes for Networks and Associations' had a high profile in the ISQ pilot project. One of the purposes of the pilot was to "[c]ollate data across all schools to determine the best ways for ISQ to support schools collectively" (ISQ, p. 6) and the findings indicate that the purpose has been realised and the improved outcomes have been delivered: "ISQ has been able to use the information to identify specific areas that need to be included in the Professional Learning Program for the sector" (ISQ, p. 31).

4.4.5.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme of 'Improved Outcomes for Networks and Associations' had a medium profile in the REFA pilot project, which investigated the use of an online platform to promote professional learning and dialogue. The findings indicate that the "majority of the respondents believed that the use of the online platform promoted professional dialogue within … the Murchison Network (82.5%)." (REFA, p. 17) and that "majority of graduate teachers agreed that the use of the online platform … improved their rapport with teachers in the network" (REFA, p. 18)

4.4.5.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme of 'Improved Outcomes for Networks and Associations' was present in the ACT TQI pilot and will be addressed in Section 4.4.6 'Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students'.

4.4.5.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Networks and Associations' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.4.6 Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students

4.4.6.1 Group 1: Teacher Self-Reflection

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students' had a minor presence in the QUT and NSW DEC pilot reports.

Specifically, QUT contended that initial teacher education courses could be enhanced by the inclusion of units/subjects on high-stakes testing data analysis. NSW DEC acknowledged its active role in initial teacher education through supporting professional experience placements: "In school Centres for Excellence, Highly Accomplished Teachers have a strong focus on supporting professional experience placements for pre-service teachers and developing University partnerships" (NSW DEC, p. 11).

4.4.6.2 Group 2: Professional Development

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.4.6.3 Group 3: Initial Teacher Education and Registration

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students' was an intermediate theme in the ACT TQI pilot project. The improved outcomes for initial teacher education students was professional growth and learning as a result of participating in the pilot project. The findings indicate:

> [a]fter the pilot all pre-service teachers reported greater understanding of the role and importance of the Standards to their careers. Comments included:
>
> I've realised that it's nice to have something to assess my own teaching against. Similar to when assessing students you teach, you often place them in levels or stages of learning. Having the National Standards available gives me the opportunity to assess where I am as a pre-service teacher and how to make leaps and bounds in becoming a QUALITY teacher. (ACT TQI, p. 19)

The findings also indicate that the initial teacher education students developed more sophisticated language in professional conversations as a result of using the Standards-based template for professional conversations that was developed in the pilot. It was also reported that "[p]articipants from both universities saw the introduction of National Teaching Standards as an opportunity to increase

consistency of courses, practicum requirements and assessment across all universities nationally" (ACT TQI, p. 28).

4.4.6.4 Group 4: Parents, Communities and Students

The sub-theme 'Improved Outcomes for Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students' was not present in the pilot reports from this group.

4.5 Summary

Table 6 provides an overview of the themes and sub-themes that were identified within and across the final pilot project reports. The overview is presented as a heat map; colours signify the relative presence of sub-themes within and across the reports. The darkest colour signifies the presence of a substantive sub-theme, which could, for example, be integral to the research design or a sustained aspect of the discussion. Paler colours signify the decreasing presence or centrality to the eventual absence of a sub-theme. Multiple coding has been avoided in the construction of the heat map in order to prevent artificial elevation of sub-themes.

From the Table, for example, the alignment of existing processes and policies with existing practices was identified substantially across most Pilot studies. Reading vertically, it is possible to get a sense of which of the four themes used for the thematic analysis were evident in the way Pilot groups wrote about their projects, e.g., the reports from DECS SA and Australind Senior High School incorporated all four themes.

Table 8: Heat Map and Overview of Thematic Analysis

KEY

Category	Colour
Major sub-theme	(dark navy)
Intermediate sub-theme	(medium blue)
Minor sub-theme	(light blue)
Sub-theme absent	(white)

Legend codes used below: **M** = Major sub-theme, **I** = Intermediate sub-theme, **m** = Minor sub-theme, blank = Sub-theme absent.

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	AIS NSW	DECD SA	ISQ	AEF	ASPA	DoE TAS	DoE WA	NSW IT	NSW DEC	QUT	REFA	ACT TQI	CDU NT TRB	VIT	APC & ACSSO	ASHS	SSI
		Group 1			Group 2								Group 3			Group 4		
Alignment	School/system and individual teacher need	M					m		M									
	Existing processes, policies & professional practice	M	M	I	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
	Local and network practices			I	m	m	m					I	M			M	M	M
	Other	m					m			m	m					m	m	m
Data Sources	School and system	M	M		M	M	M		M	M	I	M	M	M	M	m	m	m
	Student voice						I										M	m
	Community																M	I
	Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students						m				m		I					
Growth & Learning within the profession	Self-reflection / self-evaluation	M	M	M	m	m	M	M		m		m			M	m	m	m
	Strategies / evidence	I	M		M					M		I	M	M	M		M	
	Professional conversations	I	M	m								I					m	M
	Support structures			M	m	M	I	M	I	m		M		m				
	Planning and research	I		M			M				m						m	
	Paradigm shift											I	m				m	
	Aspirational goals				m					m	M							
	Continuity	m			M			M	M	M	M			M	I	I		m
Improved Outcomes	Schools	M	m			m	I			m							m	m
	Teachers	M	M				M		I	m		M	M	M	M		M	m
	Students						I			m						m	m	M
	Wider community											I				m	m	m
	Networks and associations			M														
	Universities and Initial Teacher Education Students												M					

5 Resources Developed

This section lists the resources developed during Pilot projects and which are documented in respective Pilot Reports and Appendices. A range of artefacts was either produced or developed during the Pilots and they could be refined/extended to inform the implementation of the Standards within different contexts. These resources included, but are not limited to:

- Seven Questionnaires/surveys
- Four Interview protocols
- Four Self-reflection tools/audits
- Two Planning Guides
- Two Feedback proformas/information options, e.g., video samples

5.1 Teacher Self-reflection

5.1.1 AIS NSW

Questionnaires

A questionnaire for teachers and school executive that captured data related to effectiveness of using the Standards to:

1. Develop individual teachers understanding of the school goals

2. Link actions and evidence to specific career stages in the Standards

3. Build teachers' and school leaders' confidence and capabilities to commit effort and resources to meet the school goals.

Focus group interview schedule

The focus group interview schedule was used to explore more deeply the issues and themes emerging from the questionnaires in each school.

5.1.2 DECS SA

An observation tool had previously been developed by DECS officers. The tool had been developed with the intention of it supporting early career teachers to observe the National Professional Standards for Teachers in the practice of more experienced teachers. This tool was made available to pilot participants to use and adapt as they felt suited their context. Many participants adapted the way they used the tool by using only part of the tool to document their process or substituting blank paper to record notes and details. Only two sites modified the tool to create a version of an observation tool that better suited their needs.

5.1.3 ISQ

Self-reflection Tool

The Self-reflection Tool is an online survey that steps teachers through a series of questions. The questions are set up so that it is possible to gain demographic information about the individual teacher and then gather information about how the teacher rates their competencies against the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

The survey is then used as a basis for individual professional learning growth planning. Alongside this, schools can obtain collective data to better inform professional development needs and capitalise on the strengths of their teaching staff. By providing this tool, individual teachers along with their school, can embark on a journey of professional self-reflection and improvement of practice that will positively affect teachers' skills and pedagogy and student learning experiences, leading to higher student achievement.

Data Analysis Tool

The Data Analysis tool allows data from the online survey to be collated in a series of linked spreadsheets so that an array of queries and profile graphs can be generated. The data sets can be set up so that schools can see the results of their own school but also see the overall results from the rest of the sample (429 participants). It is also possible to see a profile for an individual teacher.

Self-reflection for Professional Growth Planning Guide

In order to assist teachers to understand what evidence might be indicative of Proficiency level at each Standard the Self-reflection for Professional Growth Planning Guide was developed in conjunction with school leaders. Professional Development

5.2 Professional Development

5.2.1 AEF

A self-assessment tool was created for use in this pilot study that comprised:

1. **General questions** were designed to reveal the kind of attributes an Asia literacy teacher might have.

2. **School-based questions** focused on how the implementation of Asia literacy in schools can be used to demonstrate what a teacher does in school and how this activity may be translated into the career path continuum in the Standards.

3. **Standards based questions** were intended to examine and interrogate the meaning for a particular context so that they could be used to identify where an individual stands and to determine any areas of further professional development that may be needed to assist in their achievement.

5.2.2 ASPA

The resource developed for this pilot was the Pre-Interview Survey used as a preparatory instrument to 'tune' principals into the issues involved in implementing the Standards.

5.2.3 DoE Tas

Student Feedback Surveys: Some participants created surveys for students that were based on the Standards. These surveys were applied in both primary and secondary school settings and were often accompanied by discussions with students about the Standards and how students might make judgements about teachers' practice.

Self-audits: Some graduate teachers developed self-audits on both the Graduate and Proficient career stages as part of their conversations about feedback and assessment practices.

Specific surveys and templates: Some teachers developed surveys for teachers to use in specific aspects of their teaching practice and used the findings to apply improved practices to that area and another developed a template for teachers to base their professional Learning Plans on the Standards.

Consultants Protocol: Participants used this protocol to give them and their colleagues a framework for presenting and gaining feedback about their developing inquiries.

5.2.4 DoE WA

As a result of this pilot study, the Institute has developed evidence-based electronic resources as follows:

1. Teacher self-reflection tool, linked directly to the Standards and career stages.
2. Teacher professional learning mapped to the appropriate career stages, Standards, focus areas and descriptors as articulated in the Standards
3. A tool for teachers that provides easy access to lists of professional learning available through the Institute, connected to each Standard and career stage
4. A generic course evaluation linked directly to the Standards
5. Findings and Outcomes.

5.2.5 NSW DEC

An online survey was an artefact developed as an integral part of the NSW DEC pilot study. The survey questions were central to all aspects of the pilot study. The survey was designed to gather valuable information from a cross section of key groups at both the leadership and classroom level. The survey was organised into three sections:

1. General demographic and aspirational information about respondents

2. Professional learning needs: Respondents were asked to indicate their beliefs about the level of professional learning needed to meet the voluntary career stages for each Standard; teachers were asked about the most effective ways to develop high quality teaching practice; This section also sought information about the most effective ways to demonstrate evidence of high quality teaching practice; Respondents were also asked to indicate the most useful types of feedback in developing teaching practice, as well as types of feedback that they would like to receive more often; Opinions were also sought in this section about the most valuable ways to acknowledge excellence in teaching.

3. Engaging with the Standards: sought information to support the implementation of the Standards in the context of NSW DEC schools. Questions in relation to the voluntary career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead focused on:

   - the best way to introduce the voluntary career stages
   - the factors influencing a teacher's decision to undertake certification at the voluntary career stages
   - the groups predicted to be most likely to engage with the voluntary career stages
   - the most crucial personnel in supporting teachers to achieve voluntary certification
   - factors that would inhibit or enable the implementation of the national Standards.

5.2.6 NSWIT

5.2.7 QUT

Three semi-structured questionnaires (for Proficient, Highly Accomplished, and Lead teachers) were developed as part of the interview process for this project:

5.2.8 REFA

No specific resources were developed for the Pilot project.

5.3 Initial Teacher Education and Registration

5.3.1 ACT TQI

Two versions of the *Template for Professional Conversations*, initial draft used in the pilot and the revised version both include a Preamble that provides context. The University of Canberra is using the revised draft in their development of reviewed professional experience organisation for 2012.

The *Draft Evidence Guide* was useful in the context of this pilot and generated good professional discussion.

5.3.2 CDU – NTTRB

No specific resources were developed for the Pilot project.

5.3.3 VIT

No specific resources were developed for the Pilot project.

5.4 Parents, Community and Students

5.4.1 APC – ACSSO

No specific resources were developed for the Pilot project.

5.4.2 Australind SHS

Resources developed for the Pilot were:

1. Power Point – outlining processes, roles, responsibilities and timelines
2. Classroom film footage and audio
3. Student surveys
4. Classroom improvement plans
5. Excel – conditionally formatted summary sheet
6. Excel – focus area summary sheet

5.4.3 SSI

Posters were developed from the visualisation activities and will be presented back to the schools to honour individual contributions that convey the key messages.

A video has been developed from the Northern NSW Learning Communities schools. The video is a means of documenting the processes and will become a record of the initial conversation that is seen as the beginning of a journey, to build authentic school and community relationships within this learning community.

Surveys developed were a means of capturing attitudes and beliefs from a range of teachers in an efficient manner and would guide further investigations.

6   Concluding Remarks

The research team is pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to a significant national collaborative research endeavour to trial the use of the National Professional Standards for Teachers (Standards) and to determine the support required for implementation of the Standards nationally. It is our belief that well-designed investigations undertaken by key stakeholder groups from within the profession, and that involve significant input from teachers, will ensure the relevance of the Standards to teachers' work.

The Pilot Projects represented a large and significant undertaking. The timeframe was tight, and the projects were undertaken as an adjunct to the core business of the State and Territory organisations involved. Data collection commenced in early August for most Pilot groups and concluded in early November. This time frame included school holiday periods and schedules of annual events within education institutions that had the potential to adversely impact on data collection.

We are confident that, collectively, the procedures put in place by the Pilot groups meant that the outcomes of the projects have captured a representative 'voice' of the profession. Through a range of methods that included surveys, interviews, professional self-audits, inquiry plans, focus groups and professional conversations, the participant 'voice' was drawn from graduate teachers, teacher mentors, teachers across a range of career stages, leaders, principals, students and parents. In addition, the settings chosen for these investigations included Pre-school, K-12 schools, Primary, Middle, Secondary and Specialist Schools, and tertiary institutions across metropolitan, regional, remote and very remote locations.

Significantly, AITSL should have confidence that the findings of the Pilot projects provide constructive and advisory commentary that will support the profession to implement the Standards within a range of existing structures and practices. In particular, the Focus Areas of the Standards framework have been recognised for their capacity to encapsulate key areas of inquiry and, hence, to inform professional learning through collaborative engagement.

Whilst the commentary generated by the Pilot projects is encouraging, there are also challenges. One challenge relates to ensuring that the data sets collected have been fully interrogated. There is the potential for further collaborative work to be undertaken with both the qualitative and quantitative data collected to ensure that the integration of the Standards into practice is informed.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Melbourne Planning and Training Meeting Documentation

8.2 Appendix B (i) – (xvii): Site Visit Reports

8.3 Appendix C (i) – (xvii): Pilot Project Executive Summaries

8.4 Appendix D (i) – (xvii): Pilot Project Final Reports

8.5 Appendix E (i) – (xvii): Pilot Project Final Reports – Appendices