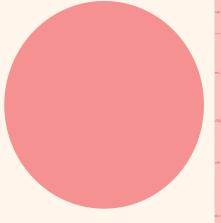# Introduction

Learning to Teach in a New Era is a foundational text with scope for use throughout an entire initial teacher education (ITE) degree program. The book equips preservice teachers with introductory understanding and skills in the areas of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. Aligned with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST; the Standards) (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2018) and the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2016), it contributes to the preparation of those in early childhood, primary and secondary preservice education to meet the Graduate Standards.

Significantly, it is a contemporary book designed to respond to current and emerging trends in Australian educational settings through, for example:

- being classroom ready and futures oriented
- embedding digital pedagogies across the curriculum
- working with local orientations and global perspectives
- differentiating for diverse contexts
- applying principles of learning to teach, framed within professional communities of practice
- working in a culture of evidence
- building a culturally responsive workforce
- engaging in practitioner inquiry.

The book acknowledges the high-stakes accountability and varied contexts within which teachers now work, and prepares preservice teachers to embrace the opportunities and meet the challenges of such contexts. It provides rich insights into the array of areas associated with professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement for which teachers need to be prepared. The book also educates preservice teachers to identify ways in which they can provide evidence of the impact of their teaching on student outcomes, which is a key driver in teacher education in Australia (see, for example, Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group [TEMAG], 2014) and internationally (see, for example, Cochran-Smith & the Boston College Evidence Team, 2009).

Why this book?

Learning to Teach in a New Era has been written in response to the introduction and rollout of the APST (AITSL, 2014), the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2016) and the Alice Springs (*Mparntwe*) Declaration (2019). Teacher educators who use this text will find that it assists them to effectively prepare preservice teachers for the new and emerging contexts in which they will work. Further, the text will help teacher education providers to ensure they are meeting the requirements of ITE program accreditation by focusing on the development of preservice teachers' skills, knowledge and performance against the Standards, and to show evidence of the impact of their programs.

The book recognises the importance of partnerships in teacher education, and pays attention to the role of school-based teacher educators (mentors or supervising teachers) and their mutual involvement in ITE with university-based teacher educators. Mentor teachers and coaches play an important and pivotal role in ITE, and the text positions them as equal partners in the field of learning to teach. Chapters in the book are authored by teacher educators, located across Australia, who were invited to contribute because of their experience and expertise in particular area/s. The authors bring to the text a richness and diversity of offerings that, separately and together, are intended to engage and challenge preservice teachers in their learning.

Features of the text highlight the integration of theory and practice across the multiple sites in which ITE occurs, particularly through professional experience, which is an integral part of the preservice teacher's education. Thus, a core strength of the text is that it addresses the needs of university-based teacher educators, school-based teacher educators and preservice teachers.

Chapter features

The pedagogical features in this text have been designed to support preservice teacher learning and encourage critical thinking and further research. Each chapter includes the following features:

- Learning objectives: to set the aims of the chapter and assist with navigation of content within the chapter. A summary of the learning objectives at the end of each chapter highlights how the chapter has addressed these objectives.
- Introduction: opening paragraphs to set the scene of the content to follow.
- Opening vignette: an illustrative example to set the scene, allowing preservice teachers to engage with the content from the outset.
- Key terms: margin breakout boxes that highlight important terms and concepts.
- Teacher reflections: these moments for pause encourage preservice teachers to think critically about the text.
- Connections: additional information to build on chapter content, allowing preservice teachers to think critically about essential topics. There are seven themes for these boxes:
  1. The classroom
  2. Professional experience

3. Education in Australia
4. Country (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge of Country)
5. Community (specifically Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities)
6. Communication
7. Professional development.
- Scenarios: practical examples (often with embedded links to professional sources) designed to illustrate key concepts and encourage preservice teachers to think like practicing teachers. There are five themes for these boxes:
    1. Taking it to the classroom (classroom strategies and planning)
    2. Technologies in the classroom
    3. What would you do? (thought-provoking examples encouraging preservice teachers to think like a teacher)
    4. Evidently (evidence-based teaching research and examples)
    5. School connections (real-world examples from classroom settings).
- Short-answer questions: placed under each major heading to consolidate learning and understanding of key concepts.
- Critical thinking questions: stimulating discussion and analytical assessment of key concepts and difficult scenarios.
- End-of-chapter pedagogy: summary, review questions, in-depth research topics and further reading.
- Content that is accompanied by imagery to bring visual support to the content.

The text is accompanied by a comprehensive VitalSource eBook, housing interactive resources, including video links; web links; guided responses to all short-answer, critical thinking and review questions posed; multiple-choice questions and additional downloadable resources.

Contents

The chapters in this book have been crafted to introduce preservice teachers to essential topics for their professional development, and to provide them with the foundational knowledge and skills that will be crucial as they progress through their studies.

The book is divided into four parts: an introduction, followed by three sections that align with the Professional Standards – Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement.

Part I: Introduction

Chapter 1: Teaching in the twenty-first century

Teaching is complex work that often appears simple. This chapter provides a positive, futures-oriented approach to how novice teachers can build from their own strengths and abilities, adapt to the challenges of the twenty-first century and embrace the rewards that inhere within the education world. Cognisant of the standardised and high-stakes

accountability contexts within which novice and experienced teachers now work, we introduce some of the broad concepts that are important in preparing those in preservice to work with future generations of students.

Part II: Professional knowledge

Chapter 2: Understanding the education landscape: policy, practice and context

Novice teachers need to be aware that they enter into a profession with a set of guiding documents to inform their knowledge, practice and engagement. Preservice teachers will engage with relevant local, national and global contemporary education policies, as well as analyse past policies, to understand how change occurs. This chapter provides the broader education policy framework, and guides and supports preservice teachers to learn how to access and utilise the associated resources and materials they will require.

Chapter 3: Effective pedagogy for student learning

Teachers need to understand students and how they learn in order to ensure that the students in their care achieve the highest possible outcomes. This chapter explores the nature of learning, effective learning and teaching models, and pedagogical practices of how to engage students in the learning process. Preservice teachers will examine ways in which teaching and learning can be guided by an understanding of young children's and young people's identities, and the sociocultural factors that help shape these identities. This chapter examines how different learning and developmental theories can inform classroom teaching, and preservice teachers will be introduced to a range of related pedagogical frameworks.

Chapter 4: Teaching with digital technologies

This chapter builds the knowledge base for preservice teachers in such ways that they can then utilise and embed information and communication technology (ICT) within their professional practice and engagement. Preservice teachers will be introduced to appropriate devices used in ICT and education, their usage, interfaces, operating systems and connectivity. The chapter considers the benefits and limitations of employing digital technologies as a means to engage learners and to address the challenges of achieving student-centred participation and inclusion. Exemplars of ways teachers use innovative technology will be highlighted.

Part III: Professional practice

Chapter 5: Aligning curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting

This chapter foregrounds curriculum theories and their application to teaching and learning in education, developing understanding of curriculum guidelines, documentation, and assessment and evaluation policies that are pertinent to the education field nationally and globally. Preservice teachers will develop curriculum knowledge to design learning sequences,

lesson plans and effective approaches to classroom management that meet diverse learners' needs, and have the opportunity to explore and use technology to provide feedback to, and support learning among, diverse learners.

Chapter 6: Planning for teaching

Graduate teachers are required to show evidence of being able to plan lesson sequences using knowledge of student learning, content and effective teaching strategies (AITSL, 2014). This chapter demonstrates how pedagogical approaches and curriculum perspectives need to be addressed in planning to meet the learning needs of a diverse range of students. Links to sample lesson and unit plans are included and discussed in relation to their appropriateness for particular learning contexts.

Chapter 7: Student diversity, education and social justice

This chapter explores the powerful impact that teachers can have on students' educational experiences, pathways and outcomes, and how this relates to the concept of social justice. Preservice teachers will gain a sound understanding of theories and practices related to educational social justice, and will be encouraged to challenge their own attitudes, values and beliefs in this area. The chapter explores ways of establishing inclusive and effective learning environments for all students, and ways in which teachers can effectively foster learning in heterogeneous classrooms.

Chapter 8: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

This chapter focuses on Country and Peoples and the impact of the past on the present, as well as practical strategies to identify appropriate inclusions for preservice teachers' practice to demonstrate their capability against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers 1.4 and 2.4. This chapter supports teachers to begin to create innovative learning experiences specific to the teaching location; the story and history of the place; the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; their knowledges, cultures and languages; the intended learning; and the teachers and students in the room.

Chapter 9: Understanding classroom management

This and the following chapter are about classroom management. This chapter lays the groundwork by introducing broad conceptual and theoretical understandings associated with establishing and maintaining positive, supportive, safe and inclusive learning environments that allow all students to participate fully in educational opportunities. Managing the classroom environment has been shown to be an area of concern to many preservice and novitiate teachers. This chapter therefore examines factors of classroom management that enable teachers to establish and foster positive learning environments and address the individual needs of all students in order to maintain a focus on learning.

Chapter 10: Promoting positive teaching and learning environments

This chapter builds on Chapter 9 by focusing on more specific strategies of engaging and motivating students in the classroom. Engagement and motivation are key to students'

achievement of success, and this can only occur in positive learning environments. This chapter introduces preservice teachers to the types of practices that engage and motivate students in learning, and to ways of promoting effective and productive teaching and learning environments. The importance of positive student–teacher relationships is underscored. Preservice teachers will learn effective proactive, supportive and corrective strategies for managing classrooms and student behaviour.

Part IV: Professional engagement

Chapter 11: Communication skills with students, staff and parents/caregivers

Developing effective interpersonal and professional communication skills is paramount in learning to teach. This chapter identifies the different contexts in which preservice and practicing teachers need to become adept in communicating clearly and effectively, as well as the different audiences (students, staff and parents/caregivers) they need to address. Included in the chapter are ways to develop effective teacher listening and communication skills appropriate to early childhood, primary and secondary school settings, as well as strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with staff and parents/caregivers.

Chapter 12: Becoming a teaching professional: scoping the ethical and legal dimensions

Schools are shaped by wider political and social contexts that enable and constrain teachers in the ways they work. Preservice teachers therefore need to be conceptually prepared to recognise schools as institutions and communities of learners in order to be able to negotiate confidently within them, as beginning teachers. This chapter is organised around themes of essential professional knowledge and ethical and legal requirements, which will assist preservice teachers to understand and apply key principles described in codes of ethics and conduct for the teaching profession.

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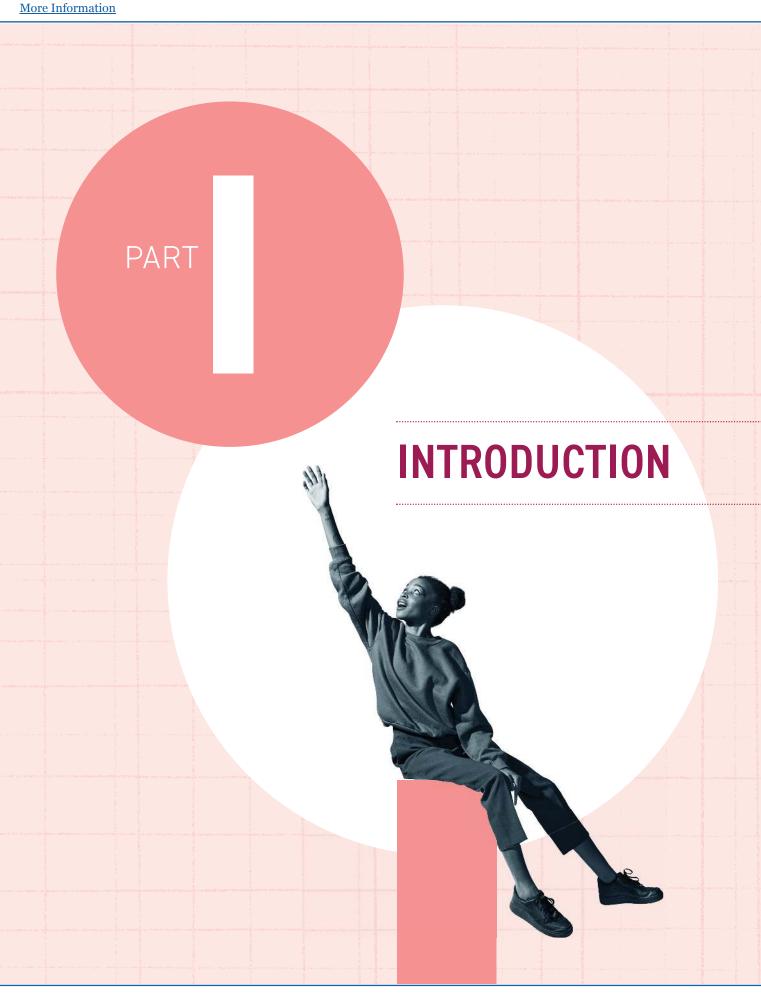
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PART **I**

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER

1

Teaching in the twenty-first century

Jeanne Allen and Simone White

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify key concepts of twenty-first-century teaching and learning
- Display an understanding about teachers' work in Australia
- Provide a beginning understanding of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- Start planning your professional learning trajectory

Introduction

Teaching is complex work that often appears simple, and becoming a teacher in the twenty-first century is arguably more challenging than ever before. In this book, we provide a positive, futures-oriented approach to assist you to build on your knowledge, skills, strengths and abilities so that you are prepared for teaching in the current era and able to embrace the many rewards associated with working in the educational sphere.

Cognisant of the standardised and high-stakes accountability contexts within which teachers now work, the book will assist in preparing you to understand, and to begin to address, the mandatory accreditation requirements of teaching in Australia. From the outset, you will also be encouraged to develop and reflect on your own personal and professional philosophies of teaching.

In this chapter you will be introduced to some of the literature, research and practices that will help you learn about and reflect on teaching and the teaching profession in the twenty-first century. You will also be introduced to relevant information about Australia's school communities and school structures so that you can best understand the complex and diverse nature of the work involved in teaching students across the full learning spectrum from early years to senior secondary.

One of our goals in this opening chapter, and throughout the entire book, is to challenge your thinking about the range of issues involved in learning to teach in the twenty-first century. Therefore, we invite you to engage with and question the concepts and ideas presented in the coming pages, rather than accept them at face value. In many cases, we will prompt you to do so, particularly by examining key issues through social and ideological lenses. Adopting a critical inquiry stance is crucial in learning to become a teacher – it will help you to discover what it is that really matters in teaching in the twenty-first century.

OPENING VIGNETTE

Consider the estimate that 65 per cent of school students starting primary school today may be working in jobs that do not yet exist (World Economic Forum, 2016). The key question here for twenty-first-century teachers is: how can we prepare our students for this kind of future? There are considerable differences between the knowledge and skill sets needed by teachers and students today and those of the twentieth century, many of which are associated with the advent, and inclusion in education, of digital technologies.

Digital technologies have permanently changed teaching and learning practices. Many children already start school with digital literacy skills and identify as digital natives – people born after 1980 who grew up in technology-rich environments and possess technological skills that are markedly different than the technological skills of previous generations (Akçayır, Dündar & Akçayır, 2016). Technology hooks students into learning and can be highly engaging in modern classrooms, but *how* and *what* students learn is very much dependent on the knowledge and skills of the twenty-first-century teacher.

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Teacher using an interactive whiteboard as a teaching tool

QUESTION

How will teachers adapt and develop teaching practices that are sufficient to the needs of all students in their classrooms?

Key concepts of twenty-first-century teaching and learning

Key concepts associated with teaching and learning are embedded within particular contexts – characterised by social and cultural conditions, belief and value systems, political and economic systems, and so forth – of a particular era or age. It is important, therefore, not to consider notions about teaching and learning as 'fixed'. Rather, they change and adapt according to a whole range of contextual influences. Consider, for example, the rapid changes in remote teaching and learning that have occurred through and since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a teacher entering the profession in the initial decades of the twenty-first century, you will find that, throughout your career, you will need to continually reflect upon and change the way you teach in order to remain effective in your teaching practice. In a number of ways, this has been the case for the many generations of teachers who have preceded you. The difference for you, however, is that the twenty-first century is distinguished by an intensification of change, making it all the more important to keep abreast of shifts that are occurring nationally and internationally, both in education and more broadly.