

## 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], 2014) 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
- 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 has emerged as 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) and the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2016). 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 new 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 increasingly 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.
- Scenarios: practical examples (often with embedded links to professional sources) designed to illustrate key concepts and encourage preservice teachers to think like practising teachers. There are five themes for these boxes features:
  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 (present evidence-based teaching research and examples)
  5. School connections (real-world examples from classroom settings).
- 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 and a test bank with multiple-choice, short-answer and critical thinking questions. All questions are accompanied by guided answers to encourage self-assessment.

## 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: 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: 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 novice 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 9: Creating engaging and motivating learning environments

This chapter builds on Chapter 8 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 10: 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 practising 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 11: Becoming a teaching professional: ethical and legal issues

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.

## References

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