Graduate teachers and those renewing registrations will come under the National Professional Standards for Teachers from next year. Director of workforce policy and coordination Chris Porter speaks with School Matters about what this means for teachers.
1. **What are the National Professional Standards for Teachers?**

The standards give a comprehensive picture of the elements of effective teaching around three domains: professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. They describe what teachers are expected to know and be able to do at four stages across their careers. They’re a valuable tool to guide teachers on their professional learning and practice to improve the quality of their teaching. The standards are on the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) website.

2. **How were the standards developed?**

They were developed following research of professional standards and analysis of standards in use across the country by teacher registration authorities, employers and professional associations. An extensive consultation and validation process involving teachers and stakeholders then helped refine the standards to ensure they reflected the practice of teaching.

3. **Why do we have national standards?**

They are one of a number of national reforms under the Smarter Schools National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality. They provide national consistency, promote excellence in teaching and offer teachers a basis for ongoing reflection and development. It’s important to define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high quality effective teaching.

4. **How can teachers become familiar with the standards?**

The AITSL website is really comprehensive. For example, under Illustrations of Practice there are videos, documents and work samples of effective practice that show what the standards could look like in action and help teachers identify their own practice. On the homepage there is an overview of the standards and what they mean for teachers.

5. **What are the benefits to teachers?**

Teachers can use the standards to reflect on their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements. They can use them as the basis for shared discussions about effective teaching. The standards can also be used to give teachers feedback on their performance and development.

6. **How will the standards benefit students?**

All the research points to high quality teaching and leadership as the basis for improving student learning. The standards are a common language for us all to talk about what this looks like.

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7. **What professional learning is available for teachers?**

A self reflection tool is on the Institute for Professional Learning website to help teachers identify their professional learning needs. The Graduate Teacher Induction Program and Senior Teacher professional learning modules have also been aligned to the standards.

8. **What effect will the new standards have on recruiting and selecting teachers?**

The selection criteria for applications has been changed to align with the new standards. Applicants may now demonstrate their skills against the domains of teaching in the new standards.

9. **What happens next?**

Implementation of the standards will continue with AITSL developing further materials to inform and support the process.

10. **Where can I go for more information?**

The AITSL website includes information and resources for teachers. Teachers are encouraged to explore the website and become familiar with the material provided. W: aitsl.edu.au

W: det.wa.edu.au/professionallearning