



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATORS

Professional Teaching Standards

The quality of teaching in South African classrooms is highly variable, with little shared understanding between teachers regarding what constitutes professional teaching. To address this problem, SACE is developing a set of standards for professional teaching that is theoretically informed, contextually appropriate and widely accepted by stakeholders. Professional teaching standards describe the pedagogical and other professional knowledge, skills and conduct that characterise good teaching, which research evidence shows supports student learning gains.

Preamble

Teaching is complex work in which teachers organise knowledge-rich learning opportunities for the learners in their classes. As professionals, teachers draw on different kinds of specialist knowledge to make appropriate choices in their classroom practices. They need to consider the knowledge of the subjects they teach and the learners with which they work in order to decide how best to enable learning within the particular school context. Teachers are expected to make wise decisions in situations that are often complex or unpredictable. As such, their teaching choices and classroom actions must be guided by a moral imperative to act in the best educational interests of the learners they teach. The professional practice of teaching therefore requires that teachers are trusted with the future prospects of learners in their classes. For this reason, committed, knowledgeable and skilful teachers are recognised as one of the country's greatest assets.

SACE Professional Teaching Standards for South Africa

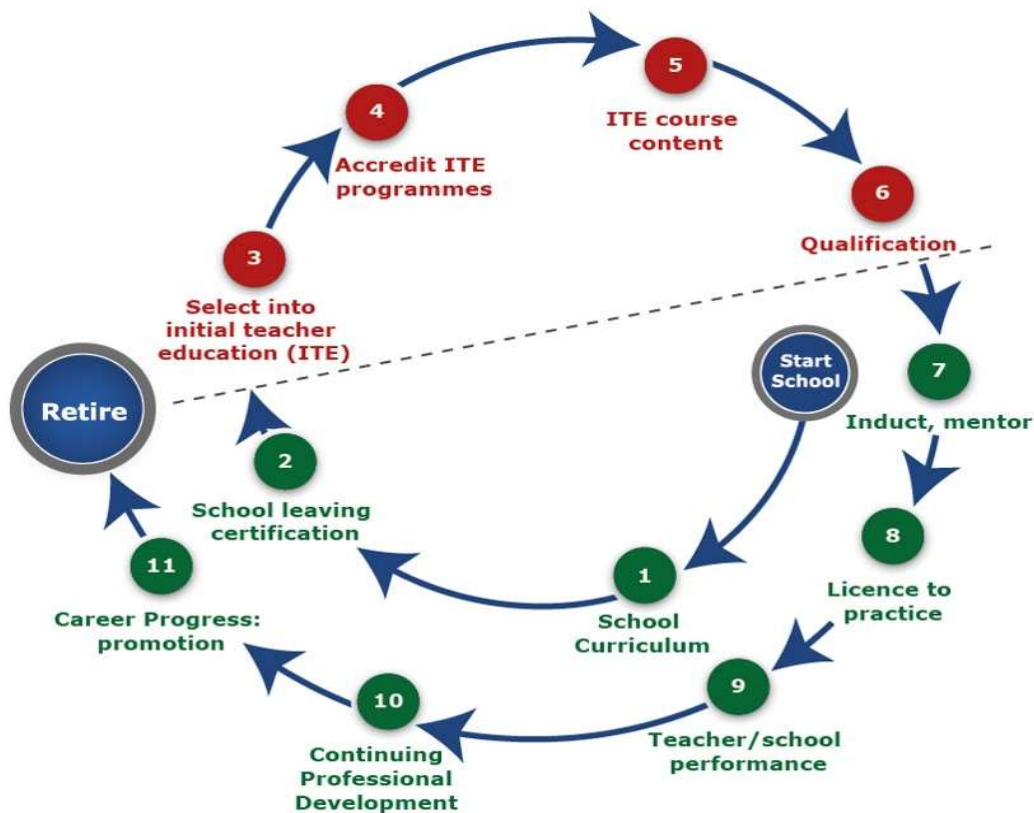
The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has a mandate to strengthen and uphold the profession of teaching, including the development of a professional standards framework for the teaching profession in South Africa. This framework should be a collaborative effort from the onset. It should involve all relevant stakeholders and incorporate input from existing standard setting initiatives. It should also precede and inform the development of professional standards for provisional, full and retention registration. Since 2016, SACE, in close collaboration with the national Standards Development Working Group (SDWG), has been actively working towards developing the framework and hereby presents a draft set of *Professional Teaching Standards* (PTS) that seeks to recognise the nature of teaching needed to strengthen the South African education system (SEE APPENDIX p.21-26 of this document). The standards development process is firmly located in the objectives of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) and also relate directly to the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ).

In our young democracy, there have been times when the professional nature of teaching practice has been obscured by a myriad of rapid policy and curriculum changes. A focus on learner-centred education in Outcomes Based Education (OBE), in which teachers were seen as facilitators, for example, under-emphasised the importance of teachers' work in the active knowledge mediation and organisation of knowledge-rich learning opportunities. The standards intend to clarify what teachers are expected to know and be able to do, specifically in their work as professional practitioners. These standards cannot, and should not, address every aspect of the work that teachers do in their classrooms and school communities. The PTS are also not intended to specify the subject knowledge required by teachers; they do, however, provide a guiding framework wherein more specific standards can be developed and they focus rather on the conditions necessary for creating powerful learning opportunities in South African classrooms. The standards bring together the professional knowledge, classroom skills and ethical orientations that teachers draw on throughout their professional careers. The *Standards for Professional Teaching* therefore would apply to all teaching across all phases and subject specialisations.

The SACE PTS provide the overarching framework wherein a range of other standards development processes is currently underway in South Africa. This range includes: (1) knowledge and practice standards for primary mathematics and literacy teacher education (PrimTEd); (2) professional standards for inclusive education in teacher education; (3) knowledge and practice standards for teacher education for early childhood education (TEECD); and (4) teacher competencies for digital learning. The *Policy on the South African Standard for Principals*, published in March 2016, is also important to note. The specific purposes of these processes differ, but collectively aim to develop the committed,

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knowledgeable and skilful teachers that South Africa needs. The SACE PTS aim to provide consistency in the nomenclature used in the processes and, more importantly, a common conceptual basis. For this reason, the cycle of schooling developed by Taylor (2017)¹ provides an important guide to the type, purpose and level of standards that exist across the education system.



The SACE PTS are intended to govern the work teachers do in their classrooms, from work-based learning in initial teacher education until retirement. The PTS will be particularly useful for SACE at #8 in the cycle as a basis for the criteria on which teachers are licensed to practice. The rollout and implementation of the SACE standards is being finalised by SACE, but will likely start with the licensing of newly-qualified teachers (newly qualified teachers) and be phased in for practising teachers. Following an interim licensing process on graduation (#6) and an induction process (#7), newly qualified teachers will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence (PoE) after one year of teaching, which will form the basis for full licensing. In order to retain the license to practice, teachers will be required to meet

¹ Taylor, N., Robinson, N. & Hofmeyr, &. 2017. *Teacher Professional Standards for South Africa*. Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.

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SACE's continuing professional teaching development (CPTD) requirement (#10). The SACE standards will be introduced in a systematic and incremental manner to avoid disruptions, will include meaningful engagement from the profession itself and will be actively managed to avoid a compliance approach.

A range of other standards that are used at different points in the cycle of schooling will be guided by the broader professional framework developed by SACE. Unlike the SACE PTS, these other standards are very specific in terms of their application. The knowledge and practice standards for PrimTEd are located at #5 in the cycle and will be used to improve the course content for ITE. The professional standards for inclusive education in teacher education are very similar to the SACE standards as they are relevant to many points in the cycle of schooling. Discussions are underway to in some way merge the two processes or, at the very least, to publish these standards within one broader framework. The TEECD knowledge and practice standards are similar to the PrimTEd standards and are also located at #5: so too the teacher competencies for digital learning. The 2016 Policy on the South African Standard for Principals is located at #11 and may need to be reviewed to align it to the conceptual framework that is emerging across the other processes, in particular the SACE PTS. An important point here is that #11 in the cycle of schooling does not refer to progression into management only. Promotion could also involve horizontal progression and greater specialisation in a subject area. As such, the Policy on the South African Standard for Principals is only applicable to teachers that move into the position of principal.

A key feature of the professional standards framework for the teaching profession is a distinction between employment and professional dimensions. This distinction is critical to avoid confusion between the roles of SACE (the custodian of the PTS required for license to practice), the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (the employer of teachers), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (the custodian of MRTEQ and conditions of service), teacher unions (representing teachers' interests, specifically in relation to conditions of service) and the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) (promotes labour peace through dispute prevention and management).

The interrelation of the standards processes in South Africa is a distinct feature that strengthens the system as a whole and allows the common alignment of all role players, including SACE, DBE, DHET, universities and the profession itself, to the goals of the ISPFTED.

The Draft Standards

The Standards are grouped within ten broad principles of professional teaching. These are as follows:

1. *Teaching is guided by an ethical commitment to the learning and wellbeing of learners.*
2. *Teaching is deeply connected to teachers' understanding of the subject/s they teach.*
3. *To teach is to organise systematic learning, guided by the requirements of the national curriculum.*
4. *Teachers understand how their subjects are best taught and learnt.*
5. *Teaching involves managing and monitoring learning.*
6. *Teaching involves thinking before, during and after classroom action.*
7. *Teachers understand the complex role that language plays in teaching and learning.*
8. *Teaching requires that a safe and disciplined learning environment be created and maintained.*
9. *Teachers belong to communities that support their professional learning.*
10. *Teachers promote social justice and the redress of inequalities within their educational institutions and society more broadly.*

While each cluster represents a distinct aspect of professional teaching practice, there exist many relationships within and between the standards. This is to be expected in a complex professional practice which is much more than a collection of isolated skills. As teachers gain experience, become established in their school communities and develop expertise in their teaching, it is expected that they will come to deeper understandings of the different standards and understand the connections between them in increasingly sophisticated ways.

Strengthening teaching as a professional practice is widely considered a means by which the quality of teaching can be enhanced throughout all South African classrooms in order to make the education system work as it should. Professional teaching requires that teachers consider how best to enable powerful learning opportunities for learners, given the limitations and opportunities within the schooling contexts in which they teach. The PTS are therefore intended to be useful to teachers across the vast diversity of South African schooling contexts. However, it must be acknowledged that many teachers in South Africa still work in exceptionally challenging contexts and are sometimes expected to play a role in the lives of the children far beyond that of an educator. It is important that the relevant government departments ensure that teachers can work in dignity within safe stable schooling environments that meet the norms for adequate infrastructure. However, it is

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equally important that even in challenging school contexts, teachers remain mindful of their constitutive role: to enable the learners in their classes to gain access to literacy skills and powerful knowledge.

The PTS are not intended as a performance management instrument imposed on teachers through policy directives. Without a strong statement of the nature of the work of professional teaching, there is a danger that teachers' work could succumb to increased bureaucratisation. Diverting attention away from the core tasks that underpin professional practice can negatively impact on the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. Rather, the standards form a framework to enable teachers and other stakeholders to understand the importance and complexity of the work that teachers do in their classrooms, schools and communities.

The PTS are contextually appropriate for the diverse South African context: they apply to all levels of teachers, including newly qualified teachers, novice and experienced, and also to teachers of varying degrees of competence, including basic, proficient and advanced professional. The PTS also apply to principals and school managers, but need to be viewed in conjunction with the *Policy on the South African Standard for Principals* (2016). The different points of application of PTS (#8 in the cycle of schooling) and the *Policy on the South African Standard for Principals* (2016) (#11) are important in this regard. The principle here is that when principals are involved in classroom teaching, they need to meet both sets of standards. In a similar manner, all teachers are required to master teacher competencies for digital learning.

A distinctive attribute of a profession is that it is the members of the practice that own the standards used to describe the nature of their practice. To build a common understanding of professional teaching for South African classrooms, SACE invites comments on this draft document from practicing teachers and other stakeholders from all parts of the South African education system. All comments received will be carefully considered by the SDWG and will be invaluable in assisting the working group to refine and strengthen the draft standards. Through this mechanism, the document will be revised so that it becomes a product produced and owned by practicing teachers. Upon finalisation, the standards will be endorsed by SACE as guidelines that enable teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices, support one another and open up possibilities for professional development. The PTS will be useful in informing the development of teacher education programmes and continuous professional development initiatives and will contribute to strengthening the teaching profession within the South African context.

The PTS presented below will be further developed by the SDWG over the next six months. Key considerations at this point are:

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- Do the proposed standards cover all the key domains?
- Have we carefully considered the available research in this area (specifically the work of Taylor, Robinson and Hofmeyr, 2017)?
- Are ten standards too many? Can some be integrated?
- How best can the standards be elaborated on? A few test cases will be developed to guide this process.
- Careful attention to be paid to:
 - The formulation of the standards to show progression across newly qualified teachers, novice and experienced and also basic, proficient and advanced professional levels. The risk of over-specification (as happened in the Norms and Standards) should be guarded against as this results in teachers becoming overwhelmed rather than empowered. The extent to which each cluster of standards can apply to all teachers at different levels of expertise and experience and across different contexts is an option that could replace the proposed basic, proficient and advanced professional levels. This will have to be tested.
 - The potential integration of the standards for inclusive education.
 - The interrelationship with the knowledge and practice standards for PrimTEd, TEECD, teacher competencies for digital learning as well as the *Policy on the South African Standard for Principals*.
 - The communication and consultation process required to garner sufficient traction for piloting and implementing the standards.

The SDWG will meet on 29 August 2017 to discuss these points and also to assign development work to smaller working groups during September 2017. A range of provincial consultations with teacher as well as subject and phase experts is scheduled for October to November 2017. The SDWG intends to hand over the final PTS to SACE in April 2018.

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PRINCIPLE 1: Teaching is guided by an ethical commitment to the learning and wellbeing of learners.		
1.1. Teachers hold high expectations of all learners' capacity to learn, work hard, and achieve success. 1.2. Teachers understand how children develop and learn. 1.3. Teachers understand the diverse challenges that confront learners and their families, and consider how these issues may affect their learning. 1.4. In their planning, teachers reflect on how to enable learners to overcome the barriers that affect their learning. 1.5. Teachers respect different aspects of learners' identities, and consider aspects of learner diversity that affect learning when preparing their lessons.		
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-service teacher Newly-qualified teacher Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Proficient Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
Applicability for teachers in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban & township schools Rural village or farm schools 	
Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation Intermediate/Senior Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Languages Maths Sciences & Technology Arts Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

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PRINCIPLE 2: Teaching is deeply connected to teachers' understanding of the subject/s they teach.		
2.1. Teachers understand the complex concepts that make up their subject knowledge and understand how these concepts are connected. 2.2. Teachers know and can use the inquiry skills needed to create and verify knowledge in the subject/s they teach. 2.3. Teachers understand how concepts in their subjects can be used to address real world issues. 2.4. Teachers keep up to date with new developments in their subject knowledge.		
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
Applicability for teachers in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

PRINCIPLE 3: Teachers interpret the national curriculum to organise systematic learning.

- 3.1. Teachers understand how concepts have been sequenced in the current national curriculum for cumulative learning.
- 3.2. Teachers use their knowledge of their subject, of learners and of the curriculum to develop purposeful and coherent learning experiences.
- 3.3. Teachers build their lessons on what learners have been taught previously, and this establishes a foundation for what learners will learn subsequently.

Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
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PRINCIPLE 4: Teachers understand how their subjects are best taught and learnt.		
	<p>4.1. Teachers use their subject knowledge to present lesson content in conceptually sound ways.</p> <p>4.2. Teachers explain ideas using language that their learners will understand, and also introduce them to the specialist terminology of their subject/s.</p> <p>4.3. Teachers devise tasks that give learners opportunities to consolidate, practice and master new knowledge and skills.</p> <p>4.4. With experience, teachers learn to anticipate what learners find difficult to understand and devise effective ways to address common misunderstandings.</p> <p>4.5. Teachers choose suitable electronic, physical and text-based resources that enhance learners' access to knowledge.</p> <p>4.6. Teachers access, develop and modify teaching and learning resources available within and beyond their school contexts.</p>	
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
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WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

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PRINCIPLE 5: Teaching involves organising, managing, monitoring and assessing learning.		
	<p>5.1. Teachers devise assessment tasks that give learners opportunities to show what they have learnt, and what they can do with that knowledge.</p> <p>5.2. Teachers provide learners with feedback that helps them see which tasks they have done correctly, where they made mistakes, and how they can improve.</p> <p>5.3. Teachers keep accurate records that reflect learner achievement, and can report to stakeholders on their progress.</p> <p>5.4. Teachers use learner errors as important data for understanding what learners misunderstand and for thinking about ways to improve their teaching.</p>	
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
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Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

PRINCIPLE 6: Teaching involves thinking before, during and after classroom action.		
6.1. Teachers make judgments that are informed by their understanding of teaching and learning, and which are appropriate to the subject/s they teach, the learners in their classes, and the contexts in which they work. 6.2. Teachers seek to understand the relationship between theory, research and their classroom practices. 6.3. Teachers can justify their teaching choices to themselves and to other stakeholders. 6.4. Teachers think about their classroom experiences and reflect on ways to improve their teaching.		
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
Applicability for teachers in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

PRINCIPLE 7: Teachers understand the complex role that language plays in teaching and learning.		
<p>7.1 Teachers make appropriate use of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) and, where necessary, draw on other languages for learners to clarify their understanding of important concepts.</p> <p>7.2 Teachers provide learners with ongoing opportunities to decode, interpret and critique different kinds of written, graphical and visual texts.</p> <p>7.3 Teachers enable learners to develop both reading and writing competences in the subject/s they teach.</p>		
<p>Applicability for teachers with different years of experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service Teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
<p>Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
<p>Applicability for teachers in different contexts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
<p>Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
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<p>WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?</p>		

PRINCIPLE 8: Teaching requires that safe and disciplined learning environments be created and maintained.		
8.1. Teachers are in class and teaching during scheduled teaching time. 8.2. Teachers establish classroom routines to maximise teaching and learning time. 8.3. Teachers use fair and consistently enforced rules to promote respectful behaviour between all members of the classroom community. 8.4. Teachers conduct themselves in ways that earn the respect of those in the school community and uphold the dignity of the teaching profession.		
Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
Applicability for teachers in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

PRINCIPLE 9: Teachers belong to communities that support their professional learning.		
<p>9.1. The wellbeing of learners requires collaboration between teachers and other professionals.</p> <p>9.2. Teachers involve themselves in ongoing personal, academic and professional growth through reflection, reading, study, research, and participation in professional development activities.</p> <p>9.3. Established teachers in a school provide a supportive environment for the induction and mentoring of new colleagues, as well as pre-service and newly-qualified teachers.</p> <p>9.4. Teachers participate in professional development activities organised by their subject associations, professional learning bodies and teacher unions.</p> <p>9.5. In addition, lead teachers involve themselves in educational debates in the public domain, and provide public comment on drafts of national curricula and policy.</p>		
APPLICABILITY FOR TEACHERS WITH DIFFERENT YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
APPLICABILITY FOR TEACHERS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF TEACHING COMPETENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
APPLICABILITY FOR TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
APPLICABILITY FOR TEACHERS WITH DIFFERENT PHASE SPECIALISATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
APPLICABILITY FOR TEACHERS ACROSS DIFFERENT SUBJECT SPECIALISATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

PRINCIPLE 10: Teaching advocates for social justice within the education system.

10.1 Teaching affords every learner equitable learning opportunities within a functional school institution.

10.2 While teachers support the smooth functioning of schools, they also have a moral responsibility to confront and resist the marginalisation and exclusion of learners from accessing quality learning opportunities.

Applicability for teachers with different years of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service teacher • Newly-qualified teacher • Established teacher 	
Applicability for teachers at different levels of teaching competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic • Proficient • Advanced professional/Lead teacher 	
Applicability for teachers in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban & township schools • Rural village or farm schools 	
Applicability for teachers with different phase specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation • Intermediate/Senior • Senior /FET 	
Applicability for teachers across different subject specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Languages • Maths • Sciences & Technology • Arts • Humanities 	
WHAT KNOWLEDGE SKILLS AND DISPOSITIONS does this cluster of standards require of teachers?		

Annexure: Members of the SACE SDWG

Name	Organisation
Confidence	Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa
Daya Chetty	South African Principals' Association (SAPA)
Elizabeth Walton	University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)
Ella Mokgalane	SACE
Faith Kimathi	Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Wits / Zenex
Francis Faller	Wits/Council on Higher Education (CHE)
Gugu Mbele	National Teachers' Union (NATU)
Haroon Mahomed	DBE
Hema Hariram	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South
James Keevy	JET Education Services (JET)
James Ndlebe	DBE
Jane Hofmeyr	Independent education consultant.
Johannes Motona	Professional Educators' Union (PEU)
Kim Draper	Independent education consultant.
Kulula Monona	DBE
Lee Rusznyak	Wits
Lulekwa	DBE
Marie Schoeman	DBE
Marietjie le Roux	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (SAOU)
Muavia Gallie	Independent education consultant.
Neil Makhaga	DHET
Nhlanhla Nduna-	SACE
Nick Taylor	JET
Olivia Mokgat	CHE
Renny Somnath	South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU)
Roger Deacon	Independent education consultant.
Saguna Gordhan	Zenex Foundation
Sifiso Nkonza	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)
Yusef Sayed	Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE) at the
Yvonne Lechaba	Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and

Abbreviations

CPTD	continuing professional teacher development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development
ITE	initial teacher education
LoLT	language of learning and teaching
MRTEQ	Policy on Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
NQT	newly qualified teachers
OBE	outcomes based education
PoE	portfolio of evidence
PrinTEd	primary mathematics and literacy teacher education
PTS	professional teaching standards
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SDWG	Standards Development Working Group
TEECD	teacher education for early childhood education
PTS	Professional Teaching Standards

APPENDIX

DRAFT Professional Teaching Standards for South Africa

Preamble

Teaching is complex work in which teachers create knowledge-rich learning opportunities for the learners in their classes. As professionals, teachers draw on different kinds of knowledge, namely subject, professional and contextual, to make suitable choices for their classroom activities. They need to consider the knowledge of the subjects they teach, and the learners with which they work, to decide how best to enable learning within the context in which they work. Teachers are expected to make wise decisions in situations that are often complex and unpredictable. Their teaching choices and classroom actions must therefore be guided by a moral need to act in the best educational interests of the learners they teach. For this reason, committed, knowledgeable and skilful teachers are among the country's greatest assets.

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is tasked to strengthen and uphold the profession of teaching. They are responsible for developing a framework of professional standards for the South African teaching profession. Strengthening teaching as a professional practice is widely considered to be a way to enhance the quality of teaching throughout all South African classrooms, and to make the education system work as it should. In this document, SACE presents a draft set of *Professional Teaching Standards* that seeks to promote professional teaching. The Standards focus on what South African teachers should know² and what they should be able to do to provide learners with knowledge-rich learning opportunities. The Standards bring together the professional knowledge, classroom skills and ethics that teachers draw on during their professional career.

² The *Professional Teaching Standards* do not specify the actual subject knowledge required by teachers; they do however provide a guiding framework wherein subject-specific standards can be developed.

The Standards are grouped within ten broad principles of professional teaching. These are as follows:

- 1. Teaching is guided by an ethical commitment to the learning and wellbeing of learners.*
- 2. Teaching is deeply connected to teachers' understanding of the subject/s they teach.*
- 3. To teach is to organise systematic learning, guided by the requirements of the national curriculum.*
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- 8. Teaching requires that a safe and disciplined learning environment be created and maintained.*
- 9. Teachers belong to communities that support their professional learning.*
- 10. Teachers promote social justice and the redress of inequalities within their educational institutions and society more broadly.*

These principles apply to teaching across all phases and subject specialisations. While each principle represents a distinct aspect of professional teaching practice, there are many relationships within and between the Standards. This is to be expected in a complex professional practice which is much more than a set of isolated skills. As teachers gain experience and become established in their school communities, as well as develop expertise in their teaching, it is expected that they will build understandings of the different Standards, and grasp the connections between them in increasingly sophisticated ways.

Professional teaching requires that teachers consider how best to create learning opportunities within the limitations and opportunities of the contexts in which they work. The *Professional Teaching Standards* are intended to be useful to teachers across different South African school contexts. However, it must be acknowledged that many teachers in South Africa still work in exceptionally challenging contexts and are sometimes expected to play roles in the lives of children far beyond that of an educator. Even in challenging school contexts, teachers must remain mindful of their role to enable the learners in their classes to gain access to literacy skills and powerful knowledge.

A distinctive attribute of a profession is that its members have ownership of the standards used to ensure the quality of the practice. To build a common understanding of professional teaching for South African classrooms, SACE invites comments on this draft document from practicing teachers and other stakeholders from all parts of the South African education system. All comments received will be carefully considered by the Standards Development Working Group, and will be used to refine and strengthen the draft Standards. Through this process, the document will be produced and owned by practicing teachers. Upon finalisation, it will be endorsed by SACE as guidelines that enable teachers to reflect on

their own teaching practices and support one another. These guidelines will also be intended to open up possibilities for professional development. The *Professional Teaching Standards* should inform the development of teacher education programmes and continuous professional development initiatives. These Standards will be used as a framework to strengthen the teaching profession within the South African education system.

Proposed Professional Teaching Standards

1. Teaching is guided by an ethical commitment to the learning and wellbeing of learners.

- 1.1. Teachers hold high expectations of all learners' capacity to learn, work hard, and achieve success.
- 1.2. Teachers understand how children develop and learn.
- 1.3. Teachers understand the diverse challenges that confront learners and their families, and consider how these issues may affect their learning.
- 1.4. In their planning, teachers reflect on how to enable learners to overcome the barriers that affect their learning.
- 1.5. Teachers respect different aspects of learners' identities, and consider aspects of learner diversity that affect learning when preparing their lessons.

2. Teaching is deeply connected to teachers' understanding of the subject/s they teach.

- 2.1. Teachers understand the complex concepts that make up their subject knowledge and understand how these concepts are connected.
- 2.2. Teachers know and can use the inquiry skills needed to create and verify knowledge in the subject/s they teach.
- 2.3. Teachers understand how concepts in their subjects can be used to address real world issues.
- 2.4. Teachers keep up to date with new developments in their subject knowledge.

3. Teachers interpret the national curriculum to organise systematic learning.

- 3.1. Teachers understand how concepts have been sequenced in the current national curriculum for cumulative learning.
- 3.2. Teachers use their knowledge of their subject, of learners and of the curriculum to develop purposeful and coherent learning experiences.

- 3.3. Teachers build their lessons on what learners have been taught previously, and this establishes a foundation for what learners will learn subsequently.

4. Teachers understand how their subjects are best taught and learnt.

- 4.1. Teachers use their subject knowledge to present lesson content in conceptually sound ways.
- 4.2. Teachers explain ideas using language that their learners will understand, and also introduce them to the specialist terminology of their subject/s.
- 4.3. Teachers devise tasks that give learners opportunities to consolidate, practice and master new knowledge and skills.
- 4.4. With experience, teachers learn to anticipate what learners find difficult to understand and devise effective ways to address common misunderstandings.
- 4.5. Teachers choose suitable electronic, physical and text-based resources that enhance learners' access to knowledge.
- 4.6. Teachers access, develop and modify teaching and learning resources available within and beyond their school contexts.

5. Teaching involves organising, managing, monitoring and assessing learning.

- 5.1. Teachers devise assessment tasks that give learners opportunities to show what they have learnt, and what they can do with that knowledge.
- 5.2. Teachers provide learners with feedback that helps them see which tasks they have done correctly, where they made mistakes, and how they can improve.
- 5.3. Teachers keep accurate records that reflect learner achievement, and can report to stakeholders on their progress.
- 5.4. Teachers use learner errors as important data for understanding what learners misunderstand and for thinking about ways to improve their teaching.

6. Teaching involves thinking before, during and after classroom action.

- 6.1. Teachers make judgments that are informed by their understanding of teaching and learning, and which are appropriate to the subject/s they teach, the learners in their classes, and the contexts in which they work.
- 6.2. Teachers seek to understand the relationship between theory, research and their classroom practices.
- 6.3. Teachers can justify their teaching choices to themselves and to other stakeholders.
- 6.4. Teachers think about their classroom experiences and reflect on ways to improve their teaching.

7. Teachers understand the complex role that language plays in teaching and learning.

- 7.1. Teachers make appropriate use of the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), and where necessary, draw on other languages to clarify learners' understanding of important concepts.
- 7.2. Teachers provide learners with ongoing opportunities to decode, interpret, and critique different kinds of written, graphical and visual texts.
- 7.3. Teachers enable learners to develop both reading and writing competences in the subject/s they teach.

8. Teaching requires that safe and disciplined learning environments be created and maintained.

- 8.1. Teachers are in class and teaching during scheduled teaching time.
- 8.2. Teachers establish classroom routines to maximise teaching and learning time.
- 8.3. Teachers use fair and consistently enforced rules to promote respectful behaviour between all members of the classroom community.
- 8.4. Teachers conduct themselves in ways that earn the respect of those in the school community and uphold the dignity of the teaching profession.

9. Teachers belong to communities that support their professional learning.

- 9.1. The wellbeing of learners requires collaboration between teachers and other professionals.
- 9.2. Teachers involve themselves in ongoing personal, academic and professional growth through reflection, reading, study, research, and participation in professional development activities.
- 9.3. Established teachers in a school provide a supportive environment for the induction and mentoring of new colleagues, as well as pre-service and newly-qualified teachers.
- 9.4. Teachers participate in professional development activities organised by their subject associations, professional learning bodies and teacher unions.
- 9.5. In addition, lead teachers involve themselves in educational debates in the public domain, and provide public comment on drafts of national curricula and policy.

10. Teachers promote social justice and the redress of inequalities within their educational institutions and society more broadly.

- 10.1. Teaching affords every learner equitable learning opportunities within a functional school institution.
- 10.2. While teachers support the smooth functioning of schools, they also have a moral responsibility to confront and resist the marginalisation and exclusion of learners from accessing quality learning opportunities.

*On behalf of:
SACE Standards Development Working Group,
in collaboration with JET Education Services*

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