The Auditor-General
Auditor-General Report No.32 2023–24
Performance Audit

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Administration of National Standards and Frameworks

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Australian National Audit Office

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Australian National Audit Office

Canberra ACT

30 May 2024

Dear President
Dear Mr Speaker

In accordance with the authority contained in the *Auditor-General Act 1997*, I have undertaken an independent performance audit in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. The report is titled *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Administration of National Standards and Frameworks.* I present the report of this audit to the Parliament.

Following its presentation and receipt, the report will be placed on the Australian National Audit Office's website — http://www.anao.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General

The Honourable the President of the Senate
The Honourable the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

AUDITING FOR AUSTRALIA

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Audit snapshot

Auditor-General Report No.32 2023–24

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Administration of National Standards and Frameworks

Why did we do this audit?

- The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL) leads the promotion of excellence in teaching and school leadership on behalf of education ministers, through its administration of national standards and frameworks.
- This audit provides assurance to Parliament over the effectiveness of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks.

Key facts

- As of December 2023, AITSL is responsible for administering 10 national standards and frameworks.
- The Department of Education (Education) administers AITSL's Australian Government grant agreements, and supports the education minister, as the representative of the sole member of the company, in duties including appointments to the AITSL Board of Directors.

What did we find?

- AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks is largely effective.
- AITSL's governance arrangements are largely fit-for-purpose.
- AITSL's approach to developing, revising and supporting implementation of national standards and frameworks is largely effective.
- AITSL's measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on national standards and frameworks is largely effective, but provides limited basis to judge whether they are having the intended impact.

What did we recommend?

- There were three recommendations to AITSL, and one recommendation to Education, on governance, stakeholder engagement and support, assurance, and measurement.
- AITSL and Education agreed to all recommendations.

307,228

teaching staff in Australian schools in 2022.

6

AITSL training courses as of December 2023.

774

AITSL digital tools and resources supporting the teaching profession as of December 2023.

Summary and recommendations

Background

1. As of 2022, Australia's school education system was made up of 9,614 schools, attended by four million students, and staffed by 307,228 teaching staff (full time equivalent, including principals).[1] There were also 90,028 prospective teachers enrolled in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses.[2]

2. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL, or the company) was established in 2010 to lead the promotion of excellence in teaching and school leadership on behalf of the Australian Government and state and territory governments, with an initial focus on national standards and professional development resources.[3]

3. As of December 2023, AITSL is responsible for administering 10 national standards and frameworks, which inform teacher regulation, professional development and career pathways, codify agreed common approaches to regulation between states and territories, and provide assistance and support for teachers and school leaders in areas of identified need.[4] In 2022–23, AITSL had 81 employees (not including board directors), and received $17.1 million in revenue, including $10.3 million from the Australian Government (Table 1.1).

Rationale for undertaking the audit

4. AITSL was established 'to provide national leadership for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership'.[5] As of December 2023, AITSL is responsible for administering 10 national standards and frameworks, which inform the regulation, professional development and career pathways of the teaching profession.[6]

5. This audit provides assurance to the Parliament over the effectiveness of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks.

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1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Schools, 2022* [Internet], February 2023, available from https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/schools/2022 [accessed 28 September 2023]. Teaching staff are defined as those who spend the majority of their time in contact with students. The ABS defines teaching staff as including principals, deputy principals, campus principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administration.

2 Department of Education (Education), *Student Enrolments Pivot Table 2022* [Internet], Education, 18 December 2023, Table 8.3, available from https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/2022-section-8-special-courses [accessed 18 January 2024].

3 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), *Communique* [Internet], 28 September 2009, available from https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FI0TU6%22 [accessed 7 August 2023].

4 Summarised from Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL), *National Frameworks* [Internet], https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 19 March 2024].

5 MCEETYA, *Communique* [Internet], 28 September 2009, available from https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FI0TU6%22 [accessed 7 August 2023].

6 Summarised from AITSL, *National Frameworks* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 19 March 2024].

Audit objective and criteria

6. The audit objective was to assess the effectiveness of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks.

7. To form a conclusion against the objective, the following high-level audit criteria were adopted:

- Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose governance arrangements to support the administration of national standards and frameworks?
- Has AITSL adopted an appropriate approach to developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks?
- Does AITSL effectively measure, monitor, evaluate and report on national standards and frameworks?

Conclusion

8. AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks is largely effective. By improving its strategic planning and assurance, AITSL would be better positioned to determine whether national standards and frameworks are having the intended impact on the quality of teaching and school leadership in Australia.

9. AITSL has established governance arrangements that are largely fit-for-purpose to support the administration of national standards and frameworks. Strategic planning arrangements largely support the company's work on national standards and frameworks. Alignment between the corporate plan and annual work plan could be improved. Risk management and internal reporting arrangements incorporate national standards and frameworks, and action is taken in response to risks. The company's arrangements to gather, document, and use expert advice support its purpose. Feedback to expert advisory groups on how AITSL uses their advice could be improved. The Department of Education's support for assessing the collective expertise of the Board to support appointments could be improved.

10. AITSL has adopted a largely appropriate approach to developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks. While stakeholder engagement approaches are in place, there is no overarching strategy for stakeholder engagement activities. Training, guidance and information resources to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks are appropriate. There is no overarching strategy to consider how materials contribute to and are relevant to the implementation of the national standards and frameworks. The company's information management, framework to guide decision-making about the contents of its collection of training, guidance and information resources, guidance for stakeholders other than teachers and school leaders, and clarity of its role in respect to early childhood teachers, could be improved.

11. AITSL's measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on national standards and frameworks is largely effective. An effective assurance approach for all agreed national standards and frameworks has not been established. AITSL executes the assurance role it has been afforded in initial teacher education (ITE) effectively. AITSL's measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting does not occur across all national standards and frameworks. As a consequence, AITSL is not able to determine whether national standards and frameworks are having the intended

impact on the quality of teaching and school leadership in Australia. AITSL's reporting obligations to the Department of Education could be improved.

Supporting findings

Governance

12. AITSL does not have a strategic planning framework which documents the interactions between the AITSL Constitution, corporate plan, annual work plan, priorities given by education ministers, and its approach to providing strategic advice to ministers. The company uses its internal annual work plan to manage its business. This plan incorporates streams of work from different funding sources, is updated in response to significant changes in work allocation, and is approved by the Minister for Education as the representative of the sole member of the company. Detailed planning about how work is to be undertaken is on a project-by-project basis, in accordance with AITSL's *Project Management Framework*. In the absence of a framework that articulates the relationship between its planning documents, the AITSL Board lacks a basis to consider how new work will relate to the company's existing priorities. (See paragraphs 2.4 to 2.15)

13. AITSL's governance framework supports its work on national standards and frameworks through internal reporting arrangements. Project oversight is provided by an Operations Board, supported by a Project Steering Committee, with high-risk projects escalated to the Senior Executive Team. Project information and reporting was provided and considered at an appropriate level, in line with the provisions of the *Project Management Framework*. (See paragraphs 2.16 to 2.18)

14. AITSL's identification and management of risk is fit-for-purpose. The company has established an enterprise risk management policy, framework, and guide, as well as project risk identification and escalation procedures. These arrangements are being used to support AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks. (See paragraphs 2.19 to 2.28)

15. AITSL's arrangements for incorporating expert advice into decision-making about national standards and frameworks are generally sound and could be improved by providing information to expert standing committees about how their advice has been used. Of the expert standing committee agenda items relevant to national standards and frameworks, eight (19 per cent) School Leadership and Teaching Expert Standing Committee items and 14 (31 per cent) Teacher Education Expert Standing Committee items resulted in agreed actions. Other mechanisms for AITSL to access expertise, such as advisory bodies and procurement, are well-utilised. The Department of Education's support for assessing the collective expertise of the Board to support appointments could be improved. (See paragraphs 2.29 to 2.45)

Developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks

16. AITSL does not have an enterprise-wide consultation strategy or framework. The company's approach to stakeholder engagement includes five standing stakeholder forums (four of which it convenes), project-specific engagement under its *Project Management Framework*, a stakeholder engagement survey, and other activities such as senior executive meetings and presentations. The company provides little written guidance for project managers about how

engagement should be conducted. Project-specific consultations were largely consistent with better practice guidance in the *APS Framework for Engagement and Participation* standards. (See paragraphs 3.3 to 3.20)

17. As of December 2023, AITSL provides training, guidance and information to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks via six training courses and 774 digital tools and resources. These materials are appropriate in that they are well aligned to the national standards and frameworks and provide detailed and practical guidance on implementation. AITSL does not have an overarching strategy to consider how materials contribute to and are relevant to the implementation of the national standards and frameworks. (See paragraphs 3.21 to 3.32)

Measurement, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

18. Education ministers have endorsed national quality assurance arrangements, which afford AITSL a role, in respect to initial teacher education (ITE) program accreditation. AITSL's quality assurance arrangements for ITE are effective, but efforts to build on these have been limited. An effective approach to gain assurance about the ongoing currency and effectiveness of all agreed national standards and frameworks has not been established. There could be benefit to AITSL and education ministers having more information about the implementation of all national standards and frameworks to inform the need for and priority of revisions, especially the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and *Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia*. (See paragraphs 4.2 to 4.12)

19. AITSL has established arrangements to measure, evaluate and report on its work on national standards and frameworks. Its performance measures are aligned with its purpose but performance information is not presented to allow readers to understand its limitations, or performance over time. The company can demonstrate the value of its work in most areas via evaluation, although reports and responses are of variable quality. The company has adhered to its reporting obligations since 2020–21 in all but one instance. (See paragraphs 4.13 to 4.36)

Recommendations

Recommendation no. 1
Paragraph 2.34

The Department of Education ensure briefing to its minister supports the minister's consideration of the collective expertise of prospective Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Board of Directors appointments.

Department of Education response: *Agreed.*

Recommendation no. 2
Paragraph 3.19

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership clearly document its approach to stakeholder engagement, including:

(a) its stakeholder engagement strategy; and

(b) guidance for project managers on planning, record keeping, documenting changes to plans during implementation, and providing feedback to stakeholders about how their input has been used.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

Recommendation no. 3
Paragraph 4.11

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership lead work to advise education ministers of the need for governments to develop an agreed approach and implementation plan to:

(a) regularly review national standards and frameworks;

(b) assure the currency and effectiveness of all currently agreed national standards and frameworks;

(c) provide reports resulting from this work to education ministers for consideration; and

(d) publish reports resulting from this work.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

Recommendation no. 4
Paragraph 4.23

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership review the company's performance measures with particular attention to diversifying sources of performance information, and ensuring the outcomes of the company's work are captured.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

Summary of entity response

20. The proposed audit report was provided to AITSL and an extract was provided to the Department of Education. The entities' summary responses are reproduced below. Their full responses are included at Appendix 1. Improvements observed by the ANAO during the course of this audit are listed at Appendix 2.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

AITSL welcomes the report of the ANAO performance audit, including its finding that the company's administration of national standards and frameworks is largely effective, as well as its largely positive assessments against the high-level audit criteria. AITSL accepts all three recommendations to the company outlined in the report, and AITSL Management will commence work to implement these within the company's relevant authorising and implementation environments.

AITSL will develop a stakeholder engagement strategy and improve written guidance for project managers, mainly by codifying existing effective practices and applying these consistently across all projects. AITSL will bring forward advice to education ministers on the development of an agreed approach and implementation plan to regularly review and assure the currency of national frameworks, subject to ministers' agreement to an appropriate authorising environment and resourcing for this work. AITSL is currently reviewing its performance measures to better address the company's intended impact and the outcomes of its work, as well as diversifying its sources of performance information.

AITSL also notes the opportunities for improvement as outlined in the report. AITSL Management will consider how they might be addressed within the company's context. AITSL thanks the audit team for their engagement throughout the performance audit.

Department of Education

The Department of Education welcomes this report's focus on AITSL's role in administering National Standards and Frameworks.

As highlighted, the department plays a role in supporting AITSL in these responsibilities, primarily through advice provided to the Minister for Education that ensures the AITSL board possesses appropriate skills and expertise.

The department meets its formal obligations in this regard and agrees with the audit's findings that it would be appropriate for the Minister to be provided with advice on the collective expertise of the board members when asked to consider new appointments. The department undertakes to ensure that future ministerial briefings on potential appointments include a skills matrix of all board members.

The department will also take action in relation to the audit's suggested 'opportunity for improvement' by ensuring that future grant agreements require AITSL to provide a more detailed breakdown showing where expenditure will be allocated, and tracking this as the project progresses.

The department commits to requiring AITSL deliver more consistent and transparent reports and will provide guidance regarding its expectations.

Key messages from this audit for all Australian Government entities

21. Below is a summary of key messages, including instances of good practice, which have been identified in this audit and may be relevant for the operations of other Australian Government entities.

Governance and risk management

- Where a Commonwealth company is required to develop a work plan under its constitution in addition to its corporate plan, consideration should be given to clearly articulating its alignment with the corporate plan.

Policy/program design

- Australian Government entities tasked with administering multijurisdictional policies should ensure robust assurance arrangements are established before commencement. Arrangements should be agreed with all parties and clearly articulate measures, responsibilities, and timeframes.

Audit findings

1. Background

Introduction

1.1 As of 2022, Australia's school education system was made up of 9,614 schools, attended by four million students, and staffed by 307,228 teaching staff (full time equivalent, including principals).[7] There were also 90,028 prospective teachers enrolled in initial teacher education (ITE) courses.[8]

1.2 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL, or the company) was established in 2010 to lead the promotion of excellence in teaching and school leadership on behalf of the Australian Government and state and territory governments, with an initial focus on national standards and professional development resources.[9]

1.3 As of December 2023, AITSL is responsible for administering 10 national standards and frameworks, which inform teacher regulation, professional development and career pathways, codify agreed common approaches to regulation between states and territories, and provide assistance and support for teachers and school leaders in areas of identified need.[10] In 2022–23, AITSL had 81 employees (not including board directors), and received $17.1 million in revenue, including $10.3 million from the Australian Government (Table 1.1).

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

Establishment and governance

1.4 AITSL is a Commonwealth company. The Board of Directors (the AITSL Board) is the accountable authority. The *Constitution of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Ltd* (the AITSL Constitution) provides that the education minister appoints between three and 11 company directors, who together make up the AITSL Board. The Board 'has the final responsibility for the successful operations of the Company', and is accountable to the minister as the representative of the sole member of the company. The AITSL Board delegates authority over the day-to-day management of AITSL to the Chief Executive.

1.5 As a Commonwealth company, AITSL is subject to Chapter 3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), which sets out public sector accountability

7 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Schools, 2022* [Internet], February 2023, available from https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/schools/2022 [accessed 28 September 2023]. Teaching staff are defined as those who spend the majority of their time in contact with students. The ABS defines teaching staff as including principals, deputy principals, campus principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administration.

8 Department of Education (Education), *Student Enrolments Pivot Table 2022* [Internet], Education, 18 December 2023, Table 8.3, available from https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/2022-section-8-special-courses [accessed 18 January 2024].

9 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), *Communique* [Internet], 28 September 2009, available from https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FI0TU6%22 [accessed 7 August 2023].

10 Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), summarised from Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL), *National Frameworks* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 19 March 2024].

requirements with which it must comply.[11] The company is also a registered charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. Its obligations under this Act have not been considered by this audit.

1.6 The AITSL Constitution details its purpose (see Box 1).

Box 1: The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's purpose

AITSL's Constitution provides that it is:

> formed to play a lead role in promoting excellence in teaching and school leadership for the Australian, state and territory governments. It does this by leading educational reform to strengthen the professionalism of teaching and school leadership with the objects of:
>
> (a) establishing the Company as a national organisation that operates openly, collaboratively, efficiently and ethically by working across jurisdictions and sectors through engagement with key bodies;
>
> (b) fostering, promoting and driving high quality professional learning for teachers and school leaders;
>
> (c) supporting and advancing the quality of teaching and leadership in Australian schools and other educational settings;
>
> (d) developing and maintaining national approaches to:
>
> - stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses;
> - rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses;
> - improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students;
> - robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness;
> - research, data collection and workforce planning capabilities;
> - professional standards for teachers and school leaders;
> - certification of teachers and school leaders against the national professional standards;
> - consistent registration of teachers;
> - standards and/or professional development for the early childhood education workforce; and
> - undertaking and engaging with international research and innovative developments in best practice.

Source: *Constitution of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Ltd* [Internet], October 2019, available from https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/29cb3ff0-38af-e811-a961-000d3ad24182/documents/ [accessed 18 January 2024].

11 Chapter 3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) requires Commonwealth companies to keep the responsible Minister and Finance Minister informed, ensure that the company has an audit committee, follow any applicable government policy orders, prepare a corporate plan, budget estimates, and an annual report, and comply with audit requirements. See Department of Finance, *Commonwealth company* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/about-us/glossary/pgpa/term-commonwealth-company [accessed 7 August 2023].

Funding arrangements

1.7 National school funding and policy arrangements rely on a federated system. States and territories retain constitutional responsibility for the provision of schooling to the children in their jurisdiction. The Australian Government provides funding to schools and is involved in setting national policies through national and bilateral funding agreements with states and territories.[12]

1.8 AITSL is funded primarily by the Australian Government via two grant agreements administered by the Department of Education: *Grant Agreement — Core Funding*, and *Grant Agreement — Projects*. The current grant agreements expire on 30 June 2027. Core funding is intended to cover operational costs and overheads, but may be redistributed to projects, while project funding is to be used for specified project costs only.

1.9 In addition to funding provided under the grant agreements, AITSL receives income from:

- the Australian Government and state and territory governments via the Education Ministers Meeting, for collectively commissioned work;
- contracts with Australian or overseas entities, such as work completed for individual jurisdictions via their education departments; and
- services to individuals via the Teacher Migration Services and Support (TMSS; formerly Assessment for Migration) team and 360° Reflection Tool for school leaders.

1.10 Income for the three most recent financial years is summarised in Table 1.1 below.[13]

Table 1.1: Revenue by source, 2020–21 to 2022–23 ($)

Source	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
Grant Agreement — Core Funding	13,772,810[a]	7,950,000	7,996,996
Grant Agreement — Projects		4,923,000	2,346,702
Education Ministers Meeting (cost sharing funding)	3,468,288	2,291,705	1,850,004
Contracts with other Australian or overseas entities	–	26,900	719,224
Fees for services to individuals	1,292,385	2,735,287	3,848,387
Interest and other revenue	206,866	107,887	291,679
Total	**18,740,349**	**18,034,779**	**17,052,992**

Note a: Separate core and project grants commenced in 2021–22. The figure provided for 2020–21 represents total Grant Agreement funding.

Source: AITSL documents.

12 Education, *How schools are funded* [Internet], last updated 23 February 2023, available from https://www.education.gov.au/schooling/how-schools-are-funded [accessed 22 September 2023]. Provision of schooling includes operating public schools; registering teachers and schools across the government, independent, and Catholic sectors; and accrediting initial teacher education (ITE) programs delivered to prospective teachers by universities and non-university higher education providers.

13 AITSL does not quantify the amount of funding relevant to national standards and frameworks. AITSL advised the ANAO on 6 September 2023 that most funding provided under both grant agreements, and from the Education Ministers Meeting, relates to national standards and frameworks.

National professional standards and frameworks for teachers

Current arrangements

1.11 As of December 2023, responsibility for teacher registration and ITE program accreditation lies with states and territories.[14] Where agreed by education ministers, national consistency in language, registration or accreditation requirements and approaches, professional development, and mutual recognition is guided via 10 national standards and frameworks administered by AITSL (Table 1.2 below). They include:

- standards, which inform regulation, professional development and career pathways;
- frameworks, which provide an agreed common approach; and
- charters and guidelines, which are optional, and provide assistance or support in areas of identified need.

1.12 The 10 national standards and frameworks intersect as outlined in Figure 1.1 below.

Table 1.2: National standards and frameworks, as of December 2023

Date	Summary
2011	***Australian Professional Standards for Teachers —*** set out what teachers are expected to know and be able to do at four career stages: Graduate; Proficient; Highly Accomplished; and Lead.[a] The Standards are grouped into three domains of: teaching; professional knowledge; professional practice and professional engagement. To achieve full registration by the relevant state or territory authority, all teachers must provide evidence of performance at the Proficient career stage. The Standards can be used as a basis for a professional accountability model.
2011	***Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia —*** sets out agreed elements of national consistency for the registration of teachers in all states and territories. It consists of eight common agreed elements: initial period of registration; fixed period of registration; alternative authorisation to teach; sanctions including withdrawal of registration; suitability; qualifications; English language proficiency; and mutual recognition. Each state and territory has a teacher regulatory authority (TRA) responsible for registration of teachers.[b]
2011	***Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures —*** set out the requirements that an ITE program must meet to be accredited by the relevant state or territory authority (revised in 2015, 2018, 2019, and 2023).[c] All ITE programs must meet these as part of the national accreditation process. The Standards and Procedures are designed to ensure that all graduates meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate career stage.
2011	***Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles —*** sets out what school principals are expected to know, understand and do to succeed in their work (revised 2014). It includes five professional practices (leading teaching and learning; developing self and others; leading improvement, innovation and change; leading the management of the school; and engaging and working with the community) and three leadership requirements (vision and values; knowledge and understanding; and personal qualities, social and interpersonal skills). The Profiles describe each of the professional practices and leadership requirements in more detail.
2012	***Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework —*** describes the characteristics of an effective performance and development cycle. It recommends approaches for measuring teacher effectiveness, including student outcomes, observations, student feedback, peer/supervisor feedback, parent feedback, and self-assessment.

14 Education, *How schools are funded* [Internet], last updated 23 February 2023, available from https://www.education.gov.au/schooling/how-schools-are-funded [accessed 22 September 2023].

Date	Summary
2012	***Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders —*** describes the characteristics of a high-quality professional learning culture and of effective professional learning, to assist teachers, school leaders and those who support them to get the most from professional learning. Ongoing professional learning is a requirement of teacher registration.
2018	***Leading for impact: Australian guidelines for school leadership development —*** set out guidance to support a nationally coherent and standards-based approach to leadership development in all jurisdictions and schools.
2023	***Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers —*** provides a nationally consistent approach to certification at the highly accomplished and lead career stages. It consists of: eligibility; portability; assessment of practice; appeals process; applicant support; maintenance; pathways; and quality assurance.
2023	***Guidelines for the Induction of Early Career Teachers in Australia —*** describe why induction matters, the conditions for good induction, the focus of induction, effective strategies for induction, and the respective roles of organisations and individuals in managing the delivery of high-quality induction programs.
2023	***Guidelines for the Induction of New School Leaders in Australia —*** provide advice on what leadership induction is, why it matters and the conditions and focus areas for leadership induction. It also outlines strategies for supporting induction and the roles played by individuals and organisations in this process.

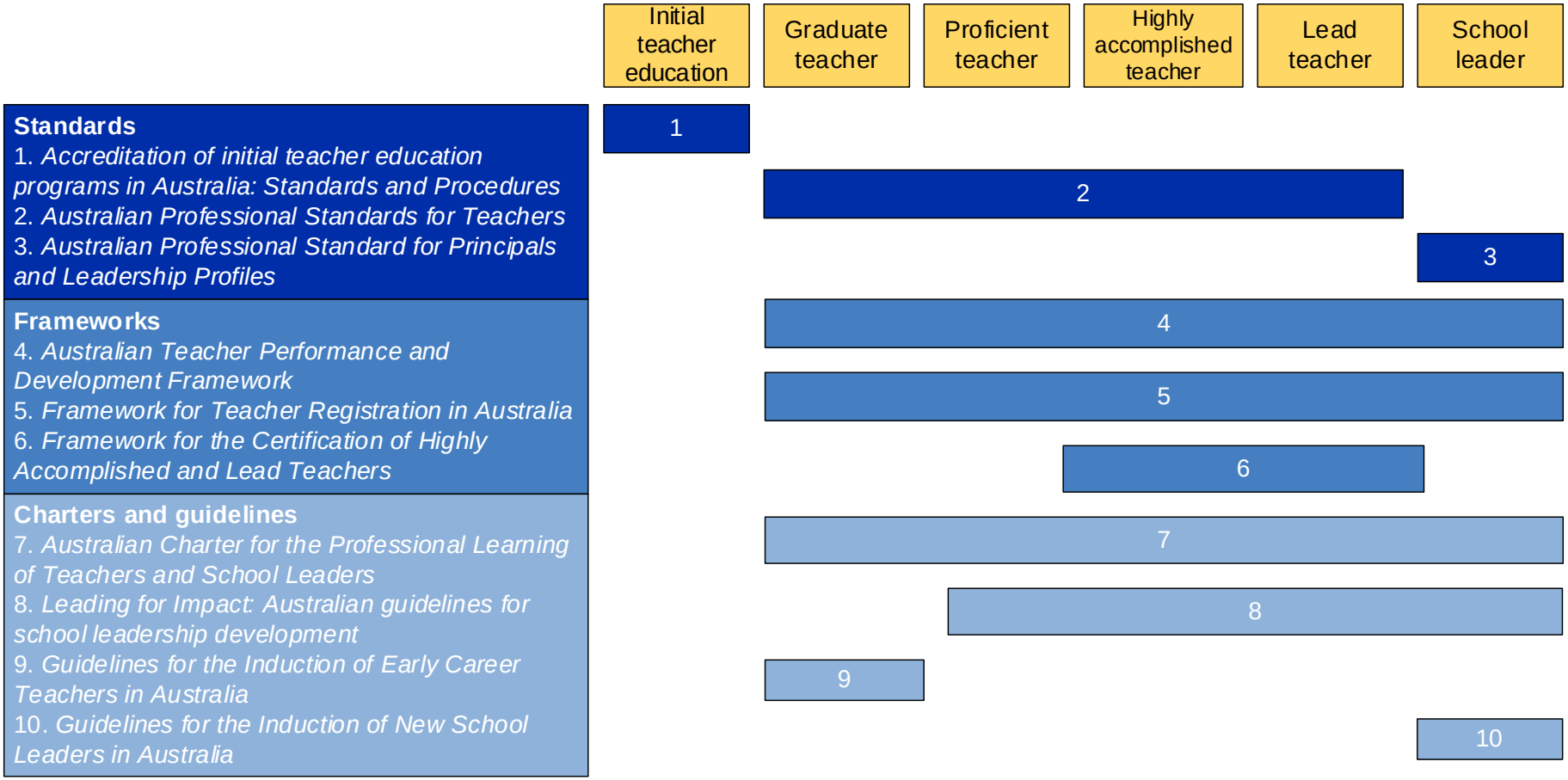
Note a: In addition to the four career stages in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (Graduate; Proficient; Highly Accomplished; and Lead), there are two additional stages: initial teacher education (before registration) as dealt with by the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures*; and school leader, as dealt with in the *Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles*.

Note b: The teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs) are the: New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA); ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI); Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT); Queensland College of Teachers (QCT); NT Teacher Registration Board; WA Teacher Registration Board; SA Teachers Registration Board; and Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board. See AITSL, *Find your local regulatory authority* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/find-your-local-regulatory-authority [accessed 28 September 2023].

Note c: In addition to these Standards and Procedures, providers are also required to be registered by the national higher education regulator, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* and (where applicable) the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*.

Source: ANAO, summarised from AITSL, *National Frameworks* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 19 March 2024].

Figure 1.1: Relationships between national standards and frameworks



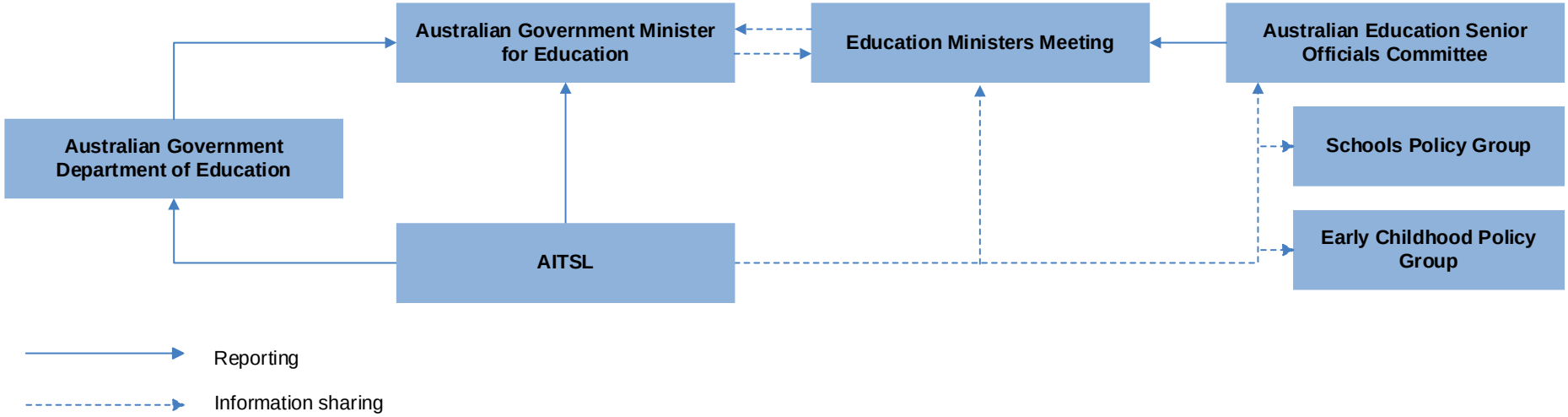
Source: ANAO, summarised from AITSL, *National Frameworks* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 11 March 2024].

Implementation environment

1.13 State and territory education ministers do not have power to direct AITSL. Under the AITSL Constitution, this role is reserved for the Australian Government Education Minister, as the representative of the sole member of the company. As responsibility for teacher registration and ITE program accreditation lies with states and territories, AITSL is reliant on state and territory cooperation to undertake its work (Figure 1.2 below). Decision-making primarily takes place via:

- the Education Ministers Meeting, made up of Australian, state and territory government ministers responsible for education;
- the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC), the primary subcommittee of senior officials supporting the Education Ministers Meeting; and
- the standing working groups of the AESOC: Schools Policy Group, with responsibility for reporting to and providing high-level strategic policy advice on all school education components of the Education Ministers Meeting agenda; and the Early Childhood Policy Group, with the equivalent responsibility for early childhood education and care matters.

Figure 1.2: National standards and frameworks decision-making



Source: ANAO, based on AITSL documents.

1.14 National standards and frameworks are implemented and supported by:

- state and territory teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs), which have responsibility for teacher registration and ITE program accreditation;
- ITE providers, which have responsibility for ITE program design and delivery, including assessment of prospective teachers via Teaching Performance Assessments;
- employers, including early childhood education providers, state government education departments, Catholic and independent school systems, and individual independent schools, which have responsibility for negotiating and setting employment conditions;
- member-based stakeholder bodies[15];
- school leaders, who are responsible for teacher induction, supervision, and performance evaluation; and
- individual teachers, who are responsible for meeting the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* as a condition of registration, and may have supervisory responsibilities and adhere to other national policies as relevant to their career stage and goals (for example, highly accomplished and lead teachers).

1.15 Revising or introducing new national standards and frameworks relies on agreement from education ministers, as well as consideration of, and consultation with, others involved in implementation.

Rationale for undertaking the audit

1.16 AITSL was established 'to provide national leadership for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership'.[16] As of December 2023, AITSL is responsible for administering 10 national standards and frameworks, which inform the regulation, professional development and career pathways of the teaching profession.[17]

1.17 This audit provides assurance to the Parliament over the effectiveness of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks.

Audit approach

Audit objective, criteria and scope

1.18 The audit objective was to assess the effectiveness of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks.

15 For example, state and territory independent schools' associations, such as the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales, support national policy implementation through advice to member schools, and professional learning.

16 MCEETYA, *Communique* [Internet], 28 September 2009, available from https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FI0TU6%22 [accessed 7 August 2023].

17 Summarised from AITSL, *National Frameworks* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/national-frameworks [accessed 19 March 2024].

1.19 To form a conclusion against the objective, the following high-level audit criteria were adopted:

- Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose governance arrangements to support the administration of national standards and frameworks?
- Has AITSL adopted an appropriate approach to developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks?
- Does AITSL effectively measure, monitor, evaluate and report on national standards and frameworks?

1.20 The audit focused on AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks in place as at September 2023. The audit did not examine the two sets of guidelines (*Guidelines for the Induction of Early Career Teachers in Australia* and *Guidelines for the Induction of New School Leaders in Australia*) agreed by education ministers in December 2023.

Audit methodology

1.21 The audit methodology included:

- examining and analysing AITSL documentation, with a focus on documents that relate to national standards and frameworks;
- meetings with relevant AITSL staff;
- a site visit to AITSL's office in Melbourne; and
- engagement with key stakeholders.[18]

1.22 The audit was conducted in accordance with ANAO Auditing Standards at a cost to the ANAO of approximately $439,885.

1.23 The team members for this audit were Hazel Ferguson, Klein Anderson, Shannon Clark, Rajya Abo-Shaban, Rupal Darji, and David Tellis.

18 Public submissions were invited via the ANAO website between August 2023 and January 2024. Fifty-six key stakeholders were contacted directly in September 2023, and invited to meet with the audit team and provide a submission to the audit. These included: Australian Government education portfolio entities such as the Department of Education, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, and Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority; state and territory education authorities; Catholic and independent school authorities; teacher regulatory authorities; representatives of initial teacher education providers; principals' associations; and unions. The audit team met with 13 stakeholders and received a further 14 written submissions.

2. Governance

Areas examined

This chapter examines whether the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL, or the company) has established fit-for-purpose governance arrangements to support its administration of national standards and frameworks.

Conclusion

AITSL has established governance arrangements that are largely fit-for-purpose to support the administration of national standards and frameworks. Strategic planning arrangements largely support the company's work on national standards and frameworks. Alignment between the corporate plan and annual work plan could be improved. Risk management and internal reporting arrangements incorporate national standards and frameworks, and action is taken in response to risks. The company's arrangements to gather, document, and use expert advice support its purpose. Feedback to expert advisory groups on how AITSL uses their advice could be improved. The Department of Education's support for assessing the collective expertise of the Board to support appointments could be improved.

Areas for improvement

The ANAO made one recommendation aimed at improving advice about Board expertise (paragraph 2.34).

The ANAO also suggested that AITSL consider developing a strategic planning framework (see paragraph 2.15) and arrangements to provide information to expert standing committees about how their advice has been used (see paragraph 2.41).

2.1 As a Commonwealth company and registered charity, AITSL is required to have governance arrangements in place that are consistent with:

- the provisions of the *Constitution of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Ltd* (the AITSL Constitution), made under the *Corporations Act 2001*;
- Chapter 3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act); and
- the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

2.2 This includes obligations related to strategic planning, internal reporting, risk management, and the incorporation of expertise into its work.

2.3 AITSL has also adopted certain Australian Government policies, which are not required for Commonwealth companies under the PGPA Act, but which AITSL considers provide a better practice framework appropriate to its purpose. This includes the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.[19]

19 Department of Finance (Finance), *Commonwealth Risk Management Policy* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/comcover/risk-services/management/commonwealth-risk-management-policy [accessed 25 September 2023].

Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose strategic planning arrangements which support its work on national standards and frameworks?

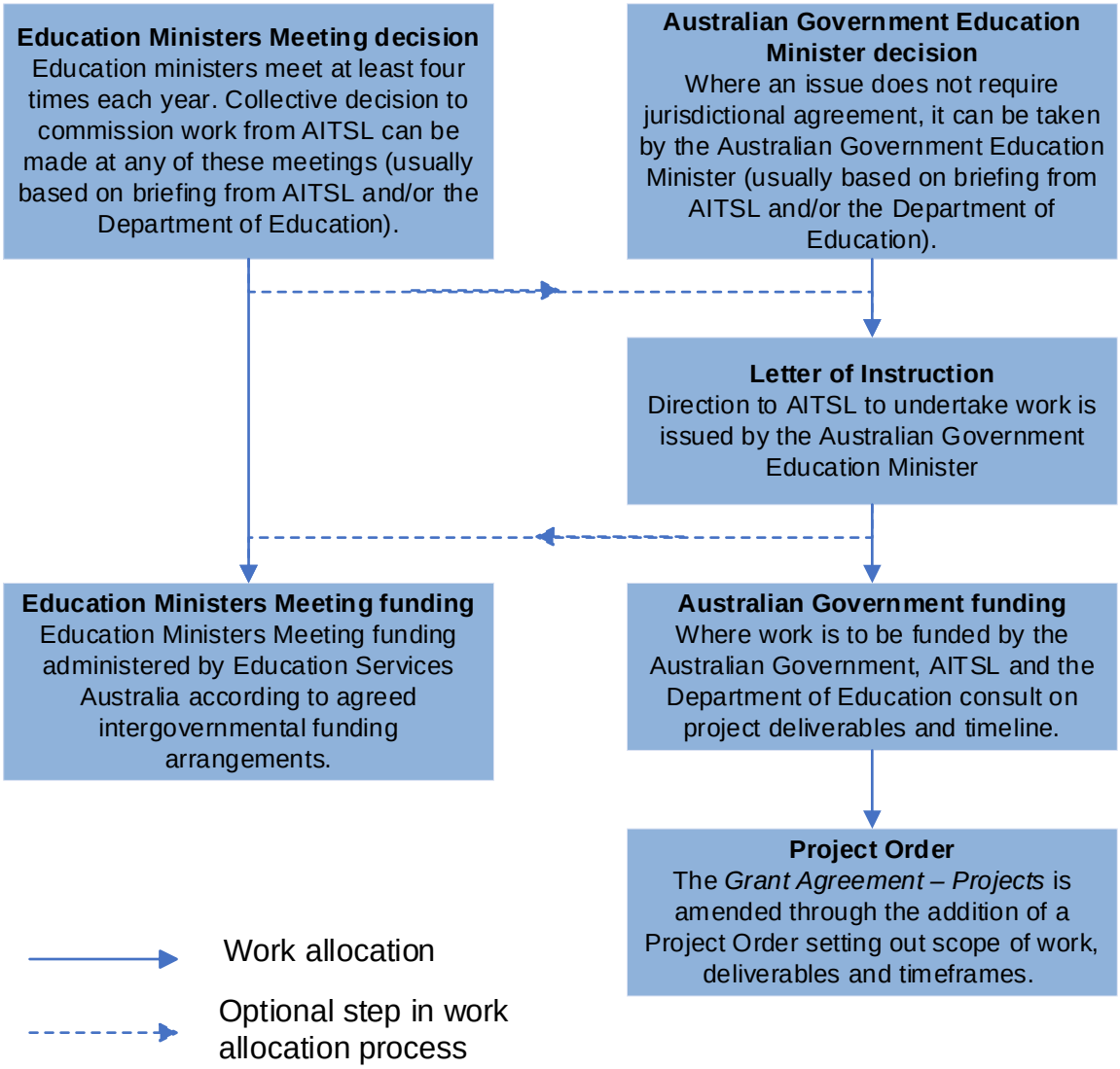
AITSL does not have a strategic planning framework which documents the interactions between the AITSL Constitution, corporate plan, annual work plan, priorities given by education ministers, and its approach to providing strategic advice to ministers. The company uses its internal annual work plan to manage its business. This plan incorporates streams of work from different funding sources, is updated in response to significant changes in work allocation, and is approved by the Minister for Education as the representative of the sole member of the company. Detailed planning about how work is to be undertaken is on a project-by-project basis, in accordance with AITSL's *Project Management Framework*. In the absence of a framework that articulates the relationship between its planning documents, the AITSL Board lacks a basis to consider how new work will relate to the company's existing priorities.

Strategic planning framework

2.4 AITSL does not have a strategic planning framework which documents the interactions between the AITSL Constitution, corporate plan, annual work plan, priorities given by education ministers, and its approach to providing strategic advice to ministers. The AITSL Board and Senior Executive Team consider which activities should be undertaken each year as part of the development of the budget and annual work plan. The company advised the ANAO on 6 September 2023 that it is the process of being tasked work by the Australian Government Education Minister and Education Ministers Meeting that drives its internal work planning. In the absence of a framework that articulates the relationship between this task taking and AITSL's strategic planning documents, the AITSL Board lacks a basis to consider how new work will relate to the company's existing priorities.

2.5 Figure 2.1 summarises the processes used by ministers to task AITSL with work. A small amount of AITSL's work falls outside these arrangements, and is provided on a fee-for-service basis to state and territory and overseas governments, and individuals (see paragraph 1.9).

Figure 2.1: Arrangements for education ministers to allocate work to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership



Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Corporate plan

2.6 Effective planning is critical to transparent and accountable government.[20] At the beginning of each planning cycle, AITSL is required to publish a corporate plan, to provide Parliament, the public, and stakeholders with information about the company's purpose, objectives, functions, key activities, and how it will measure its performance.[21]

20 Finance, *Planning and reporting* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting [accessed 16 October 2023].

21 Finance, *What is a corporate plan?* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/corporate-plans-commonwealth-companies-rmg-133/what-corporate-plan [accessed 11 October 2023]. Section 95 of the PGPA Act requires that directors of Commonwealth companies prepare a corporate plan in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule).

2.7 Under the Commonwealth Performance Framework, the corporate plan is intended to be a Commonwealth company's primary planning document.[22] The *AITSL Corporate Plan 2023–2027* states that the company's priorities and goals are detailed in the strategic plan and operationalised each year in the annual work plan.[23] The Corporate Plan meets the requirements for Commonwealth company corporate plans set out in section 16E of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

Strategic plan

2.8 AITSL's *Strategic Plan 2022–2026* (the Strategic Plan) was developed based on stakeholder consultation and a 2021 paper, *Developing, Esteeming, and Investing in Expertise: The Second Decade of AITSL*, developed by the Board of Directors (AITSL Board or the Board). The resulting strategic outcomes are included in the:

- Corporate Plan as the outcomes against which the company's performance is to be measured; and
- Strategic Plan as the priorities under which planned work is detailed.

2.9 Unlike the corporate plan, the strategic plan is not updated annually.

Annual work plan

2.10 The AITSL Constitution requires an annual work plan to be developed by 30 June each year for approval by the Australian Government Minister for Education (the Education Minister). According to the Corporate Plan, the annual work plan includes 'all work tasked to AITSL.'[24] The annual work plan is updated in response to significant changes. The annual work plan is not published.

2.11 The majority of the planned activities in the *AITSL Work Plan 2022–23* (five of nine) and *AITSL Work Plan 2023–24* as of October 2023 (15 of 21) relate to work to develop, revise, or support the implementation of national standards and frameworks. These are summarised in Appendix 3.

Alignment between planning documents

2.12 The Strategic Plan is aligned with the Corporate Plan via priorities and goals to achieve planned performance. The Corporate Plan specifies how AITSL's performance will be measured in each priority area and the Strategic Plan details activities against each priority.

2.13 The same priorities and performance measures are included in the annual work plan in a separate table. The goals from the Strategic Plan are not mapped to the activities in the body of the annual work plan. The annual work plan is structured around AITSL's different sources of funding, and the streams of work associated with these funding sources. This results in a lack of direct alignment between the published planning documents and the annual work plan.

2.14 AITSL manages its activities using the annual work plan. For each funding source in the annual work plan, key areas of activity, milestones and deliverables are provided. More detailed

22 ibid.

23 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), *AITSL Corporate Plan 2023–2027* [Internet], p. 2, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/corporate/aitsl-2023-2027-corporate-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=3e3be3c_2 [accessed 30 January 2024].

24 ibid.

planning about how milestones and deliverables are to be achieved occurs using a *Project Management Framework* (July 2022). Under the Framework, AITSL staff are required to use templates for pre-planning and implementation planning which include considerations such as budget, timing, consultation, outputs, risks and approvals. Business as usual work (where there is no foreseeable end date) is not covered by the Framework.

Opportunity for improvement

2.15 To increase the transparency of the alignment between the AITSL Constitution, corporate plan, strategic plan, and annual work plan, and ensure the AITSL Board has visibility over the delivery of the company's priorities, there would be merit in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership developing a strategic planning framework.

Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose project management arrangements which support its work on national standards and frameworks?

AITSL's governance framework supports its work on national standards and frameworks through internal reporting arrangements.

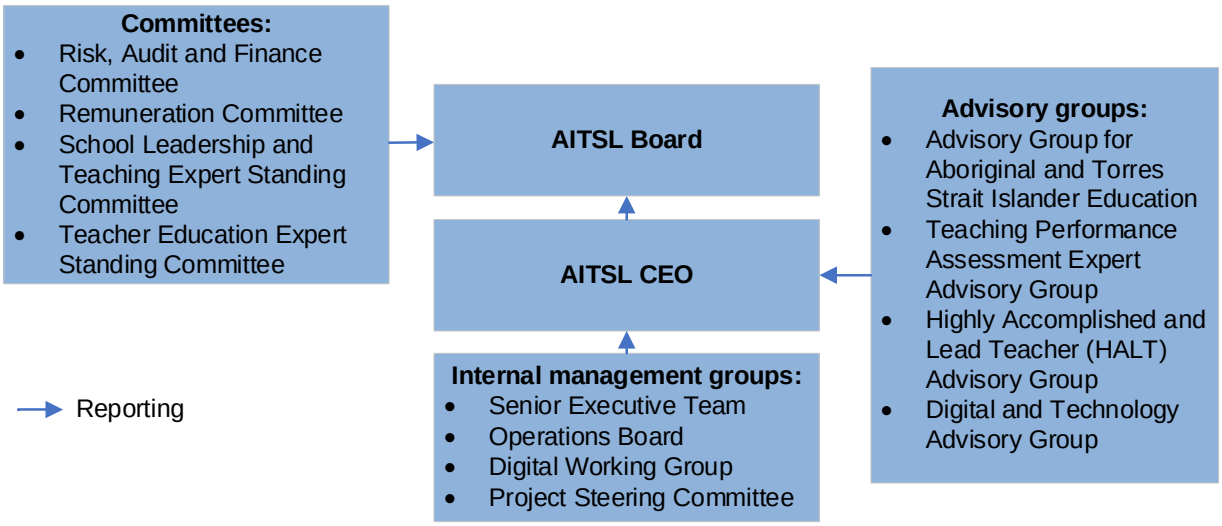
Project oversight is provided by an Operations Board, supported by a Project Steering Committee, with high-risk projects escalated to the Senior Executive Team. Project information and reporting was provided and considered at an appropriate level, in line with the provisions of the *Project Management Framework*.

Governance framework

2.16 As shown in Figure 2.2, AITSL's internal reporting regarding work on national standards and frameworks operates in the context of a governance framework comprising:

- groups to support the AITSL Chief Executive (CEO) in day-to-day management of the company;
- committees of, or committees established to advise, the AITSL Board; and
- advisory groups reporting to the CEO.

Figure 2.2: The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's internal governance arrangements



Source: ANAO analysis based on AITSL governance structure documents.

Oversight of work on national standards and frameworks

2.17 AITSL develops, manages and executes its work on national standards and frameworks via projects (see Appendix 3). Under AITSL's *Project Management Framework*:

- monitoring, review and information sharing on all projects is provided by the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which supports and escalates to the Operations Board;
- the Operations Board is the decision-making body for all project-related matters; and
- the Senior Executive Team (SET) receives reports of Operations Board decisions, and is the escalation point for projects the Operations Board considers high risk or off track (membership is detailed at Appendix 4).[25]

2.18 The PSC and Operations Board manage project approval, implementation tracking, consideration of risks to delivery, and project closure, including lessons learned (more detail at Appendix 4). Changes during implementation that the PSC and Operations Board consider do not pose a risk to project delivery (such as changes to consultation plans) are not documented. Issues are escalated from the Operations Board to the SET. The SET is involved in monitoring potential projects, project approvals, and project closure.

25 Relevant project information is also provided to the Board for noting and/or discussion via the CEO Report and project-specific reports. Between 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2023, information was provided about: Professional Standards for Middle Leaders; the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan; and Esteeming the Profession.

Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose risk management arrangements which support its work on national standards and frameworks?

AITSL's identification and management of risk is fit-for-purpose. The company has established an enterprise risk management policy, framework, and guide, as well as project risk identification and escalation procedures. These arrangements are being used to support AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks.

2.19 Risk management arrangements under the PGPA Act aim to achieve 'a more mature approach to risk across the Commonwealth', since engagement with risk is 'a necessary first step in improving performance.'[26]

2.20 The *Commonwealth Risk Management Policy* defines risk as 'the effect of uncertainty on objectives' and risk management as the 'coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk.'[27] The Policy emphasises that risk management must be formalised through a risk management framework and embedded into the decision-making activities of an entity.[28] Commonwealth Companies are not required to comply with the Policy. AITSL has adopted the policy as a matter of good practice.[29]

Risk management policy and procedures

2.21 AITSL has formalised its overarching approach to risk management in its *Risk Management Policy*. Entity-level oversight of the policy and its operation is provided via its internal governance committee structure (see Figure 2.2), by the AITSL Board and the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee, as well as senior executives and established bodies reporting to the CEO (except the Digital Working Group).

2.22 Under the *Risk Management Policy*, AITSL's *Risk Management Framework* sets out how it manages strategic, operational and project risks. The Framework applies to all projects and activities undertaken by AITSL and outlines steps for identifying, managing and escalating emerging risks.

2.23 A *Risk Management Guide* assists staff in operationalising the *Risk Management Framework*, by breaking down the steps for assessment of project risk. It states:

> No matter what step you're at in the Risk Management Process, continuously reviewing, validating, and implementing Risk Assessment Activities will help to improve the ways in which risks are managed within your projects.

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26 Explanatory Memorandum to the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Bill 2013, paragraphs 16 and 18, available from https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fems%2Fr5058_ems_5771fa39-4fac-45d7-9699-75920976ba70%22 [accessed 17 October 2023].

27 Finance, *Implementing the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy (RMG 211)* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/managing-risk-internal-accountability/risk-internal-controls/implementing-commonwealth-risk-management-policy-rmg-211 [accessed 17 October 2023].

28 ibid.

29 The duty to establish and maintain systems relating to risk and control is imposed by section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), which does not apply to Commonwealth companies. See Finance, *Commonwealth Risk Management Policy* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/comcover/risk-services/management/commonwealth-risk-management-policy [accessed 22 March 2024].

2.24 Use of the *Risk Management Framework* and Guide is a requirement of the *Project Management Framework*. A risk assessment is required as part of project pre-planning.

2.25 Between July 2022 and September 2023, AITSL assessed and managed risk in AITSL's project planning, decision-making and management at all levels of the company (more detail at Appendix 5).

Management of strategic risks

2.26 As of October 2023, AITSL's strategic risk register contains six strategic risks all with relevance to the company's work on national standards and frameworks (Table 2.1). Relevant controls were identified for each risk, and AITSL rated controls against each risk as either moderate or substantial confidence. Recent actions (January 2023 to September 2023) to implement controls were recorded by responsible officers against each risk, with treatments identified in three areas (capacity to deliver, funding and authorising environment).

Table 2.1: Strategic risk controls and treatments relevant to national standards and frameworks, as of October 2023

Risk title and description	Current controls recorded in the Strategic Risk Register	Recent actions recorded under progress reporting in the Strategic Risk Register	Actions recorded under Strategic Risk Treatments
Demonstrating relevance AITSL is unable to demonstrate the impact of its work and its relevance to stakeholders' needs.	3	3	Within tolerance
Capacity to deliver AITSL is unable to deliver commissioned work in expected timeframes.	5	2	Out of tolerance, 6 actions identified to bring into tolerance
Funding AITSL does not have adequate funding to deliver a desired work plan.	6	5	Out of tolerance, 7 actions identified to bring into tolerance
People AITSL does not have the right number, mix, skill set, or continuity of staff to deliver the desired work plan.	10	3	Within tolerance
Authorising environment AITSL does not have sufficiently explicit authorisation to pursue actions considered important.	5	4	Out of tolerance, 3 actions identified to bring into tolerance
Cyber security Unauthorised access to personal and/or business-critical information held by AITSL.	4	2	Within tolerance

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

2.27 The risk register and risk treatment registers contain information to support risk management, including:

- a risk overview, including risk category, title and description, the date raised and the risk owner;
- risk analysis, including contributing factors, implications, and current controls;
- risk appetite and tolerance;
- inherent and residual risk rating;
- strategic risk treatments, including completion and review dates, responsible officer names, and treatment outcomes; and
- progress reporting, including status updates, date of update, and individual responsible for the update.

2.28 The strategic risk register is used to advise the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee and the AITSL Board of any developments and changes to the risk environment, ratings, controls, and treatments, and for operational management of risks.

Has AITSL established fit-for-purpose arrangements to incorporate expert advice into decision-making about national standards and frameworks?

AITSL's arrangements for incorporating expert advice into decision-making about national standards and frameworks are generally sound and could be improved by providing information to expert standing committees about how their advice has been used. Of the expert standing committee agenda items relevant to national standards and frameworks, eight (19 per cent) School Leadership and Teaching Expert Standing Committee items and 14 (31 per cent) Teacher Education Expert Standing Committee items resulted in agreed actions. Other mechanisms for AITSL to access expertise, such as advisory bodies and procurement, are well-utilised.

The Department of Education's support for assessing the collective expertise of the Board to support appointments could be improved.

2.29 Rule 2.2(d) of the AITSL Constitution provides that in relation to its work on developing and maintaining national approaches, it is committed to 'undertaking and engaging with international research and innovative developments in best practice.' The AITSL *Strategic Plan 2022–2026* articulates the company's commitment to shaping, influencing, enhancing, esteeming, and supporting expertise as part of its work.[30]

30 AITSL, *Strategic Plan 2022–2026* [Internet], 2022, p. 2, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-aitsl/strategic-plan-2022-2026 [accessed 26 October 2023]. The priorities in the Strategic Plan are: shaping expertise; influencing expertise; esteeming expertise; and supporting expertise.

Board expertise

Membership

2.30 In December 2023, the AITSL Board comprised eight directors, including the Chair.[31] ANAO analysis of governing board sizes at 30 June 2021 shows most (15 out of 18 Commonwealth companies) have boards made up of six to 10 members.[32]

2.31 Rule 4.4(c) of the AITSL Constitution provides that, in appointing directors, the Minister should have regard to 'the person's skills and expertise in the following':

- teacher education;
- regulation and accreditation of initial teacher education (ITE) courses;
- school leadership;
- teacher practitioner expertise;
- government school systems leadership and management;
- non-government school systems leadership and management;
- public policy;
- governance including audit, risk and finance; and
- government liaison.

2.32 The Department of Education is responsible for briefing the minister on board appointments. In addition to the specific requirements of the AITSL Constitution, paragraph 17(e) of the *Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions 2022*, made under the *Public Service Act 1999*, require departments to provide the minister with advice that is 'frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence', including 'providing advice that is relevant and comprehensive, is not affected by fear of consequences, and does not withhold important facts or bad news'.

2.33 From March 2020 to October 2023 board appointment (and reappointment) decisions were largely informed by strategic advice related to missing expertise, and gender and geographic balance. The three most recent appointments were not informed by a skills matrix or other high-level overviews of board expertise.

31 Under the AITSL Constitution, the Board is made up of between three and 11 company directors.

32 Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), *Reporting on Governing Boards of Commonwealth Entities and Companies* [Internet], 20 June 2022, Table 3.3, available from https://www.anao.gov.au/work/information/reporting-governing-boards-commonwealth-entities-and-companies [accessed 19 January 2024].

Recommendation no. 1

2.34 The Department of Education ensure briefing to their minister supports the minister's consideration of the collective expertise of prospective Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Board of Directors appointments.

Department of Education response: *Agreed.*

2.35 *The department has always met its board appointment obligations under the AITSL Constitution and the most recent version of the Cabinet Handbook and acknowledges that a skills matrix of the collective board's skills and expertise could enhance briefings related to board appointments.*

2.36 *In response to this recommendation, the department now provides an overview of the entire board's respective skill sets when briefing the Minister on board appointments.*

Expert committees

2.37 In addition to the expertise of directors, the AITSL Board is supported by two expert standing committees.

- The School Leadership and Teaching Expert Standing Committee (SLTESC) advises the AITSL Board on work it is progressing to promote excellence in teaching and school leadership to maximise impact on student learning in all Australian schools.
- The Teacher Education Expert Standing Committee (TEESC) assists the AITSL Board in its responsibilities relating to ITE.

2.38 Committees consistently discuss items of relevance to the national standards and frameworks. Members of the committees provide updates about current developments in teaching and school leadership and ITE. This is a source of intelligence for AITSL about the implementation of national standards and frameworks.

2.39 Of the agenda items relevant to national standards and frameworks, a total of eight (19 per cent) SLTESC items and 14 (31 per cent) TEESC items resulted in agreed actions (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Number of relevant substantive agenda items resulting in action, 2021–22 to 2023–24 (to September 2023)

	School Leadership and Teaching Expert Standing Committee	Teacher Education Expert Standing Committee
Number of substantive agenda items relevant to national standards and frameworks[a]	42	45
Number of relevant substantive agenda items resulting in action and percentage of all agenda items[a]	8 (19% of agenda items)	14 (31% of agenda items)

Note a: An item was considered relevant if it related to the national standards and frameworks. All items not required for committee governance (for example, welcome and acknowledgement of country) have been considered substantive.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

2.40 Between July 2020 and September 2023, out of 20 AITSL Board meetings, there were 11 instances of expert committee advice being cited or sought. Expert committees provide reports to the Board after each meeting. A 2021 review of expert standing committees conducted by AITSL found that committees (Figure 2.2), while influential, lacked a clear understanding of their impact.[33]

Opportunity for improvement

2.41 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership should implement arrangements to provide information to expert standing committees about how their advice has been used.

Guest experts

2.42 Alongside other provisions for accessing expertise, rule 12.11 of the AITSL Constitution provides that the 'Board has the capacity to invite up to two persons with expertise in a specific subject to attend a meeting and provide advice to the Board.' From 2021–22 to 2023–24 (up to September 2023) the Board held 12 meetings, and invited eight experts to these meetings.

Other mechanisms for accessing expertise

Procurement

2.43 The company engages external experts to support its work on national standards and frameworks. AITSL has established a *Procurement Policy* and supporting protocols, procedures and templates, setting out its process for procuring goods and services. This includes risk assessment, planning, evaluation, awarding of a contract, ongoing contract management, and completion of the contract period.

2.44 From January 2020 to September 2023, AITSL engaged experts to inform work on national standards and frameworks on nine occasions, for a total contracted value of $695,837 (including GST). In accordance with its *Procurement Policy*, AITSL has identified suppliers using competitive processes (seven requests for quote from identified suppliers, and one open tender), and sought approval for exemption from this requirement as required (one such instance was identified, and approval provided by the CEO on the basis that three experts were sought, and a very limited number were in the market who were independent of AITSL and certifying authorities).

Advisory groups

2.45 AITSL has four advisory groups, all of which provide advice to inform work related to national standards and frameworks (see Figure 2.2 and Appendix 6). In 2022 and 2023:

- two advisory groups (the Advisory Group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, and the Teaching Performance Assessment Expert Advisory Group) provided advice to inform AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks at every meeting;
- the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Advisory Group provided advice to inform AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks at two of five meetings; and

33 The review was conducted by AITSL with the chair of each committee. The terms of reference for each committee require a review of membership every two years. Analysis for the review consisted of mapping items the committees were asked to consider over the last two years; a survey of members; and interviews with the chair of each committee.

- the Digital and Technology Advisory Group provided advice to inform AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks at five of seven meetings.

3. Developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks

Areas examined

This chapter examines whether the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL, or the company) has adopted an appropriate approach to developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks.

Conclusion

AITSL has adopted a largely appropriate approach to developing, revising and supporting the implementation of national standards and frameworks. While stakeholder engagement approaches are in place, there is no overarching strategy for stakeholder engagement activities. Training, guidance and information resources to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks are appropriate. There is no overarching strategy to consider how materials contribute to and are relevant to the implementation of the national standards and frameworks. The company's information management, framework to guide decision-making about the contents of its collection of training, guidance and information resources, guidance for stakeholders other than teachers and school leaders, and clarity of its role in respect to early childhood teachers, could be improved.

Area for improvement

The ANAO made one recommendation aimed at AITSL documenting its approach to stakeholder engagement (see paragraph 3.19).

The ANAO also suggested that AITSL consider assessing the company's information management risks (see paragraph 3.18), developing a framework to guide decision-making about the contents of its collection of training, guidance and information resources, and guidance for stakeholders other than teachers and school leaders (see paragraphs 3.24 and 3.29), and work with the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and education ministers to clarify its role in respect to early childhood teachers (see paragraph 3.32).

3.1 AITSL's Constitution provides that the company was established to support and advance the quality of teaching and leadership in Australian schools and other educational settings, and to foster, promote and drive high quality professional learning for teachers and school leaders.

3.2 The Australian Government needs to cooperate with state and territory governments, and the private and not-for-profit sectors, to deliver a range of objectives, including education policy.[34] As such, under Rule 2.2(a) of the AITSL Constitution, the company was formed 'as a national organisation that operates openly, collaboratively, efficiently and ethically by working across jurisdictions and sectors through engagement with key bodies'.

34 Also refer to E Alexander and D Thodey, *Independent Review: into the operation of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability ACT 2013* [Internet], Department of Finance, September 2018, pp. 43–44, available from https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/PGPA_Independent_Review_-_Final_Report.pdf [accessed 19 March 2024].

Does AITSL have effective stakeholder engagement approaches in place to support the development, revision, and implementation of national standards and frameworks?

AITSL does not have an enterprise-wide consultation strategy or framework. The company's approach to stakeholder engagement includes five standing stakeholder forums (four of which it convenes), project-specific engagement under its *Project Management Framework*, a stakeholder engagement survey, and other activities such as senior executive meetings and presentations. The company provides little written guidance for project managers about how engagement should be conducted. Project-specific consultations were largely consistent with better practice guidance in the *APS Framework for Engagement and Participation* standards.

Approach to stakeholder engagement

3.3 AITSL undertakes stakeholder engagement in four ways:

- standing stakeholder forums;
- project-specific engagement;
- a stakeholder survey, which is conducted every two years; and
- other activities, such as senior executive meetings and presentations.[35]

3.4 The company has not established an enterprise stakeholder engagement strategy, framework, or policy which would inform prioritisation, performance measurement, and risk management in respect to its stakeholder relationships. Some guidance is provided via its *Project Management Framework* (paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12).

3.5 Table 3.1 shows project-specific stakeholder engagement and standing stakeholder forums are among the top sources of information contributing to AITSL's advice to education ministers.

Table 3.1: Information sources for the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's advice to education ministers[a], July 2020 to September 2023

Sources of information	Number[b]
Project-specific stakeholder engagement	23
Expert research and advice	11
Standing AITSL stakeholder forums, consultative groups, and the AITSL Board	8
Consultation via Education Ministers Meeting structure	6
National quality assurance activities (only in place for initial teacher education and highly accomplished and lead teachers)	3
National reviews	1

Note a: Education ministers refers to advice provided to ministers individually and via the Education Ministers Meeting (EMM), Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC), and Schools Policy Group (SPG).

35 Only some of these meetings are formally documented. These meetings and other ad hoc or informal stakeholder engagement were not considered as part of this performance audit.

Note b: This is a count of the number of times AITSL drew on information for each source. The sum of the numbers does not equal the total number of relevant agenda items, as AITSL papers often cite more than one source of information.

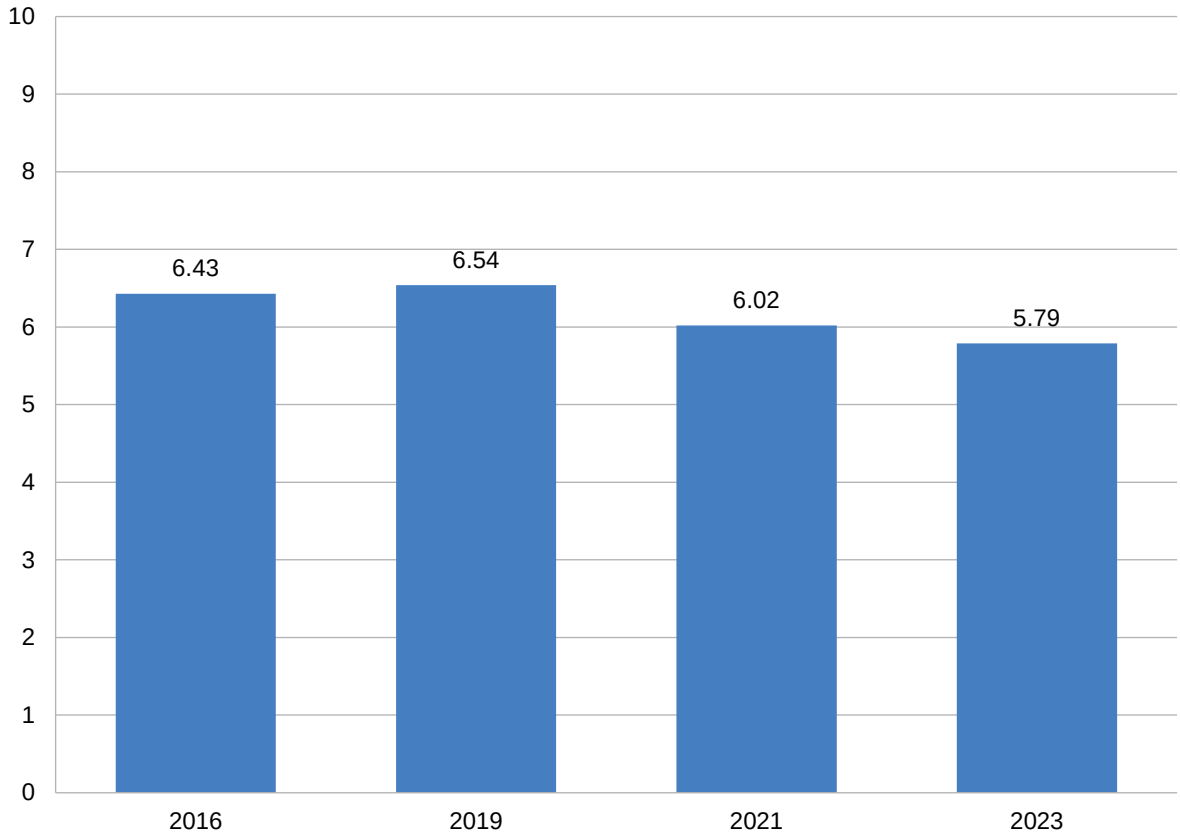
Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

Stakeholder feedback

3.6 AITSL conducts a stakeholder survey every two years. The results of the survey are used as the basis for performance reporting in the annual report (paragraphs 4.17 and 4.22), published via the AITSL website, provided to the AITSL Board, and circulated internally to AITSL staff.

3.7 The most recent report to the AITSL Board, covering longitudinal analysis of all stakeholder surveys up to 2023, states that stakeholders have 'somewhat positive perceptions' of the company, with perceptions of how effectively it consults and communicates with the profession trending down in recent years (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership stakeholder survey results, 'consults and communicates effectively with the profession'[a] ratings, 2016 to 2023[b]



Note a: The stakeholder survey asks respondents to rate their agreement with questions about their overall perceptions of AITSL, on a scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree). The ratings provided are the aggregate response to whether the company 'consults and communicates effectively with the profession'.

Note b: Results are collected and reported by calendar year. Survey sampling periods were 30 March to 15 May (4959 responses) in 2016, 27 March to 12 June (5561 responses) in 2019, 23 February to 11 April (2592 responses) in 2021, and 14 March to 22 May (5868 responses) in 2023.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

3.8 As part of this performance audit, the ANAO met with 13 stakeholders, and received a further 14 written submissions.[36] Feedback was generally positive, with most seeing the company's stakeholder engagement as a strength.

Standing stakeholder forums

3.9 To facilitate ongoing consultation with external stakeholders, AITSL convenes four standing stakeholder forums, and participates in the Executive Officers Network, which is convened by the teacher regulatory authorities (see Table 3.2). Each forum is substantially concerned with work on the development, revision, and implementation of national standards and frameworks.

3.10 Engagement through these standing stakeholder forums provides AITSL with information about jurisdictional differences and potential barriers to implementation. For example, the National Professional Learning Network and Certifying Authorities Network provide an opportunity for AITSL to obtain information about work being progressed in states and territories that is relevant to professional learning and the *Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers* (HALT Framework).

Table 3.2: Standing stakeholder forums

Group	Membership	Purpose
Certifying Authorities Network	AITSL and representatives from jurisdictional Certifying Authorities, which are responsible for certifying highly accomplished and lead teachers.	To share practice, provide advice, make decisions and offer support amongst jurisdictions regarding national Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher certification.
Teacher Quality and Regulation Forum	AITSL and the jurisdictional teacher regulatory authorities.[a]	To support collaboration between AITSL and the teacher regulatory authorities to: promote professional standards and suitability to teach; and discuss and make decisions on areas of mutual work.
Professional Growth Network	AITSL and representatives from government, Catholic and independent school sector organisations from each state and territory, with responsibilities, influence, and expertise in the areas of professional learning and/or performance and development.	Share the latest evidence-based research and thinking, showcasing current approaches and practices across Australian education jurisdictions, and partner to support implementation of national standards and frameworks.

36 As indicated in paragraph 1.21, 56 key stakeholders were contacted in September 2023, and invited to meet with the audit team and provide a submission to the audit. These included: Australian Government education portfolio entities such as the Department of Education, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, and Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority; state and territory education authorities; Catholic and independent school authorities; teacher regulatory authorities; representatives of initial teacher education providers; principals' associations; and unions. Meetings and submissions covered a range of topics, based on stakeholder type and interests. Because stakeholders were presented with broad topics for discussion rather than a series of structured questions, it is not possible to infer how common or important a particular view is based on the number of times it was mentioned.

Group	Membership	Purpose
Executive Officers Network (convened by teacher regulatory authorities)	AITSL and Executive Officers (officers of the teacher regulatory authorities) with responsibility for supporting panels assessing initial teacher education programs.	Support practice sharing and collaborative work between members.
National Professional Learning Network	AITSL and representatives from state and territory leadership institutes, either from within or an arm of government departments, or a cross-sectoral body.	Support collaboration between members including the sharing of practice, research and innovation as well as identifying and participating in areas of mutual work.

Note a: The Australian Government Department of Education is a standing observer to Teacher Quality and Regulation Forum (TQRF) meetings. As of January 2024, the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) is also a conditional member of the TQRF.

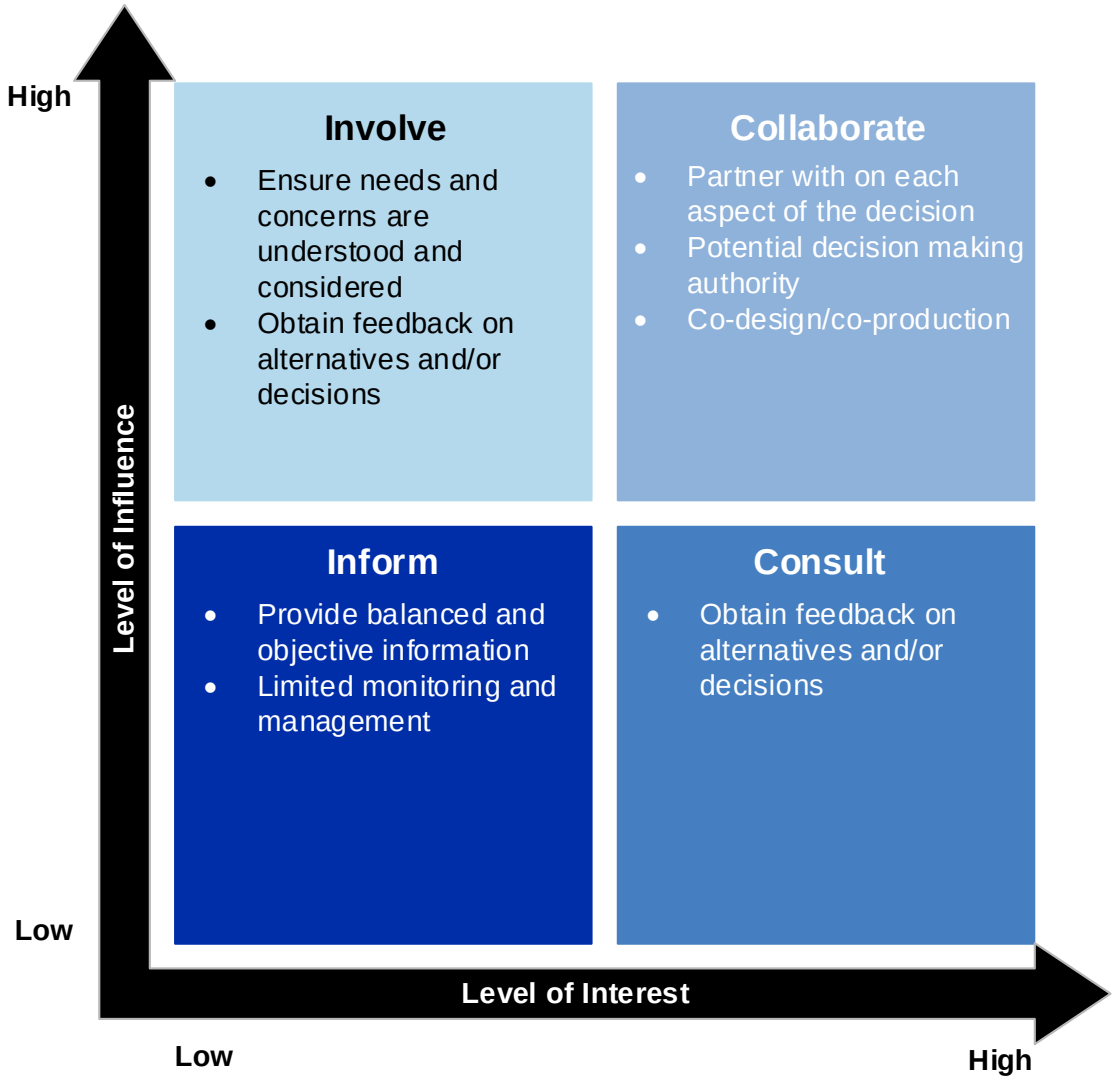
Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

Project-specific stakeholder engagement

Project-specific guidance

3.11 AITSL's *Project Management Framework* (July 2022) provides some guidance on stakeholder engagement for project managers. The Framework does not apply to AITSL's business-as-usual work (that is, work without an identified end date). The Framework requires project teams to identify 'all the people who have an interest in the project, and/or who may be influenced by its outcome', and map their level of influence and interest to determine the frequency and method of communication (guidance from the Framework is at Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership project guidance, stakeholder mapping



Source: ANAO, based on AITSL, *Project Management Framework* (July 2022).

3.12 AITSL provides an implementation plan template to assist teams to meet the requirements of the Framework. It requires teams to identify project stakeholders (internal and external), including level of influence, level of interest, and frequency and method of communication. Under the Framework, project teams are not required to detail how or why engagement is to take place. There is no set procedure or written guidance for how the stakeholder mapping should inform decision-making in relation to engagement methods or frequency of engagement. The *Project Management Framework* also provides a pre-planning template and a closure report template which must be completed for all projects.

Assessment of AITSL project stakeholder engagement

3.13 In the absence of a mandated Australian Government approach, or enterprise strategy, framework, or policy, for AITSL's stakeholder engagement, the ANAO assessed recent company projects against better practice guidance from the *Australian Public Service Framework for*

Engagement and Participation (the Framework). The Framework sets out how Commonwealth entities can 'engage effectively with citizens, community and business'.[37] It includes 10 standards to apply in engaging with stakeholders, as set out in Box 2.

Box 2: Australian Public Service standards for engaging with stakeholders

1. Define the objective. Clearly define the engagement's objectives, which may include understanding the problem and what expertise should be tapped.
2. Choose the right approach. Make sure the way of engaging matches the problem at hand.
3. Manage expectations. Be honest about what is on the table. That is, what is yet to be decided and what has already been decided.
4. Choose the right people for the job. Ensure participants with suitable expertise, skills and knowledge are being engaged for the problem.
5. Be transparent. Explain the objectives and process to participants at the outset.
6. Provide sufficient information. Ensure information that is essential to participants' roles is made available to them.
7. Provide opportunities to be heard. Be inclusive and ensure diverse voices are heard — not just the loudest. For example, use plain English, offer multiple feedback channels, proactively seek appropriate participants and remove barriers to participation.
8. Understand all views. Ensure the views presented are fairly considered at the decision-making stage.
9. Close the loop. Explain how participants' contributions were taken into account in a timely manner.
10. Continuous improvement based on feedback. Ensure that there is a feedback mechanism to capture lessons learnt.

3.14 All AITSL projects that were active in 2022 and 2023 included engagement with stakeholders. The ANAO's assessment of relevant projects (except for two which were too early in implementation to be assessed) is summarised in Table 3.3.

37 AITSL is not required to meet Australian Government guidance relevant to stakeholder engagement. Department of Industry, Science and Resources, *APS Framework for Engagement and Participation* [Internet], available from https://www.industry.gov.au/publications/aps-framework-engagement-and-participation [accessed 11 October 2023].

Table 3.3: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's adherence to Australian Public Service standards for engaging with stakeholders (see Box 2), key projects 2022 and 2023

Project	Planning		Implementation						Closure	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Professional Standards for Middle Leaders	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	N/A [a]	N/A [a]
Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers	◕	◑	●	●	●	●	●	◕	◑	◔
Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Initiative	●	◕	●	●	●	●	●	◕	◕	●
Disability Standards for Education	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◑	●
High Quality Professional Learning	◕	◑	●	●	●	◕	●	◑	◕	◔
Overall	●	◕	●	●	●	●	●	◕	◑ [a]	◕ [a]

Key:

○ No evidence of relevant activity (i.e. planning, implementation and closure).

◔ Significant issues identified, with evidence of major impact on the overall contribution stakeholder engagement the project.

◑ Issues identified, with some impact on the overall contribution stakeholder engagement efforts to the project.

◕ Issues identified, but these have not substantially undermined the overall contribution of stakeholder engagement to the project.

● Activities are consistent with AITSL's policies and procedures and best practice.

Note a: The overall assessment of project closure relates only to the four projects identified as completed. The Professional Standards for Middle Leaders project is still in progress and has not been included.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

3.15 As summarised in Table 3.3, AITSL:

- consistently develops project implementation plans, although two out of five did not identify or explain the objective of (standard 1), and three out of five did not explain the reason for the choice of approach to the engagement (standard 2)[38];
- manages expectations (standard 3), chooses the right people for the job (standard 4), and is transparent with participants about objectives and processes (standard 5);
- provides sufficient information regarding participants' roles to them (standard 6), albeit with one instance of less detailed information in part of the High Quality Professional Learning project;
- chooses methods of engagement that provide opportunities for a range of suitable voices to be heard (standard 7), and for the company to understand all views, although in three instances there was no evidence of views being carried through into the decision-making stage (standard 8);
- consistently produces project closure reports, which are approved by the Operations Board, although the company was unable to provide evidence of consistently informing stakeholders about how their input had been used (standard 9); and
- uses project closure reports to consider lessons learned in respect to stakeholder management (among other areas), albeit with a lack of specific actionable lessons in two cases (standard 10).

3.16 In four of the five projects, AITSL did not fully meet record keeping requirements. AITSL does not consistently document communication with stakeholders, or changes to project plans during implementation. Under its *Information Governance Framework* , the company uses a network drive for record keeping, which is contrary to National Archives of Australia (NAA) recommendations.[39] The NAA recommends the use of an electronic document and records management system, rather than managing information with a network drive record-keeping.[40] The NAA identifies risks associated with using network drives, which would put AITSL staff at risk of not meeting their obligations in respect of Commonwealth records under the *Archives Act 1983*.[41]

3.17 The HALT project discussed in Case study 1 illustrates AITSL's effective engagement with a range of voices, and understanding of a diversity of views.

38 The Professional Standards for Middle Leaders project, the Disability Standards for Education project, and part of the High Quality Professional Learning project set out this information.

39 The National Archives of Australia (NAA) advises to '[i]dentify and assess your agency's specific risks. A risk assessment may result in the decision to stop storing information and records in network drives'. See NAA, *Network drives* [Internet], available from https://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/managing-information-assets/systems-manage-information/network-drives [accessed 8 February 2024].

40 NAA, *Network drives* [Internet], available from https://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/managing-information-assets/systems-manage-information/network-drives [accessed 8 February 2024].

41 The risks identified by the NAA are: anyone who has access can alter or delete records; it is difficult to demonstrate the authenticity, integrity and trustworthiness of uncontrolled records; it can be difficult to identify the record's status or version; metadata is often missing and there are no links between documents and their business context; poor management can result in large volumes of uncontrolled information, which is difficult to manage and takes up network space; and finding relevant records poses a reputational risk to the agency.

Case study 1. Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers consultation approach

HALTs are 'expert teachers and reflective practitioners who lead and support colleagues towards better outcomes for learners.' The HALT reform project (a collaboration between AITSL and the NSW Department of Education) aimed to increase the number of teachers nationally with HALT certification by streamlining requirements under the *Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia* (then the relevant national policy).

AITSL held three rounds of stakeholder consultations between August 2022 and July 2023 comprising in-person and online meetings, focus group discussions, interviews, and written submissions. In addition, AITSL procured written advice from two independent expert advisors and commissioned an assessment of the impact of the proposed changes.

Feedback from stakeholders was considered in the development of the new policy. In July 2023, Education Ministers agreed to the proposed *Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers*.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Opportunity for improvement

3.18 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership could consider identifying and assessing the company's information management risks to inform decisions about its ongoing use of a network drive to store information and records.

Recommendation no. 2

3.19 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership clearly document its approach to stakeholder engagement, including:

(a) its stakeholder engagement strategy; and

(b) guidance for project managers on planning, record keeping, documenting changes to plans during implementation, and providing feedback to stakeholders about how their input has been used.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

3.20 *AITSL notes that stakeholder engagement approaches currently in place have been assessed as largely consistent with best practice, and acknowledges documentation and written guidance can be improved. AITSL will develop a stakeholder engagement strategy and improve its written guidance for project managers, mainly by codifying existing effective practices and applying these consistently across all projects.*

Does AITSL provide appropriate training, guidance, and information to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks?

As of December 2023, AITSL provides training, guidance and information to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks via six training courses and 774 digital tools and resources. These materials are appropriate in that they are well aligned to the national standards and frameworks and provide detailed and practical guidance on implementation. AITSL does not have an overarching strategy to consider how materials contribute to and are relevant to the implementation of the national standards and frameworks.

Approach to developing training, guidance and information

3.21 AITSL predominantly develops training, guidance and information resources via projects at the request of education ministers, and on its own initiative. Funding for these projects covers resource development over a fixed period (see Appendix 3). Funding for projects does not cover costs such as ongoing web hosting and the cost of updating resources to ensure they remain current. The *Grant Agreement — Core Funding* is intended to cover operational costs and overheads (paragraph 1.8).

3.22 To understand the effectiveness of these resources, AITSL relies on:

- ongoing monitoring data from web analytics and AITSL's stakeholder survey; and
- independent review and user feedback on training courses.

3.23 The company has no overarching strategy or framework to make use of this information to assess the effectiveness of, training, guidance and information. In the absence of such a strategy or framework to guide the overall management of its collection, AITSL is unable to identify when and if materials should be retired, and if any gaps in coverage are impacting how well it meets the needs of the sector.

Opportunity for improvement

3.24 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership could consider developing a framework to guide decision-making and priorities about the contents of its collection of training, guidance and information resources.

3.25 As of December 2023, AITSL has 774 digital tools and resources to support the implementation of national standards and frameworks on its website (see Table 3.4). These resources are predominantly open access and available via AITSL's website for teachers and school leaders across early childhood and school settings. In addition, AITSL provides six training courses via a password protected online learning platform.

Table 3.4: Active tools and resources by type (as of December 2023)[a]

Type	Description	Count
Guides and resources	Guides and resources provide a written overview of how to undertake actions in line with national standards and frameworks in a particular area of practice.	339
Illustrations of practice	Collection of five-minute videos that demonstrate the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* in practice, across a range of contexts.	325
Videos	Video resources not included elsewhere, including interviews with teachers and school leaders, showing good teaching and school leadership practices.	44
Research — Spotlight or Collaborate	A short summary of research evidence designed for practitioners, produced by AITSL (Spotlight) or in collaboration with another entity (Collaborate).	29
Tools	Resources that rely on user inputs to provide targeted support and information, such as reflection tools, including the Teacher Self-Assessment Tool.	11
Quality Teaching Modules	Learning modules, including places for learners to input answers to self-reflection questions, and additional resources and downloads. The modules are for teachers and school leaders, to assist them to understand High Quality Professional Learning cycle.	11
In the classroom	A collection of video-based resources that demonstrate the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* in practice, across a range of contexts.	9
Interviews	Three written interviews published on AITSL's website, produced for the 'HALT Q&A Series', exploring the experiences of HALTs.	3
Apps and online platforms	Includes the *My Induction* app and My Teaching Advice web-app, which can be downloaded or accessed by users to provide targeted support, and the HALT Network online, which allows certified users to share information.	3
Total		**774**

Note a: The following elements of AITSL's website have been excluded from this table: resources that aim to direct traffic to tools and resources already covered elsewhere in the table (media releases, communication campaigns, webpages providing collections of resources, blogs, newsletters); resources that provide an evidence base for the national standards and frameworks or resources (data reports, research reports, and policy reports); and pages about how AITSL measures its own impact.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL website.

3.26 As illustrated by the Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Initiative discussed in Case study 2, AITSL engages stakeholders in the development of these resources, including considering a diversity of perspectives.

Case study 2. Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Initiative

The first phase of the Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Initiative aimed to support teachers and school leaders in understanding, developing, and enacting their cultural competency.

To deliver this work, AITSL partnered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education experts and the profession and drew on guidance from the Advisory Group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.

A discussion paper informed by initial consultation and research to gauge the profession's knowledge and understanding was used as a basis for consultation with stakeholders through

online forums and written submissions. A National Dialogue was also held in Canberra on 18–19 May 2021, which included three workshops aimed to 'seek agreement on a roadmap towards the development of resources and tools to support teachers and school leaders to develop their cultural competency.'

AITSL then established a Critical Focus Group (CFG) to collaborate with key stakeholders in developing 'a suite of resources and tools to increase cultural competency of teachers'. CFG membership was comprised of 'practitioners and experts from across the teaching profession including Indigenous education experts, school leadership, teaching and learning, curriculum specialists and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community'.

AITSL published the *Building a Culturally Responsive Australian Teaching Workforce* report in June 2022, and in November a toolkit was launched to support culturally responsive learning and teaching. In June 2023, AITSL was funded by the Australian Government to extend this work into a second phase.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Tools and resources

3.27 The ANAO assessed nine of AITSL's publicly accessible digital tools and resources to determine if they effectively support the implementation of national standards and frameworks (see Appendix 7).

3.28 Overall, eight of the nine tools and resources aligned to one or more of the national standards and frameworks. All nine had clear guidance for users to assist with the implementation of requirements set out in the national standards and frameworks. The emphasis on guidance for teachers and school leaders is appropriate to AITSL's purpose. More consideration of secondary influences on core audiences (such as those responsible for employing teachers, who impose obligations on teachers and school leaders under the Standards) may further improve AITSL's services in this area.

Opportunity for improvement

3.29 Where appropriate and/or requested, AITSL could consider developing resources for secondary influences on core audiences (such as those responsible for employing teachers) to ensure expectations about implementing national standards and frameworks are well understood by all stakeholders.

Training

3.30 The ANAO assessed AITSL's six training courses to determine if they effectively support the implementation of national standards and frameworks (see Appendix 7).[42]

3.31 The six training courses delivered via AITSL's online learning platform provide clear implementation guidance, and are aligned to one or more of the national standards and frameworks. One of the courses, which is focused on the early childhood context, is less clearly aligned to the national standards and frameworks than the other courses. For example, registration

42 'Refresher' courses (revisiting the content of other courses) were the only available training courses not assessed.

requirements differ by state and territory, and are explained only by the provision of a link to the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website. Equally, the early childhood content is limited by the language in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* themselves. For example, those undertaking training for the early childhood education sector are advised '"students" should be thought of as applying to "children" or "learners"' when answering a question about knowing students and how they learn. This reflects the approach taken in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*, where a glossary is provided to clarify that the school-focused language also applies to early childhood education settings.

Opportunity for improvement

3.32 There could be value in AITSL working with the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and education ministers to clarify and document the respective responsibilities of AITSL and ACECQA, including information and guidance for early childhood teachers.

4. Measurement, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

Areas examined

This chapter examines whether the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL, or the company) effectively measures, monitors, evaluates and reports on national standards and frameworks.

Conclusion

AITSL's measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on national standards and frameworks is largely effective. An effective assurance approach for all agreed national standards and frameworks has not been established. AITSL executes the assurance role it has been afforded in initial teacher education (ITE) effectively. AITSL's measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting does not occur across all national standards and frameworks. As a consequence, AITSL is not able to determine whether national standards and frameworks are having the intended impact on the quality of teaching and school leadership in Australia. AITSL's reporting obligations to the Department of Education could be improved.

Areas for improvement

The ANAO made two recommendations aimed at developing arrangements to assure the effectiveness of national standards (see paragraph 4.11) and frameworks and improving AITSL's performance measurement framework (see paragraph 4.23).

The ANAO also suggested that AITSL's reporting obligations to the Department of Education be clarified in any future grant agreements (see paragraph 4.36).

4.1 Effective performance measurement, program evaluation and reporting supports early identification of risks and provides reasonable transparency and accountability regarding the outcomes of government expenditure.[43] This should include:

- how the company's performance, in achieving its purpose, will be measured and assessed[44];
- clear objectives for policies, projects and programs, and measurement of progress towards achieving these objectives[45]; and
- reporting of meaningful information with a clear line of sight between planned and actual performance.[46]

43 Department of Finance (Finance), *Commonwealth Performance Framework* [Internet], available from: https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework [accessed 15 January 2024]; The Treasury, *Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit* [Internet], available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/toolkit/commonwealth-evaluation-toolkit [accessed 29 January 2024].

44 Finance, *Commonwealth Performance Framework* [Internet], available from: https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework [accessed 15 January 2024].

45 The Treasury, *Commonwealth Evaluation Policy* [Internet], available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/about/commonwealth-evaluation-policy [accessed 29 January 2024].

46 Finance, *Commonwealth Performance Framework* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework [accessed 29 January 2024].

Does AITSL have an effective approach to gain assurance about the ongoing currency and effectiveness of national standards and frameworks, and feed back information to decision-makers?

Education ministers have endorsed national quality assurance arrangements, which afford AITSL a role, in respect to ITE program accreditation. AITSL's quality assurance arrangements for ITE are effective, but efforts to build on these have been limited. An effective approach to gain assurance about the ongoing currency and effectiveness of all agreed national standards and frameworks has not been established. There could be benefit to AITSL and education ministers having more information about the implementation of all national standards and frameworks to inform the need for and priority of revisions, especially the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and *Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia*.

Assurance approach

4.2 As of September 2023, only the *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures) and *Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers* (HALT Framework) establish roles for AITSL in national quality assurance arrangements.[47] These arrangements come out of revisions to the Standards and Procedures in 2015, 2018, 2019, and 2023, and introduction of the HALT Framework in 2023, in place of the previous HALT policy.

4.3 Eight national standards and frameworks (as detailed in paragraph 1.11 and Table 1.2) include no assurance provisions. There could be benefit to AITSL and education ministers having more information about the implementation of all national standards and frameworks to inform the need for and priority of revisions. The key deficiency relates to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and *Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia*.

4.4 Between January 2020 and September 2023, AITSL recommended the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* be revised 13 times. For example, in November 2020, AITSL recommended that the content be evaluated, and that AITSL develop an evaluation plan, including proposed timelines, budget and cost-sharing arrangements. These recommendations have not been adopted by education ministers. In 2020, AITSL stated in advice to the Schools Policy Group (a subcommittee of the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee):

> The Teacher Standards are embedded within policies and processes across jurisdictions, and there is a relative lack of demand to change what is considered a high-quality document.
>
> …
>
> Teacher Standards are embedded deeply in policies and processes at the system level across all jurisdictions, particularly in regulatory processes where stakeholders need to map evidence against specific descriptors. These processes include initial teacher education, teacher registration, national certification at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages, professional learning and industrial agreements. Stakeholders that administer these areas are most likely to be impacted by a change to the Teacher Standards.

47 The effectiveness of Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL) quality assurance work under the HALT Framework was not assessed, due to its July 2023 endorsement, which was during the audit. AITSL's work on the formulation of the HALT Framework is considered in Case study 1 of Chapter 3.

Initial teacher education (ITE) program quality assurance

4.5 Initial teacher education (ITE) program accreditation arrangements under the Standards and Procedures were revised in response to the 2014 *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* report from the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG).[48]

4.6 The revised Standards and Procedures provide for AITSL to facilitate a national accreditation process quality framework with three key components. As summarised in Table 4.1, since 2018, AITSL has worked with ITE stakeholders in accordance with its responsibilities under the revised Standards and Procedures to:

- develop and implement a methodology for consistent accreditation of ITE programs;
- introduce requirements to assess graduating teachers to ensure they meet the Graduate Teacher Standards; and
- provide ITE data reports to inform intergovernmental decision-making about the ITE program accreditation process.

4.7 Table 4.1 also highlights ongoing challenges.

48 AITSL, *Learn about ITE accreditation reforms* [Internet], AITSL, 2015, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/deliver-ite-programs/learn-about-ite-accreditation-reform [accessed 3 November 2023].

Table 4.1: The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's role in quality assurance of the Standards and Procedures for Initial Teacher Education

Quality assurance requirement	Relevant AITSL actions
National standard setting and quality assurance activities AITSL is responsible for facilitating national standard setting and quality assurance activities to support consistency and continuous improvement of the accreditation decision-making process.	• AITSL began work on national standard setting and quality assurance in 2018. In 2019 and 2020, a methodology for the consistency of accreditation of ITE programs was developed in collaboration with a Standard Setting Advisory Group (SSAG) and stakeholders, and implemented via revisions to the *Guidelines for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs in Australia* (Accreditation Guidelines), published in December 2020. • The Accreditation Guidelines were clarified and simplified based on four standard-setting workshops using nationally trained accreditation panellists from all jurisdictions, where panellists gathered data on the consistency of the judgements being made against each of the elements requiring verification, as well as those elements requiring professional judgement in the Accreditation Guidelines. • A further proposal by AITSL to establish ongoing quality assurance arrangements, which would have included gathering information about use of the Accreditation Guidelines nationally, was considered by the Teacher Quality and Regulation Forum (TQRF) in March 2021. The proposal was not supported by the TQRF, and the project was subsequently closed. • AITSL currently supports quality assurance through: – the delivery of panel training, which was updated as part of AITSL's work to support consistent accreditation processes; – engaging with key stakeholders on national consistency matters via the TQRF; and – engaging with key stakeholders on national accreditation processes via the Executive Officers Network.
National teaching performance assessment benchmarking AITSL is responsible for establishing and quality assuring a nationally agreed benchmarking framework to confirm the passing standard between different teaching performance assessments (TPAs). Providers are required to participate in this activity, or in a cross-institutional activity that aligns with the framework and is approved and assured through AITSL's expert advisory group (EAG).	• TPAs were introduced as part of the 2015 response to the TEMAG report. TPAs are administered by ITE providers and aim to provide a nationally consistent approach to assessing the capabilities of students before they graduate from their ITE course. • AITSL collaborated with state and territory departments of education and teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs), and Deans of Education on modifications to the *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures) to introduce TPA requirements. • In 2018, AITSL established a six-member EAG to provide advice to TRAs on TPAs in relation to the requirements of Program Standard 1.2.[a] – In 2019, the EAG finalised the Expert Advisory Group Assessment Criteria, which set out the professional judgments required of members, and the evidence members should expect to see when making a judgment on whether TPAs meet the requirements. This was coupled with an assessment template, making clear the considerations required of EAG members.

Quality assurance requirement	Relevant AITSL actions
	– As of September 2023, the EAG had assessed and endorsed 12 TPAs covering 47 ITE providers. • In 2021, AITSL commenced work on identifying key components for cross-institutional moderation — in June 2022, AITSL reported to the Department of Education that it had ceased work on national TPA benchmarking due to 'the limitations of the current authorising environment to implement rigorous national benchmarking of TPAs'. • One state government education department (in a submission to this audit) expressed a desire for more direction from AITSL on TPAs, in the form of support and information provided by AITSL for schools to implement TPAs.
Review of the national accreditation process AITSL, in partnership with the state and territory TRAs, teacher employers, providers and key stakeholders, is responsible for undertaking a range of activities to determine if the national accreditation process is having the desired impact on program quality and the preparation of graduates over time. This includes (but is not limited to) the evaluation of evidence of impact data, and periodic review of the Standards and Procedures informed by international evidence and research.	• AITSL has provided ITE data analysis reports to the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) for 2020 (October 2022), 2021 (December 2022), and 2022 (January 2024). Reports include: – commencements; – selection data (academic and non-academic selection); – impact data (TPA results and final year professional experience units); – completions; – primary specialisations; and – secondary teaching areas. • These reports are based on data from ITE providers, which is collected by TRAs and provided in aggregated form to AITSL, as agreed in memoranda of understanding. • Education ministers have asked AITSL to commence planning for a review of the Standards and Procedures in 2024.

Note a: Program Standard 1.2 requires that program design and assessment processes require pre-service teachers to have successfully completed a final-year teaching performance assessment prior to graduation that is shown to: a. be a reflection of classroom teaching practice including the elements of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting; b. be a valid assessment that clearly assesses the content of the Graduate Teacher Standards; c. have clear, measurable and justifiable achievement criteria that discriminate between meeting and not meeting the Graduate Teacher Standards; d. be a reliable assessment in which there are appropriate processes in place for ensuring consistent scoring between assessors; e. include moderation processes that support consistent decision-making against the achievement criteria.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL, *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia Standards and Procedures* [Internet], 2022, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/national-policy-framework/accreditation-of-initial-teacher-education-programs-in-australia [accessed 30 October 2023] and other AITSL documents.

Information to decision-makers

4.8 Between January 2020 and September 2023, AITSL's ITE data analysis reports to the Education Ministers Meeting (formerly Education Council), the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee, and the Schools Policy Group were provided as agreed (Table 4.1). No other assurance reporting was provided.

4.9 AITSL has capacity to gather information about implementation outside national assurance arrangements, including via expert committees and advisory groups (see paragraphs 2.37 to 2.41 and 2.45) and standing stakeholder forums (see paragraphs 3.9 to 3.10). Record keeping for these standing stakeholder forum meetings is not designed to provide assurance.

4.10 AITSL has not established national assurance arrangements across the standards. As a result, AITSL is unable to provide robust information about the operation of national standards and frameworks to decision-makers to inform the need for and priority of revisions to the national standards and frameworks.

Recommendation no. 3

4.11 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership lead work to advise education ministers of the need for governments to develop an agreed approach and implementation plan to:

(a) regularly review national standards and frameworks;

(b) assure the currency and effectiveness of all currently agreed national standards and frameworks;

(c) provide reports resulting from this work to education ministers for consideration; and

(d) publish reports resulting from this work.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

4.12 *AITSL supports a nationally agreed approach to regularly review and assure the currency of national standards and frameworks, noting that effective implementation of these standards and frameworks relies on jurisdictional teacher regulatory authorities, employers and other key education stakeholders. AITSL will work with the Australian Government to bring forward advice to education ministers through intergovernmental meeting processes on the development of an agreed approach and implementation plan, subject to ministers' agreement to an appropriate authorising environment and resourcing for this work.*

Does AITSL effectively measure, evaluate and report on its work on national standards and frameworks?

AITSL has established arrangements to measure, evaluate and report on its work on national standards and frameworks. Its performance measures are aligned with its purpose but performance information is not presented to allow readers to understand its limitations, or performance over time. The company can demonstrate the value of its work in most areas via evaluation, although reports and responses are of variable quality. The company has adhered to its reporting obligations since 2020–21 in all but one instance.

Performance measurement

4.13 Under the *Commonwealth Performance Framework*, Commonwealth entities and companies must report on how their performance, in achieving their purpose, will be measured and assessed.[49]

4.14 Section 16EA of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) sets out the requirements for performance measures for Commonwealth entities (see Box 3 below). While Commonwealth companies are not obliged to meet these requirements, AITSL does so 'to maintain best practice in performance reporting and public disclosure of impact.'[50]

Box 3: Performance measure requirements for Commonwealth entities

The performance measures for an entity meet the requirements of section 16EA of the PGPA Rule if, in the context of the entity's purposes or key activities, they:

- relate directly to one or more of those purposes or key activities;
- use sources of information and methodologies that are reliable and verifiable;
- provide an unbiased basis for the measurement and assessment of the entity's performance;
- where reasonably practicable, comprise a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures;
- include measures of the entity's outputs, efficiency and effectiveness if those things are appropriate measures of the entity's performance; and
- provide a basis for an assessment of the entity's performance over time.

Source: Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, section 16EA.

Enterprise-wide performance framework

4.15 According to its *Performance Reporting Policy*, AITSL measures its performance according to:

- stakeholder awareness, perception, and engagement with AITSL policies, tools, resources, and programs; and
- effectiveness in attaining its objectives, as set out in the annual work plan and program evaluation frameworks referenced in the AITSL measurement strategy.

4.16 The *Performance Reporting Policy* (February 2021, in the process of being updated at the time of this audit) provides that performance measures are to be reviewed annually and approved by AITSL's Risk, Audit and Finance Committee. The performance measures are approved by the Board.

49 Finance, *Commonwealth Performance Framework* [Internet], available from: https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework [accessed 15 January 2024].

50 Under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, provisions for Commonwealth entities do not automatically apply to Commonwealth companies. Chapters 3 of the PGPA Act and the PGPA Rule set out requirement for Commonwealth companies. While section 27A in Chapter 3 of the PGPA Rule (made under section 95 of the PGPA Act) requires that Commonwealth companies meet the requirements of section 16E (which requires Commonwealth entities to publish a corporate plan), it exempts companies from the performance reporting requirements under section 16E table item 5, and section 16AE.

Completeness of performance information

4.17 AITSL's 2023–27 corporate plan includes five performance measures, four of which are directly relevant to its work on national standards and frameworks (the fifth being related to the company's internal culture).[51] Table 4.2 summarises analysis of these measures. Table 4.4 includes AITSL's annual public performance reporting against these measures.

4.18 As outlined in Table 4.2, AITSL relies on three sources of information to report against its performance measures:

- biennial stakeholder survey (for three performance measures (number 1, 2 and 4));
- website analytics (for one performance measure (number 4)); and
- monitoring delivery of work outputs (for one performance measure (number 3)).

4.19 The ANAO identified the following key issues with AITSL's performance information:

- the company does not set targets for each year of the four year corporate plan performance reporting period;
- information from the stakeholder survey reported in the performance statements should provide readers with an understanding of the survey methodology (including any limitations on the survey methodology);
- information about delivery of work outputs against the annual work plan could be improved by clarifying that the annual work plan can be amended during the year (paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11); and
- counts of work outputs and website access statistics could be combined with qualitative information, such as project records, to provide more complete coverage of measures of stakeholder engagement, and the quality and evidence-base of resources.

Table 4.2: *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Corporate Plan 2023–2027* performance measures and targets

Performance measure	Target	Sources of performance information	Adherence to PGPA Rule
1. Awareness, use and perception of national standards by teachers and leaders throughout Australia, as measured through a biennial stakeholder survey.	Education professionals within all systems and sectors maintain high levels of awareness (80%+), use (80%+) and perceived benefit (7/10+) of national standards.	Biennial stakeholder survey.	Survey methodology (based on invitations through AITSL's existing networks) limits AITSL's ability to measure 'teachers and leaders throughout Australia' as a cohort.
2. Consultation with key partners in the development of resources, and adoption of national frameworks by	Key partners from all jurisdictions participate in the development of resources, and education professionals maintain high levels of	Biennial stakeholder survey.	Source of information could be improved by drawing on information drawn from stakeholder engagement records to provide specific information about whether (or

51 AITSL, *AITSL Corporate Plan 2023–2027*, p. 4, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/corporate/aitsl-2023-2027-corporate-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=3e3be3c_2 [accessed 18 March 2024].

Performance measure	Target	Sources of performance information	Adherence to PGPA Rule
education professionals, as well as perceived usefulness of tools, as measured through a biennial stakeholder survey.	awareness of nationally informed frameworks (70%) and high perceptions of the usefulness (7/10+) of tools.		not) partners from all jurisdictions participated in the development of resources. The survey does not specifically measure the rate of key partners' participation in the development of resources.
3. AITSL delivers high quality, practical and evidence-based tools and resources, as measured through monitoring program of work outputs.	Successful delivery of all tools and resources in accordance with AITSL's annual workplan (100%).	Monitoring delivery of work outputs.	Monitoring delivery of outputs (using a count of resources delivered in accordance with the work plan) does not provide a basis for measuring quality, practicality or evidence-base of tools and resources. Information about how AITSL develops quality, evidence based resources could be provided based on AITSL's project records.
4. Perception of AITSL's role in supporting and recognising the profession, as measured through a biennial stakeholder survey and website analytics.	Education professionals across Australia have high levels of familiarity (80%+), positive attitudes towards, and engagement with AITSL.	Biennial stakeholder survey and website analytics.	This is a proxy measure for AITSL's object of 'supporting and advancing the quality of teaching and leadership in Australian schools and other educational settings'. The source of information is limited by lack of a national measure of teaching quality.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL, *AITSL Corporate Plan 2023–2027*, p. 4, available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/corporate/aitsl-2023-2027-corporate-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=3e3be3c_2 [accessed 18 March 2024].

Relevant and useful performance information

4.20 Meaningful performance information allows Parliament and other users and readers to understand what has been achieved, how well it has been achieved, and factors that have impacted on this achievement.[52] Where entities fail to report on significant aspects of their business, it is difficult for the reader to assess whether the entity is doing a good job and delivering value for money.[53]

4.21 AITSL's performance measures are generally well aligned with its purpose, but are process, perception, and output focused, rather than measuring the company's impact. AITSL uses a proxy measure (the perception of its role in supporting and recognising the profession) in relation to its

52 Auditor-General Report No. 16 2023–24, *Audits of the Annual Performance Statements of Australian Government Entities — 2022–23*, p. 16, available from https://www.anao.gov.au/work/performance-statements-audit/audits-the-annual-performance-statements-australian-government-entities-2022-23 [accessed 15 February 2024].

53 ibid, p. 77.

performance against 'supporting and advancing the quality of teaching and leadership in Australian schools and other educational settings'.

4.22 AITSL advised the ANAO on 6 September 2023 that its measurement approach is based on the premise that it is not possible to precisely measure the impact of national standards and frameworks on teaching quality. There are a range of factors shaping teaching quality, and Australia does not have a nationally consistent approach to measuring teaching quality. In June 2022, AITSL recommended to the Productivity Commission's *Review of the National School Reform Agreement* that measures of teaching quality be incorporated into future performance reporting under the *National School Reform Agreement***.** The next *National School Reform Agreement* is due to commence in January 2025.[54]

Recommendation no. 4

4.23 The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership review the company's performance measures with particular attention to diversifying sources of performance information, and ensuring the outcomes of the company's work are captured.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership response: *Agreed.*

4.24 *As noted by the ANAO, the company's performance measures are reviewed annually. AITSL is currently in the process of updating its performance measures. This review intends to ensure AITSL's performance measures better address the company's intended impact and the outcomes of its work, as well as diversifying sources of performance information. Following approval by the AITSL Board of Directors, updated performance measures will be incorporated into the Corporate Plan and reported through the Annual Report.*

Evaluation

4.25 The *Commonwealth Evaluation Policy*, introduced in December 2021, outlines that all Commonwealth entities and companies should set clear objectives for policies, projects and programs, and measure progress towards achieving these objectives.[55] Evaluation activities help entities and their stakeholders to understand and improve the performance of government initiatives, and ensure intended outcomes are being achieved.[56]

4.26 AITSL's Constitution does not impose any specific evaluation obligations on the company. Under AITSL's *Impact Measurement Strategy 2019*:

> AITSL's current approach to monitoring and evaluation is based on program-level (i.e. individual streams of work) research and evaluation frameworks linked to an overarching theory of change of AITSL's overall impact. The focus is on impacting teachers and school leaders, with the ultimate

54 Department of Education, *About the Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System* [Internet], available from https://www.education.gov.au/review-inform-better-and-fairer-education-system [accessed 9 April 2024].

55 The Treasury, *Commonwealth Evaluation Policy* [Internet], available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/about/commonwealth-evaluation-policy [accessed 29 January 2024].

56 The Treasury, *Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit* [Internet], available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/toolkit/commonwealth-evaluation-toolkit [accessed 18 March 2024].

goal of contributing to all young Australians becoming successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

4.27 Table 4.3 provides a summary of AITSL's evaluation activities from 2020–21 to 2022–23.[57]

Table 4.3: Evaluation by area of activity, 2020–21 to 2022–23

Area of activity[a]	Evaluation frameworks established	Effective evaluation reporting	Response to evaluation reports completed since 2020[c]
Initial teacher education	◆	◆	▲
Teacher Induction	◆	◆	◆
Australian Professional Standards for Teachers[b]	◆	▲	■
Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers	▲	▲	◆
School Leadership	◆	◆	◆

Key:

■ No relevant activity in the relevant time period.

▲ Activity identified in the relevant time period; quality, completeness, or timeliness concerns.

◆ Activity identified in the relevant time period; high quality, complete and timely.

Note a: Areas of activity include more than one relevant project.

Note b: Including work related to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders, Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework, and Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia.

Note c: Response to evaluation includes actions agreed by the Board, expert committees, and/or Senior Executive Team. This assessment includes only responses to reports delivered during the period 2020–21 to 2022–23, which does not capture ongoing work as a result of evaluations prior to 2020–21.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

4.28 As shown in Table 4.3, AITSL consistently established evaluation frameworks for projects in each area of activity. These frameworks are each for a limited term. AITSL advised the ANAO on 1 March 2024 that its evaluation frameworks cover the period from when project deliverables are made public to when the short and/or medium-term outcomes are proposed to be achieved (generally three to five years), and then deliverables move to 'ongoing monitoring' status. This was generally evident in the assessment summarised in Table 4.3, with most frameworks current for areas of activity. The Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALT) did not have a current framework in 2023. The framework concluded in 2022, while work in this area was ongoing. Commonwealth entities and companies can benefit from taking a strategic, risk-based approach to

57 In order to assess the usefulness, effectiveness and impact of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* following an initial implementation period, AITSL collaborated with the Centre for Program Evaluation at Melbourne University and the Australian College of Educators to conduct a three-year implementation evaluation, from 2013 to 2015. This evaluation is not in scope of the ANAO performance audit. See AITSL, *Final Report – Evaluation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* [Internet], available from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/final-report-evaluation-of-the-australian-professional-standards-for-teachers [accessed 18 March 2024].

considering what, when and how to evaluate.[58] Program outcomes and impacts (emphasised in the excerpt from AITSL's *Impact Measurement Strategy 2019* above) are usually best evaluated near or at the end of a program, or after it has matured.[59]

4.29 Evaluation reports effectively supported AITSL's work on national standards and frameworks in three areas of activity:

- in ITE, AITSL's work was part of an evaluation (commissioned by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment), and a national review (commissioned by the Australian Government); and
- evaluation reports were developed which aligned with the relevant evaluation framework, provided actionable recommendations, and were based on relevant sources of information and analysis in two further areas:
  - teacher induction; and
  - school leadership.

4.30 Two areas of activity were found to have evaluation reports that were less effective.

- in relation to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*, the sole evaluation report from the relevant period presented findings that were not aligned to the relevant evaluation framework (i.e. presented solely in a 'spotlight' format geared to practitioners); and
- in relation to the HALT work, the evaluation report lacked focus on evaluating the effect of the national policy itself (i.e. the report measured attitudes to HALT certification in broad terms).

4.31 The AITSL Board and expert committees generally consider or note evaluation reports. Of the five areas of activity, there was no response to one report (the *High-Quality Professional Learning for Australian Teachers and School Leaders Spotlight*, which was part of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* activity). School leadership saw relevant actions identified and taken by the project team. For ITE, the reports were noted rather than actions being considered or agreed.

Reporting

4.32 Effective reporting provides meaningful information with a clear line of sight between planned and actual performance.[60] Public reporting by Australian Government entities provides reasonable transparency regarding outcomes from public expenditure. AITSL is subject to ministerial reporting obligations under its Constitution, obligations to report to the Department of

58 The Treasury, *Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit When to evaluate* [Internet], available from https://evaluation.treasury.gov.au/toolkit/when-evaluate [accessed 18 March 2024].

59 ibid.

60 Finance, *Commonwealth Performance Framework* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework [accessed 29 January 2024].

Education under its grant agreements, and annual reporting obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).[61]

4.33 In relation to whether AITSL met its obligations to report to the Parliament, the minister and the department from 2020–21 to 2022–2023, Table 4.4 shows:

- the annual report to the Parliament, and annual work plan (see paragraphs 2.10 to 2.11) and achievements report to the department and minister were consistently provided across the three years; and
- project-specific reporting obligations to the Department of Education were also met, except for one project budget allocation report in 2021–22.

Table 4.4: The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's compliance with reporting obligations

Required reporting	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
To the Education Minister			
Annual work plan	✓	✓	✓
Achievements report	✓	✓	✓
To the Parliament (through the Education Minister)			
Annual report	✓	✓	✓
To the Department of Education			
Annual work plan	✓	✓	✓
Achievements report	✓	✓	✓
Milestone/deliverable reports and written updates	✓	✓	N/A[c]
Project budget allocation report	N/A[a]	✘	N/A[c]
Final project report — including a financial acquittal report	N/A[b]	N/A[b]	✓

Key:

✓ Reporting obligations met; complete and timely.

× Reporting obligations not met.

Note a: The requirement for a project budget allocation report did not apply for the 2020–21 financial year. This was introduced under the *Grant Agreement – Projects*, which was not executed until 7 October 2021.

Note b: AITSL had no completed projects to report on between 2020–21 and 2021–22, that were funded under the Projects Grant Agreement.

Note c: During 2022–23, AITSL had no project milestone or budget allocation reporting obligations. All in progress projects concluded during this period, and reporting obligations were met by delivering final project reports.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL documents.

4.34 Milestone/deliverable reports including all project updates and budget allocation tracking were provided via consolidated quarterly progress reports in 2020–21. From 2021–22, individual

61 Finance, *Annual reports for Commonwealth companies (RMG 137)* [Internet], available from https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/annual-reports-commonwealth-companies-rmg-137 [accessed 29 January 2024].

project reports were provided as specified in the relevant project orders. While both approaches comply with AITSL's reporting obligations under its grant agreements the latter provides less visibility of AITSL's overall work program.

4.35 Information about how projects are tracking against budget allocations has not been provided since June 2021. While the financial acquittal sections in the Final Project Reports identify income and expenditure for the relevant project, as required by *Grant Agreement — Projects*, no further breakdown showing where expenditure is allocated is provided. Transparency of project expenditure and departmental oversight of project expenditure is therefore limited.

Opportunity for improvement

4.36 There could be value in improving the consistency and transparency of the reporting required by the Department of Education under any future grant agreements with AITSL.[a]

Note a: On 7 May 2024, the Department of Education advised the ANAO that it agreed with this opportunity for improvement, and stated: 'The department acknowledges there is scope to require AITSL to provide a more detailed breakdown showing where expenditure will be allocated and tracking this as the project progresses. In future, the department will request that AITSL deliver more consistent and transparent reports and provide guidance as to its expectations.'

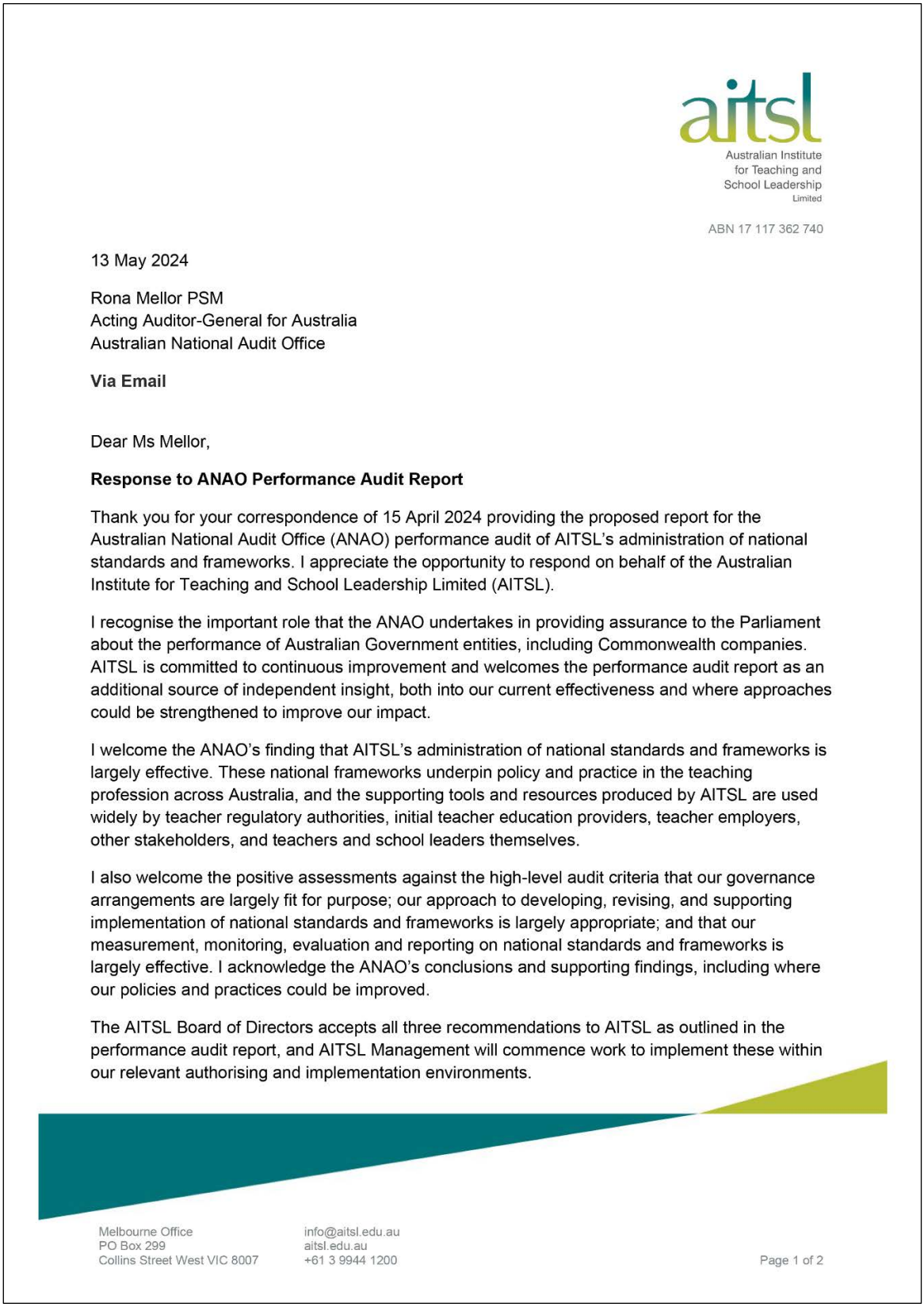
Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General

Canberra ACT
30 May 2024

Appendices

Appendix 1 Entity responses

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership



aitsl
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited

ABN 17 117 362 740

13 May 2024

Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General for Australia
Australian National Audit Office

Via Email

Dear Ms Mellor,

Response to ANAO Performance Audit Report

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 April 2024 providing the proposed report for the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) performance audit of AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks. I appreciate the opportunity to respond on behalf of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (AITSL).

I recognise the important role that the ANAO undertakes in providing assurance to the Parliament about the performance of Australian Government entities, including Commonwealth companies. AITSL is committed to continuous improvement and welcomes the performance audit report as an additional source of independent insight, both into our current effectiveness and where approaches could be strengthened to improve our impact.

I welcome the ANAO's finding that AITSL's administration of national standards and frameworks is largely effective. These national frameworks underpin policy and practice in the teaching profession across Australia, and the supporting tools and resources produced by AITSL are used widely by teacher regulatory authorities, initial teacher education providers, teacher employers, other stakeholders, and teachers and school leaders themselves.

I also welcome the positive assessments against the high-level audit criteria that our governance arrangements are largely fit for purpose; our approach to developing, revising, and supporting implementation of national standards and frameworks is largely appropriate; and that our measurement, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on national standards and frameworks is largely effective. I acknowledge the ANAO's conclusions and supporting findings, including where our policies and practices could be improved.

The AITSL Board of Directors accepts all three recommendations to AITSL as outlined in the performance audit report, and AITSL Management will commence work to implement these within our relevant authorising and implementation environments.

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I note that the stakeholder engagement approaches currently in place at AITSL have been assessed as largely consistent with best practice, and our work in this regard is seen as a strength by stakeholders themselves. However, I also acknowledge that documentation about our approach to stakeholder engagement and related written guidance to staff could be improved. In line with the ANAO's recommendation, AITSL will develop a stakeholder engagement strategy and improve written guidance for project managers, mainly by codifying existing effective practices and applying these consistently across all projects.

AITSL supports a nationally agreed approach to regularly review and assure the currency of national standards and frameworks, noting that effective implementation of these standards and frameworks relies on jurisdictional teacher regulatory authorities, employers, and other key education stakeholders. As noted in the performance audit report, AITSL has recommended that the company be commissioned to review and subsequently revise the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, which underpin a majority of the other national frameworks, on multiple occasions in recent years. AITSL will work with the Australian Government to bring forward advice to education ministers through intergovernmental meeting processes on the development of an agreed approach and implementation plan to regularly review and assure the currency of national standards and frameworks, subject to ministers' agreement to an appropriate authorising environment and resourcing for this work.

As noted in the performance audit report, the company's performance measures are reviewed annually. AITSL is currently in the process of updating its performance measures. This review intends to ensure our performance measures better address the company's intended impact and the outcomes of its work, as well as diversifying its sources of performance information. Following approval of the updated performance measures by the Board, these will be incorporated into our Corporate Plan and reported publicly through our Annual Report.

I also welcome the opportunities for improvement the ANAO has identified in its performance audit report. The AITSL Board of Directors notes these opportunities for improvement and will ask AITSL Management to consider how they might be addressed within our context.

I would like to thank your office and the audit team for their constructive engagement with AITSL Management throughout the conduct of the performance audit, and the professional and collegial manner in which the audit team undertook this important work.

While the performance audit report acknowledges the extensive work AITSL undertakes in relation to ministerially agreed national standards and frameworks, it has also provided a clear pathway to strengthen our practices and accordingly our impact. I look forward to the implementation of these recommendations to enhance our work, so that teachers and leaders have the maximum impact on learning in all Australian schools and early childhood settings.

Yours sincerely,

Michele Bruniges

Dr Michele Bruniges AM
Chair, AITSL Board of Directors

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Department of Education

Australian Government
Department of Education

Our Ref: EC24-000970

Secretary
Tony Cook PSM

Ms Rona Mellor PSM
Acting Auditor-General
Australian National Audit Office
GPO Box 707
CANBERRA ACT 2615

Dear Ms Mellor Rona

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Administration of National Standards and Frameworks

Thank you for providing extracts from the proposed report for the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audit of the *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL) Administration of National Standards and Frameworks.* Acknowledging that the Department of Education is not the primary focus of the audit, I appreciate the opportunity to respond and thank you and the ANAO for the work that has gone into the audit.

I note the audit's recommendation relating to briefings to the Minister for Education on board appointments. In particular, the recommendation that the department should "ensure briefing to their Minister supports the Minister's consideration of the collective expertise of prospective AITSL Board of Directors appointments."

The department has met its formal board appointment obligations under the AITSL Constitution and the most recent version of the *Cabinet Handbook.* While not formally required, the department accepts that a high-level, collective overview of board expertise is good practice and has not always been provided when briefing the Minister. The department has begun including skills matrices of all board members in briefs to the Minister.

I also acknowledge the 'opportunity for improvement' regarding the consistency and transparency of AITSL's reporting to the department under future grant agreements. I agree there is scope to require that AITSL provide a more detailed breakdown of expenditure and the department will communicate this expectation to AITSL.

As requested, I enclose my department's summary response for publication in the final report, together with individual responses to the recommendation and opportunity for improvement put forward by the ANAO.

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Please do not hesitate to contact Ms Julie Birmingham, First Assistant Secretary, on (02) 6240 9677 or at Julie.birmingham@education.gov.au if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely

Tony Cook

7 May 2024

Encl. Departmental summary response
Responses to recommendations

Appendix 2 Improvements observed by the ANAO

1. The existence of independent external audit, and the accompanying potential for scrutiny improves performance. Improvements in administrative and management practices usually occur: in anticipation of ANAO audit activity; during an audit engagement; as interim findings are made; and/or after the audit has been completed and formal findings are communicated.

2. The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) has encouraged the ANAO to consider ways in which the ANAO could capture and describe some of these impacts. The ANAO's Corporate Plan states that the ANAO' s annual performance statements will provide a narrative that will consider, amongst other matters, analysis of key improvements made by entities during a performance audit process based on information included in tabled performance audit reports.

3. Performance audits involve close engagement between the ANAO and the audited entity as well as other stakeholders involved in the program or activity being audited. Throughout the audit engagement, the ANAO outlines to the entity the preliminary audit findings, conclusions and potential audit recommendations. This ensures that final recommendations are appropriately targeted and encourages entities to take early remedial action on any identified matters during the course of an audit. Remedial actions entities may take during the audit include:

- strengthening governance arrangements;
- introducing or revising policies, strategies, guidelines or administrative processes; and
- initiating reviews or investigations.

4. During the course of the audit, the ANAO did not observe changes in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's approach to administering national standards and frameworks.

Appendix 3 National standards and frameworks planned activity, 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024

Funding source	Activity	Summary	Timeframe(s)
AITSL decision to fund under the Australian Government *Grant Agreement — Core Funding*	Optimising impact for teachers and school leaders	Continue to support implementation of the Teacher Standards and Principal Standard to help teachers and school leaders better understand and improve their practice.	None specified.
	Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALT)	Encourage national participation in certification across Australia and recognise and leverage the professional expertise of teachers certified at the HALT career stages.	Most deliverables not time bound. Report biannually on HALT numbers to the AITSL Board, Certifying Authority Network (CAN) and relevant stakeholders. Deliver HALT summit in May 2024.
	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 17 — HALTs	AITSL will provide advice for Education Ministers on achieving the target of 10,000 HALTs or equivalent by 2025, as well as provide advice to ministers on additional strategies to support increased numbers.	All milestones to be completed by December 2023.
	Best practice, monitoring, and evaluation	Promote best practice in relation to initial teacher education, teaching, and school leadership to education stakeholders and ensure that AITSL's work is supported by high quality monitoring and evaluation.	None specified.
	Initial teacher education (ITE) (continuation of work funded by the Australian Government under the *Grant Agreement — Projects* in the AITSL Work Plan 2022–23)	Continue to implement agreed national approaches to accreditation of ITE, including AITSL's ongoing role in the accreditation system.	Three timebound deliverables to be completed by 30 September 2023: • conduct online training sessions for panellists and panel chairs to assess either Stage 1 or Stage 2 accreditation applications; • facilitate interstate membership on accreditation panels; and • provide ongoing support to stakeholders including maintenance and publication of a national list of accredited programs. Three deliverables not timebound, including continuing to facilitate the Expert Advisory Group to

Funding source	Activity	Summary	Timeframe(s)
			provide timely advice to teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs) on the fidelity of teaching performance assessments (TPAs).
Funded by the Australian Government under the *Grant Agreement — Projects*, schedule 5, Project Order 1 of 2022	National Teacher and Leadership Frameworks and the Disability Standards for Education 2005	In March 2022, AITSL was commissioned by the then Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment to implement three recommendations from its Review of Disability Standards for Education (DSE): Mapping of teaching and school leadership frameworks (Final Report): • Recommendation 1: Increase clarity around obligations of the DSE in the Teacher Standards specifically around reasonable adjustments and consultations; • Recommendation 5: Further support whole-of-school leadership with respect to inclusive education; and • Recommendation 6: Improve availability of professional learning resources to help educators meet their obligations under the DSE.	Completion by 15 September 2023.
Funded by the Australian Government under the *Grant Agreement — Projects*, schedule 5, Project Order 2 of 2023 Due to administrative error, there is no Project Order 1 of 2023, and two Project Orders 2 of 2023. The Project Order 2 not detailed in this	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (Presented as three separate activities in the Work Plan but funded under a single Project Order.)	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 5 — Provisional and conditional registration National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 14 — Teacher and school leader induction National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 15 — Accreditation against the Principal Standard	Completion by 31 December 2023.

Funding source	Activity	Summary	Timeframe(s)
table relates to the Australian Teacher Workforce Data collection, which is out of scope of the audit.			
Funded by the Australian Government under the *Grant Agreement — Projects*, schedule 5, Project Order 3 of 2023	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural responsiveness	Build on the recently developed suite of professional learning resources to improve their usability and impact on cultural responsiveness practices.	Undertake refinements to the intercultural development toolkit, including development of data collection capability within the self-reflection tool by December 2023. Two other activities not time bound.
Funded by the Australian Government under the *Grant Agreement — Projects*, schedule 5, Project Order 4 of 2023	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan (Presented as three separate activities in the Work Plan but funded under a single Project Order.)	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 8 — Teacher Education Expert Panel Action 11 — Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE)	
Other activities funded outside of the agreements (Education Ministers Meeting funding)	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 17 — Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALTs)	AITSL will commence a two-year body of work to support national moderation and quality assurance, which is required for consistency of judgement across certifying authorities to ensure portability of certification and in line with element 8 of the *Framework for the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers*.	Establish an expert moderation advisory group by December 2023. Two other deliverables, not time bound.
Other activities funded outside of the agreements (Education Ministers Meeting funding)	National Teacher Workforce Action Plan Action 21 — Effective use of ITE students, teaching assistants and other non-teaching staff	AITSL will develop guidelines to support the optimal deployment of teaching assistants (TAs), with a view to reducing teacher workload and contributing to student progress and achievement.	Develop final guidelines to support optimal deployment of TAs in schools by June 2024. Three other deliverables not time bound.

Funding source	Activity	Summary	Timeframe(s)
Other activities funded outside of the agreements (Commissioned work for QLD Government)	Professional Standards for Middle Leaders	AITSL, in partnership with the Queensland Department of Education, will develop, validate and trial Professional Standards for Middle Leaders (Middle Leader Standards). These standards are intended to be used by the Queensland Department of Education to support the ongoing development of middle leaders and may inform future national work in the area.	Implement a validation process for the draft Middle Leader Standards, and develop an impact assessment on the draft Middle Leader Standards, and trial the draft Middle Leader Standards in Queensland Department of Education schools by November 2023. Based on the validation and trial results, refine and finalise the Middle Leader Standards with the support of an expert panel by April 2024.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Appendix 4 Project oversight arrangements relevant to national standards and frameworks, 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2023

Name	Responsible for	Membership	Meeting frequency	Summary of oversight
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	PSC is not a decision-making body. At the conclusion of joint meetings, the Operations Board will meet to finalise decisions and any escalations to Senior Executive Team. PSC is responsible for: • monitoring; • reporting on progress, risks and issues; • reviewing stage gate papers; • providing advice about progress and changes as projects develop; and • escalating risks and issues.	• Director, Teaching and School Leadership • Director, Initial Teacher Education • Director, Evidence and Impact • Director, Policy • Principal, Marketing and Communications • Principal, Digital • Principal, Initial Teacher Education • Senior Procurement Officer • Senior Legal Advisor	Monthly	Relevant project information provided to the PSC via: • monthly updates for all open projects, including (until March 2023) 'Portfolio on a Page' which reports on all projects against stakeholder status, scope status, cost status, schedule status, risks status and issue status, with red amber green rating for each; and • stage gate papers, which set out proposed projects for initiation and closure.
Operations Board	The escalation point and decision-making body for all project matters.	• Deputy CEO (Chair) • General Manager, nominated by SET • Director Business Services	Monthly	Information provided to the Operations Board is the same as the PSC. The Operations Board is the decision-making body responsible for approving stage gate papers and changes to project ratings (red amber green) and related escalation to the SET.
Senior Executive Team (SET)	The escalation point for all projects with at least one red indicator, and projects with an amber indicator, where appropriate.	• CEO (Chair) • Deputy CEO • General Managers	Weekly	Relevant project information provided to the SET via: • weekly standing agenda items: – new and significant project updates; and

Name	Responsible for	Membership	Meeting frequency	Summary of oversight
				– project-specific agenda items. • a monthly standing agenda item: – Operations Board outcomes and escalations. Between 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2023, information was provided about projects on the following topics: • Queensland System Middle Leadership Project; • New South Wales Government Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers; • Potential collaborations with state and territory governments in relation to wellbeing initiatives and a trial of alternative arrangements to the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Students (LANTITE). • Early Childhood Standards; • Streamlining Certification; • Pre-service teacher pathways; • Induction; • National Teacher Workforce Action Plan; • National Framework for Mentoring Preservice Teachers; • Teaching Effectiveness; • Supervising Preservice Teachers; • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Responsiveness Initiative; • My Teaching Advice; and • Online Support for Mid-Career Changers. Systemic issues also considered, including the effectiveness of the *Project Management Framework* and *Procurement Framework*.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Appendix 5 Risk oversight arrangements — Risk Management Policy

Responsible	Accountability	Relevant actions July 2022 to September 2023
AITSL Board	• Reviewing and approving the Risk Management Policy and Framework as well as supporting procedures. • Setting the 'tone at the top'. • Articulating appetite for risk. • Overseeing the management of strategic risks.	• The Board received the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee Report for approval at five of its seven meetings between July 2022 to September 2023 (December and August 2022, March 2023, June 2023, and August 2023) RAFC Reports to the Board were also provided at the Board meetings. • During this time, it also considered: – 2023 Strategic Risk Profiles and Treatments (7 March 2023) – Strategic Risk Review 2022 (6 December 2022) – Fraud Risk Review 2022 (6 December 2022) – Risk Management Policy and Framework (6 December 2022).
Risk, Audit and Finance Committee	• Providing oversight and assurance to the Board on the adequacy of the Risk Management Framework, including supporting policies and processes. • Monitoring the effectiveness of AITSL's risk management program and ensuring that significant and material risks are reported to the Board. • Informing the development of AITSL's annual Internal Audit Program.	• Comprehensive overview of the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee shows monitoring of the effectiveness of AITSL's risk management program. This includes discussion of strategic risks each December as part of an annual review of strategic risks, and reviews of treatment plans mid-year. • Provided support to the Board, including the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee Report to the Board for approval (March 2023, December and August 2022).
CEO	• Implementing and maintaining sound risk management across AITSL. • Overseeing the management of AITSL's strategic risks. • Operationalising the 'tone at the top' and the risk culture of AITSL as set by the Board.	Chair of Senior Executive Team (see assessment below). Engagement in implementing risk controls and treatments.

Responsible	Accountability	Relevant actions July 2022 to September 2023
Deputy CEO	• Providing guidance to all areas of AITSL on risk management matters. • Updating the Risk Management Policy, Risk Management Framework, and Risk Management Guide in the light of experience and developments in risk management standards and techniques. • Ensuring the Strategic Risk Register is up to date. • Coordinating the review of the Risk Management Policy, Risk Management Framework, and supporting artefacts. • Preparing reports on risk management and the performance of AITSL's risk management program to the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee.	Member of Senior Executive Team (see assessment below). Chair of Operations Board (see assessment below). Engagement in implementing risk controls and treatments.
Senior Executive Team	• Identifying, assessing, and managing risks relating to the operations of their business unit and for communicating High and Very High risks to the CEO. • Regularly monitoring and reviewing progress with the management of risks within their teams, and considering new and emerging risks on a regular basis. • Ensuring that their staff are aware of the relevant AITSL policies and approaches to risk management and have the necessary skills to manage risks related to their particular areas of work.	SET is engaged in managing project risk, in response to issues and reports escalated from the Operations Board.
Operations Board	• Considering the progress of all projects, including risks. • Escalating emerging risks to the Senior Executive Team where required. • Identifying and assigning responsibility for operational risks affecting multiple projects. • Approving project plans, including risk management.	The Operations Board approves project implementation plans and monitors risk. From March 2023, project risk monitoring moved to Monday.com, an online platform collecting information on risk.
Project Management Office	• Managing project risks in accordance with the Risk Management Framework. • Reporting on project level risks to the Operations Board. • Escalating project-level risks that exceed thresholds agreed with management.	The Project Management Office reports on project level risks to the Operations Board, and escalates project-level risks that exceed thresholds agreed with management.

Responsible	Accountability	Relevant actions July 2022 to September 2023
AITSL staff	• Identify and manage the risks that relate to their particular area of work in a manner consistent with all AITSL policies and guidelines on risk management. • Escalate appropriate risks to the Project Steering Committee.	AITSL staff assess and monitor project-level risk according to the *Project Management Framework*. Evidence of adherence to these requirements is in the papers provided to the Operations Board, which are compliant with risk assessment requirements.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Appendix 6 Advisory group membership and purpose

Group	Membership	Purpose
Advisory Group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education	Chair, plus a maximum of 15 expert members (rather than representatives of an organisation), from the education sector across Australia, who 'reflect the full diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.'	• Provides strategic advice, in a written or oral format, to AITSL on the development of policies, resources, and other AITSL-led initiatives that support the teaching profession to ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential and are supported to embrace their culture and identity. • Supports and guides AITSL in its consultation with key stakeholders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. • Reviews AITSL's Reconciliation Action Plan, and supports and monitors its implementation.
Teaching Performance Assessment Expert Advisory Group	Six members, each with expertise in at least one area of assessment including monitoring the reliability, validity, and fidelity of assessments; standard-setting; and initial teacher education delivery and accreditation.	• Assesses teaching performance assessments (TPA) as a requirement outlined in Program Standard 1.2 of the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia – Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures). • The Advisory Group provides advice to Accrediting Authorities, about the TPA, but does not make accreditation decisions.
Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Advisory Group	A maximum of 20 members, all holding current certification as a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher and working in an education sector role within a school, government, or not-for-profit organisation. Members are appointed as individuals and are not a representative of their education sector, certifying authority or employer.	• Provides advice to AITSL on how to leverage the expertise of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers to increase teaching quality nationally. • Provides advice and direction to shape the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Network, and to inform Network priorities. • Advises on and helps quality assure Network activities including those undertaken as a result of input from Network members. • Provides input into the design and planning of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher Summits. • Supports the promotion of national teacher certification, the Network and related activities. • In undertaking these functions, the Advisory Group will endeavour to represent the interests and opinions of Network members.

Source: ANAO based on AITSL documents.

Appendix 7 Training, guidance, and information selection methodology and detailed assessment

1. Due to differences in the large number of training, guidance and information resources developed by AITSL, the ANAO selected a range of artifacts for testing. To ensure a relevant range of training, guidance and information resources were included, artifacts were selected based on:

- artifact type — all artifacts were initially mapped to understand the different types of resources available (Table 3.4 provides this mapping, updated to December 2023);
- frequency of access by users in the 12 months to September 2023 — the most viewed resource for each type was selected based on page views for the entire AITSL website; and
- those artifacts that are central to AITSL's service delivery — a number of additional resources were selected based on AITSL's recommendation and the audit team's understanding of AITSL's work priorities in the 12 months to September 2023, including all training resources, which are required to be provided by education ministers, under the relevant national standards and frameworks.

Table A.1: Summary and assessment of selected publicly available online tools and resources

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
My Induction App	This app is designed to provide support for beginning teachers, and work alongside the induction new graduates receive in schools.	Beginning teachers.	◆	◆
Improving Teacher Professional Learning	Explains the High Quality Professional Learning cycle, which aims to keep teachers and school leaders on track throughout their professional learning journey.	Teachers and school leaders.	◆	◆

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
Eight Ways of Learning	A teacher explains the value of the '8 [Aboriginal] Ways of Learning' framework, which includes eight interconnected teaching practices.	Teachers at the highly accomplished career stage.	◆	◆
In the Classroom Student Engagement	A secondary school teacher demonstrates how to facilitate a range of classroom activities that give students opportunities to consolidate their understandings of key concepts in a Year 12 Physics lesson.	Teachers at all career stages.	◆	◆
Interview with Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) certified Principal, Luke Donnelly	Part of the HALT Q&A Series — an interview with Luke Donnelly, HALT certified Principal at St Thomas More's Primary School. The interview discusses Mr Donnelly's experience achieving certification and the impact it has on his career, school, colleagues, and students.	Teachers considering pursuing HALT certification.	◆	◆

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
Quality teaching modules: Understand the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) Module 1a What are the Standards and why are they important?	The first of four interactive and self-directed modules that guide users through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, effective approaches to professional development and ways to demonstrate proficiency against the Standards.	All teachers and leaders in early childhood and school settings.	◆	◆
Spotlight Inclusive education: Teaching students with disability	This Spotlight provides an overview of relevant standards and legislation that require an inclusive approach to the education of students with disability and unpacks strategies that teachers and schools/early childhood services can use to provide personalised learning and support, including strategies for building a culture of inclusion.	Teachers and school leaders in early childhood and school settings.	◆	◆
Teacher Self-Assessment Tool	An interactive tool to help teachers review teaching practice and plan professional development.	Teachers	◆	◆

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
Learning Walks	A video of a group of teachers visiting multiple classrooms at their own school with the aim of fostering conversation about teaching and learning in order to develop a shared vision of high-quality teaching that impacts on student learning.	Teachers	▲[a]	◆

Key:

■ Does not meet expectations/test criteria.

▲ Some issues identified.

◆ Meets expectations/test criteria.

Note a: This video is part of a collection about classroom observation. The issue identified is a lack of link to standards or frameworks within this video. The *Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework* is linked in a resource accompanying another video in the collection. ANAO also noted the 'transcript' link directed to a page marked N/A, signalling AITSL is not compliant with accessibility requirements.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL tools and resources.

Table A.2: Training courses — summary and assessment

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Panellists training	This training is to prepare and support panellists who assess ITE programs for stage 1 or stage 2. Assessment is against the requirements of the Program Standards. Assessors provide an Assessor Report to the relevant teacher regulatory authority to inform their accreditation decision. Each accreditation panel is supported by an Executive Officer from the TRA.	ITE accreditation panellists. (Panels are made up of classroom teachers, teacher educators, school leaders, and representatives from another jurisdiction).	◆	◆
Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Panel Chair training	ITE accreditation panel chair training is designed to prepare aspiring panel chairs for the role. It assumes knowledge of ITE Panellists training course.	Aspiring panel chairs.	◆	◆

Name	Description	Intended for	ANAO assessment	
			Aligned to one or more national standards and frameworks	Clear implementation guidance
Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher (HALT) Assessor Training Program (ATP)	The ATP provides the skills and knowledge for assessors to fulfill their role. Assessors are responsible for assessing evidence in applicants' portfolio submissions and providing an assessor report to the relevant certifying authority, to inform the authority's decision on an applicant's HALT certification.	HALT assessors (Often existing HALTS or teachers in a leadership role.)	◆[a]	◆
My Teaching Advice (MTA)	The MTA online platform connects beginning teachers with experienced colleagues for support. Advisers must undertake this professional learning course before they can offer advice on the platform.	Experienced teachers interested in becoming 'advisers' to provide support for beginning teachers via the MTA platform.	◆	◆
Supervising Preservice Teachers (school)	This course aims to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills and confidence to effectively supervise preservice teachers in schools.	Supervising teachers and any other school staff wishing to learn more about how to supervise preservice teachers (for example, coordinators, school leaders).	◆	◆
Supervising Preservice Teachers (early childhood)	This course aims to enhance the knowledge, skills and confidence of early childhood teachers to supervise their preservice peers.	Supervising teachers and any other early learning staff wishing to learn more about how to supervise preservice teachers (for example, coordinators, early learning leaders).	▲[b]	◆

Key:

■ Does not meet expectations/test criteria.

▲ Some issues identified.

◆ Meets expectations/test criteria.

Note a: Contains out of date reference to the *Guide to the Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia* (AITSL 2017), which was replaced by the HALT Framework, 2023, endorsed in July 2023. Between March and October 2023, AITSL advised the Certifying Authorities Network, Australian Education Senior Officials Committee, and Education Ministers Meeting about the need to address this issue, and relevant work is now underway.

Note b: Some of the adaptations to the early childhood context are not very clear, because registration requirements differ by state and territory. In other cases, the adaptation is limited by the language in the Standards themselves.

Source: ANAO analysis of AITSL training materials.