

Professional Learning Activities Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the professional learning activity requirements required of a teacher for a renewal of their registration with the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA).

This policy is required by the *Teacher Registration (General) Regulations 2012* (the regulations) regulation 9.

The regulation states that TRBWA must have a written policy about professional learning activities, to use that policy for determining which activities are professional learning activities and to publish the policy on its website.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all applications from TRBWA registered teachers for the renewal of Full, Provisional or Limited Registration categories and to the TRB staff responsible for processing these applications.

3. Background

The Regulations stipulate that every applicant for renewal of registration whose application is submitted on or after 7 December 2013 will be required to satisfy this policy. Until that date the renewal requirements established by the former Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) continue to apply.

The Regulations provide for progressive implementation of the requirement for 100 hours of professional learning activities in each 5 year registration period (or 60 hours if registration is for a 3 year period). Thus only 20 hours will be required of applicants for renewal who apply between 7 December 2013 and 6 December 2014. Teachers due to renew in December 2013 or the early part of 2014 should begin to accrue those 20 hours now. Professional learning activities undertaken at any time during the current registration period may be used for this purpose.

4. Policy

4.1 What are professional learning activities?

Continuous professional learning is integral to raising teaching standards and is an accepted professional obligation in all professions. Teacher professional learning is an ongoing process supported by planned learning activities and programs designed to enhance professional knowledge, practice and engagement.

Professional learning claimed for renewal purposes must be over and above the normal expectations of a teacher's role and responsibilities (including preparation, planning, programming, assessment and reporting).

The Regulations require 20 hours per year of professional learning is the minimum requirement for a teacher to maintain the currency of his or her professional competence.

4.2 What activities satisfy the test?

The Board requires that professional learning activities claimed for renewal purposes aim to improve the teacher's knowledge, practice and competencies as set out in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers or the Professional Standards for Teachers in Western Australia. For teachers working at the Proficient Level, the two Standards are identical in material respects. However, teachers working at the higher career stages are encouraged to refer to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher levels as appropriate.

The Board requires that all applicants for renewal have undertaken learning activities whether formal and informal in each of the three Domains of the Professional Standards – Professional Knowledge (Standards 1 and 2), Professional Practice (Standards 3, 4 and 5) and Professional Engagement (Standards 6 and 7). The proportions of activities across the three Domains will vary according to the particular teacher's situation and current career focus. Formal learning activities undertaken in one Domain may be minimal, for example. The selection of activities is at the discretion of the individual teacher subject to the requirement that each claimed activity is clearly directly related to at least one of the elements of the Professional Standards and that relationship has been articulated in the evidence collected and retained by the teacher.

An exception to the requirement for both formal and informal activities in all three Domains is made where the teacher has been enrolled in a course of study related to teaching and leading to formal qualifications, including postgraduate study. Such a teacher will be required to provide documentary evidence of enrolment and course participation for renewal of registration.

4.2.1 What is meant by formal activities?

Formal activities can include:

- activities offered by professional development providers such as workshops, seminars, online learning
- school-based and employer-provided professional development including professional development days, action research projects, mentoring a junior colleague or critical friend
- giving conference or workshop presentations or writing for publication.

Formal activities must be related to one or more of the elements in the standards at the level (or career stage) to which the applicant is working. Formal activities will generally be evidenced by a certificate of participation, a provider's signature or some other independent verification.

4.2.2 What is meant by informal activities?

Informal activities can include:

- professional reading
- professional or collegiate meetings dedicated to teacher professional learning or requiring reflection on professional practice
- participation in the development of policy or practice within the educational venue or a wider context.

Informal activities must be related to one or more of the elements in the standards at the level to which the applicant is working. Informal activities will generally be evidenced by the teacher's own record, notes and reflections.

4.2.3 Which level of the Standards is relevant for renewal purposes?

Registered teachers who already meet the Professional Standards at the Proficient Level (the majority applying for renewal of registration) must, at a minimum, refer to the standards at this level for maintenance of their professional competence. However, teachers are encouraged to refer to the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher levels with a view to continuously upgrading and advancing their knowledge and skills. Teachers already employed at these levels should generally be referring to the standards appropriate to their career stage or professional role.

It is not appropriate for any applicant for renewal of registration to refer to the Graduate Level of the Professional Standards to satisfy their professional learning obligations.

4.3 Evidence of completion and coverage

Teachers are required to collect evidence of the professional learning activities they have undertaken and to retain that evidence for the full period of the renewed registration granted on the basis of those activities having been completed (i.e. for 5 years in the case of full registration). It is recommended that teachers maintain a log of their activities and a template is provided for this purpose.

The online eRenewal form will require applicants to summarise their professional learning activities as follows:

Domains	Hours of formal learning in each Domain*	Hours of informal learning in each Domain*
Knowledge – Standards 1 and 2		
Practice – Standards 3, 4 and 5		
Engagement – Standards 6 and 7		
Total hours		

* Hours cannot be counted against more than one Domain. Where an activity is relevant to more than one Domain, record it for one only. Each domain must be covered.

Applicants will also be required to sign a declaration that the summary is accurate and can be verified by the evidence they have collected and retained. As noted above, teachers undertaking formal studies instead will be required to attach evidence of enrolment and course participation.

4.4 Extenuating circumstances

Extenuating circumstances such as maternity leave or prolonged sick leave will be taken into account on a renewal application by a teacher unable for such reasons to complete the required professional learning. Evidence will be required to substantiate this.

4.5 Failure to satisfy the professional learning requirements

In the absence of extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board, failure to satisfy the professional learning requirements on renewal will result in rejection of a renewal application and expiry of registration. However, a registered teacher unable to satisfy the requirements for renewal of Full or Provisional Registration may apply instead for Non-Practising Registration if he or she does not intend to teach in an educational venue for a period of time (section 18(a) of the Act applies). This avenue is not available for teachers with Limited Registration.

5 Supporting information

- *Teacher Registration Act 2012*
- *Teacher Registration (General) Regulations 2012*

6 Change History

Approved	Version	Details	Approved By
14/05/2013	1	New Policy Issued	Board
Next Review Date		14/05/2015	