



Policy for the Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher

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1 Purpose

This policy describes professional responsibilities associated with the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The *Professional Learning Policy* is related to this policy.

The policy is underpinned by an appreciation of the professional responsibility of each accredited teacher to maintain and develop his or her practice.

It is inherent in all professional practice and in the Standards at Proficient Teacher that all accredited teachers are active in the pursuit of knowledge and improved performance on an on-going basis.

The policy allows individual teachers to articulate and describe their professional commitment and development and the relationship of these to their practice following their successful accreditation.

The policy does not describe processes or mechanisms for a cyclical assessment of teachers against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. The responsibility to maintain professional practice is on-going. Just as teachers are responsible for their continuing and on-going commitment to their practice so are teacher accreditation authorities responsible for ensuring that any concerns relating to teachers' professional practice are addressed in an on-going manner.

This policy summarises and documents these on-going professional activities and issues.

2 The Teacher Accreditation Act 2004

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has legislated responsibility to advise the Minister on the maintenance of accreditation.

The *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Policy* gives effect to the relevant provisions in the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004*. The policy supports the implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as approved by the Minister. It is designed to support teacher accreditation authorities and teachers to maintain accreditation against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the key stage of Proficient Teacher.

In 2014, amendments were made to the Act to enable teachers working in NSW early childhood education and care services to be accredited alongside NSW primary and secondary teachers.

3 Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher

Meeting and maintaining the accreditation requirements of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers involves teachers continually developing their knowledge and practice.

Teachers are required to maintain their accreditation by:

- demonstrating ongoing proficient teaching practice at Proficient Teacher and documenting this practice in a report
- undertaking continuing professional development as described in Section 3.2
- paying the annual accreditation fee.

Accreditation at Proficient Teacher signals that a teacher has reached a key stage of their professional life. Following this accreditation, teachers are expected to demonstrate more professional autonomy in relation to their knowledge, practice and engagement.

3.1 Demonstrating consistent practice against the Standards

Teachers must demonstrate in their teaching practice that they continue to meet the Standards at Proficient Teacher.

They also complete the *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report* three (3) months before the end of each maintenance period, reflecting on their progress in maintaining the Standards (see [Section 5](#)).

3.2 Continuing professional development requirements

The *Professional Learning Policy* outlines the continuing professional development requirements.

To maintain accreditation at Proficient Teacher teachers are required to participate in a minimum of 100 hours of continuing professional development completed over a maintenance period. This continuing professional development comprises:

- a minimum of 50 hours of participation in Quality Teaching Council (QTC) Registered courses or programs over the five-year period
- Teachers are required to complete online evaluations for each QTC Registered course and program that they complete. Once matched to the provider's participation data, the NESA database will record that the teacher has completed the course
- a minimum of 50 hours of participation in Teacher Identified professional development over the five-year period. The detail of this type of professional development is described in the *Teacher Identified Continuing Professional Development Policy*.

Teachers can record their Teacher Identified continuing professional development online. Their participation and completion must be acknowledged online by the teacher accreditation authority or their delegate¹ as contributing to their Teacher Identified continuing professional development.

¹ TAAs should notify NESA with regards to identifying delegates.

Further, over each maintenance period, the continuing professional development must address:

- each Standard Descriptor contained in Standard Six (*Engage in Professional Learning*) and
- each of the remaining Standards in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (need to address a minimum of one Standard Descriptor in each).

Teachers undertaking postgraduate study

Teachers undertaking postgraduate study during the maintenance period will be deemed as meeting the professional development requirements for the maintenance of accreditation at the level of Proficient Teacher if the area of study is directly relevant to the Standards or the area of teaching (or future area of teaching where a teacher is retraining).

3.3 Payment of fees

The *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004* requires that the annual fee is paid as a condition of a teacher's accreditation.

3.4 Length of each maintenance period

Each maintenance period lasts for five (5) years for full-time teachers, and seven (7) years for casual or part-time teachers (see Section 6).

The first maintenance period begins on the day teachers are accredited, and ends five or seven years later, as relevant. Each new maintenance period begins the day after the previous period ends.

4 Policy Objectives

The Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Policy seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- maintain a high quality of teaching in New South Wales
- assist teachers to maintain their accreditation at the level of Proficient Teacher against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- assist teachers to complete the mandatory professional development as outlined in the *Professional Learning Policy*
- support teachers' autonomy in shaping professional experiences that support their maintenance of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- support the knowledge, skills and capabilities of teachers by providing appropriate recognition of their maintenance of accreditation.

5 The Process for the Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher

The process for the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher involves NESA, the teacher and the teacher accreditation authority. The role of each participant is outlined in Sections 5.1 – 5.7.

5.1 Role of NESA

NESA oversees the system of accreditation and recognition of teachers' professional capacity against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. This includes the process for the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher.

NESA advises and assists teacher accreditation authorities to accredit teachers at Proficient Teacher as well as monitoring their ongoing maintenance of accreditation. NESA monitors the application of the accreditation process across services²/schools and teacher accreditation authorities to support the consistent and fair application of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers for each teacher.

At the end of each maintenance period, the teacher's online Professional Development Log will verify the required participation in continuing professional development. The *Professional Development Progress Report* provides an immediate update for each teacher.

Once the teacher accreditation authority submits the maintenance of accreditation decision, NESA's database will record that the teacher has maintained their accreditation at Proficient Teacher.

The *Professional Development Summary Report* provides for each TAA an immediate update on teachers' progress in meeting professional development requirements.

TAA's may negotiate with NESA for the provision of data on teachers' progress in meeting professional development requirements.

NESA will be able to monitor the maintenance of accreditation decisions across teacher accreditation authorities through NESA's database.

5.2 Role of the accredited teacher in maintaining accreditation at Proficient Teacher

Teachers accredited at Proficient Teacher have demonstrated successful teaching practice. These teachers are now required to maintain their accreditation at Proficient Teacher by ongoing self-evaluation against the Standards and by completing the continuing professional development requirements.

The teacher will monitor his or her maintenance against the Standards across each five year period. Progress against the Standards will be recorded through the *Maintenance of*

² 'service' in this policy means an approved centre based education and care service within the meaning of the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW or the Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Act 2011 and includes a service or facility of a class declared by the regulations to be an early childhood education centre for the purposes of this Act.

Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report and their Professional Development Log. This is an ongoing professional process.

The teacher will prepare the *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report* based on his or her knowledge, practice and engagement before the end of the five year period. The report will allow the teacher to evaluate his or her capacity to maintain their accreditation against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Proficient Teacher level.

The report is written against the Standards of the Australian Professional Standards. The report proforma is available on the NESA website at www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au

The teacher also prints out and attaches the *Professional Development Progress Report* showing that they have completed their continuing professional development requirements.

The report is to be signed by the teacher and submitted to the teacher accreditation authority or delegate three (3) months before the end of each maintenance period.

5.3 Role of Teacher Accreditation Authorities

The teacher accreditation authority is authorised to determine if a teacher meets the requirements for maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher.

Where appropriate, the teacher accreditation authority or delegate should discuss the teacher's progress in partnership with the teacher. Recognising that this is a formative process, such discussions should be collegial and should serve to assist teachers to:

- maintain the Standards at Proficient Teacher and
- meet NESA continuing professional development requirements.

The feedback should involve the recognition of progress made and any factors beyond the teacher's control which may have affected that progress.

The teacher accreditation authority or delegate checks that the teacher has met the continuing professional development requirements. The teacher accreditation authority or delegate can do this through logging into the NESA online database, or by sighting the *Professional Development Progress Report* attached by the teacher to their *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report*.

On the basis of the *Maintenance of Accreditation Report* and the completion of the continuing professional development requirements, the teacher accreditation authority makes the decision.

The teacher accreditation authority approves and signs the *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report*.

The report is kept by the teacher accreditation authority and a copy is given to the teacher.

Teacher accreditation authorities cannot validate reports they recognise as an untrue reflection of a teacher's performance against the Standards.

In cases where the TAA decides that accreditation has not been maintained, the TAA should commence procedures to suspend and eventually revoke the accreditation of the teacher at the relevant key stage. TAAs should refer to the separate policy that deals with suspension and revocation of accreditation.

The original Report is sent to NESAs before the teacher's maintenance period ends. A signed copy should be given to the teacher, and a further signed copy be retained by the TAA.

For NSW early childhood education and care services, the TAA is NESAs or a body approved by NESAs.

5.4 Making the maintenance of accreditation decision

A teacher accreditation authority makes the decision when assured that a teacher has maintained accreditation at Proficient Teacher across the seven Standards.

5.5 Notification of a decision

All accreditation decisions including a decision to revoke accreditation at Proficient Teacher are to be provided to NESAs within 21 days from the date when the decision is made by the teacher accreditation authority. A separate Revocation of Accreditation has been developed.

5.6 Review process

Each teacher accreditation authority has a documented internal review process.³ It is the responsibility of the teacher accreditation authority to provide teachers with a copy of its internal review process.

An internal review process can be implemented should there be a dispute in cases where a TAA decides to revoke the accreditation of a teacher on the basis that he or she has not maintained his or her accreditation.

The review procedure should determine whether the teacher has undergone a fair process including the type of feedback provided by the teacher accreditation authority or their delegate.

It should be noted that the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004* specifies that the ultimate avenue of appeal is the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). Following an inability to find resolution through the internal review process, the teacher can seek a final review of the decision by the NCAT.

At the time when the teacher has not been recommended for maintenance of accreditation, he or she must be informed of his or her right to request a review of the decision by the NCAT.

5.7 Maintaining accreditation across Teacher Accreditation Authorities and NSW early childhood education and care services/schools

It is the responsibility of the teacher to write his or her *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report*. Where the teacher moves across teacher accreditation authorities during the five year maintenance period, it is the responsibility of the new teacher accreditation authority to sign the *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report*. Prior to seeking the signature of the new teacher accreditation authority, teachers who move across teacher accreditation authorities need to teach in the new system for a period long enough for them to demonstrate ongoing proficiency across a range of standards. Where practical, the

³If an early childhood education and care service /school is part of a system such as the Department of Education or a Catholic Education Office, then the teacher may need to refer to systemic policies and procedures for advice on Internal Reviews.

new teacher accreditation authority can contact the previous teacher accreditation authority or authorities to discuss aspects of the report provided by the teacher.

6 Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher of Casual, Temporary and Part-Time Teachers

Casual, temporary or part-time teachers accredited at Proficient Teacher are to maintain their accreditation using the same criteria and processes as full-time teachers who are maintaining their accreditation.

The period for a casual, temporary or part-time teacher to meet the maintenance of accreditation requirements is seven years.

The teacher can apply to NESAs for an extension of time in cases of hardship. In such cases the teacher will write to the Director, Teaching Standards to seek the extension of time.

Casual, temporary and part-time teachers will prepare a *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report*.

The final decision will be made by one teacher accreditation authority in consultation with the teacher. Where practical, this decision may reflect discussions with other teacher accreditation authorities or services/schools where the teacher has worked.

7 Accredited teachers employed in non-service/non-school based positions

Teachers who are accredited at Proficient Teacher and are subsequently employed in non-service/mom-school-based positions such as education consultants, advisors, teacher educators or VET teachers⁴ for five years or more after 1 January 2005 can take the following two options:

1. maintain their accreditation under the auspices of a TAA, or
2. take Leave of Absence from accreditation⁵

Teachers who take the first option will generally be those teachers who are employed as education consultants/advisors by teacher accreditation authorities. These teachers will need to complete the continuing professional development requirements and demonstrate their ongoing proficient teaching practice. The teacher accreditation authority who employs them (in their consultancy role) can attest to their continuing proficiency. Individuals can incorporate activities undertaken as an education consultant⁶ or as a teacher educator⁷ to meet the requirements.

4 Only those teachers who are teaching Approved Learning Frameworks/courses endorsed by NESAs.

5 A diagram outlining these options is attached.

6 Only those consultants that have worked in a position with respect to one or more of the following: development and/or implementation of the Approved Learning Framework/NESA curriculum, including assessment and reporting; child/student learning and well-being; teaching and learning in services/schools; teacher professional learning and support.

7 Only those teacher educators who are employed to deliver a NESAs endorsed teacher education qualification.

In cases where the consultant/advisor has not been able to demonstrate ongoing proficiency across some Standards Descriptors, they may need to return to teaching for a period long enough to demonstrate proficiency. Section 7.1 describes this requirement in more detail.

Teachers who take Leave of Absence should apply on the basis that they are employed in another occupation. The Leave of Absence provisions are described in Section 9 of this policy.

The *Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher Report* will need to be completed by the teacher.

7.1 Organising the return to the early childhood education and care service/classroom

The return to the service/classroom experience should be organised in a flexible way, respectful of the accredited teacher's and employer's requirements. A range of employment scenarios can be used to meet this requirement, the teaching does not need to be in a defined block.

Those teachers who are employed by service/school systems to undertake consultancy positions are encouraged to discuss this requirement with their employers. It is anticipated that employers will welcome the opportunity to provide some service-based/classroom experience for their non-teaching staff.

Those teachers who undertake consultancy positions from non-systemic services /schools should attempt to negotiate this requirement separately with a teacher accreditation authority. In cases, where meeting this requirement is proving difficult, teachers should contact NESAs. In particular, this may affect teachers working as teacher educators in universities.

8 Mutual Recognition Arrangements

NESA has mutual recognition arrangements with individual state and territory registration authorities. For agreements, check the NESA website.

9 Leave of Absence from Maintenance of Accreditation at Proficient Teacher

9.1 Grounds for Leave of Absence

Teachers who have been accredited at Proficient Teacher may apply for leave of absence from maintenance of accreditation.

Leave of Absence may be granted where a teacher is unable to teach owing to, for example:

- a. family responsibilities (e.g. maternity leave, child rearing and carers responsibilities)
- b. illness or misadventure
- c. travelling
- d. teaching overseas
- e. teaching interstate

- f. being on study leave
- g. employment in another occupation.

9.2 Applying for Leave of Absence

Accredited teachers may apply in writing to NESA for leave of absence from their accreditation. Documentation relating to the reason for leave may be required.

9.3 Extent of absence

Where a person has not been employed to teach for a period of five years or more, the *Teacher Accreditation Act 2004* requires that the teacher be provisionally or conditionally accredited and that he or she participates in an accreditation process at the level of Proficient Teacher, upon returning to teaching.

Leave of absence will be granted for periods away from teaching of six months to five years.

Lengthier periods of absence will require the teacher accreditation authority to support the teacher in the maintenance of their professional knowledge and practice at Proficient Teacher.

9.4 Implications for accreditation at Proficient Teacher

Teachers are to continue the full maintenance of accreditation requirements upon returning to teaching. The maintenance period re-commences at the point of returning to teaching.

Teachers can complete their maintenance of accreditation requirements in the amount of time that was remaining when the leave of absence commenced. For example, where a teacher has completed three years of their maintenance requirements and has taken leave of absence for one year, they will need to complete the remaining two years of the maintenance period upon returning to teaching.

In circumstances where teachers have undertaken their teaching experience and or continuing professional development outside of NSW, during the period of approved leave of absence, applications may be made to NESA to have the professional development and teaching practice recognised.

Approvals will be based on the capacity of the professional development to address the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

If NESA approves the application, the professional development hours may be recognised across both QTC Registered and Teacher Identified continuing professional development.

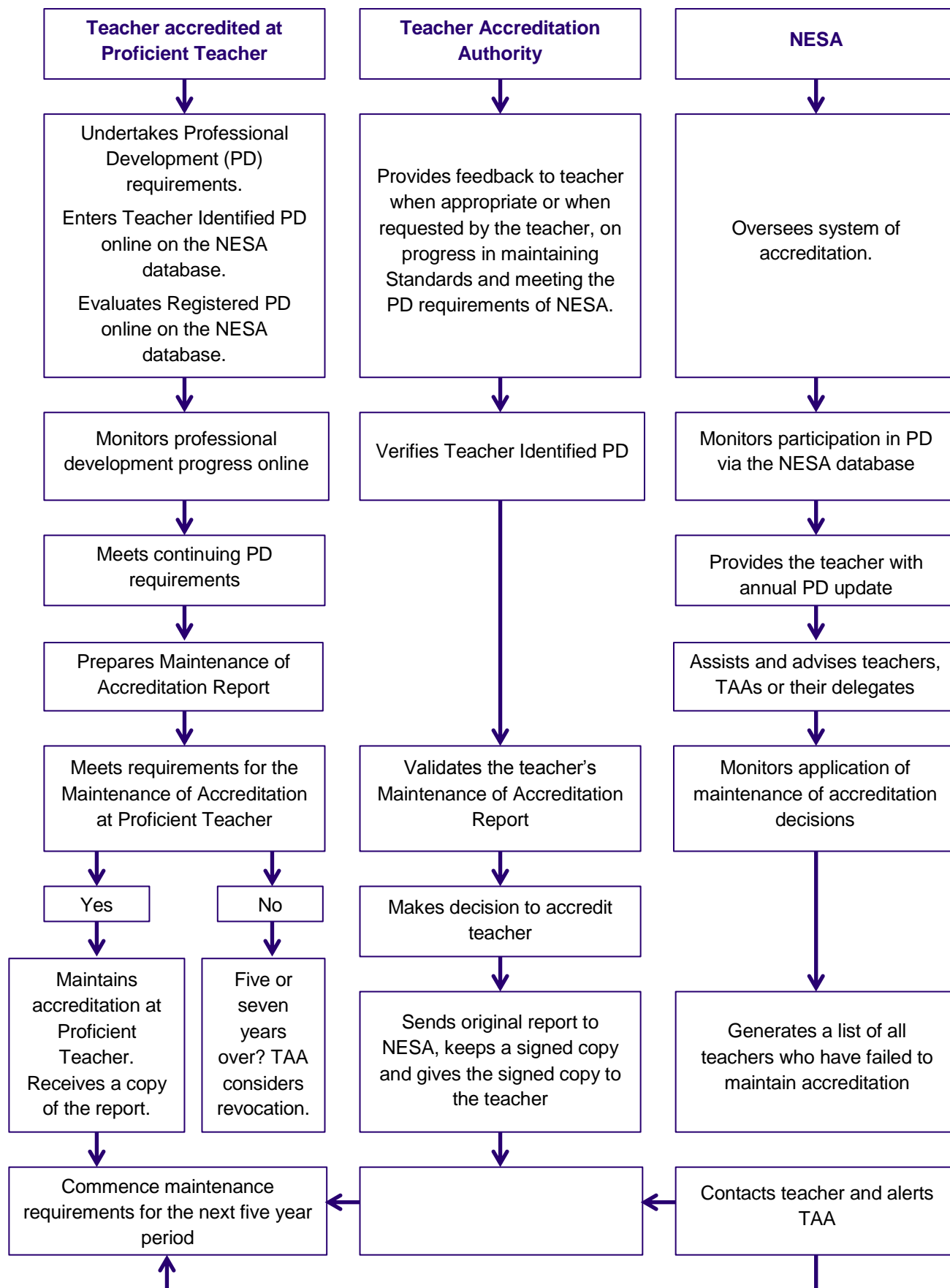
9.5 Declaration

The application for leave of absence is to include a declaration by the teacher that they will not teach in a NSW service /school while on leave of absence.

9.6 Returning to teaching

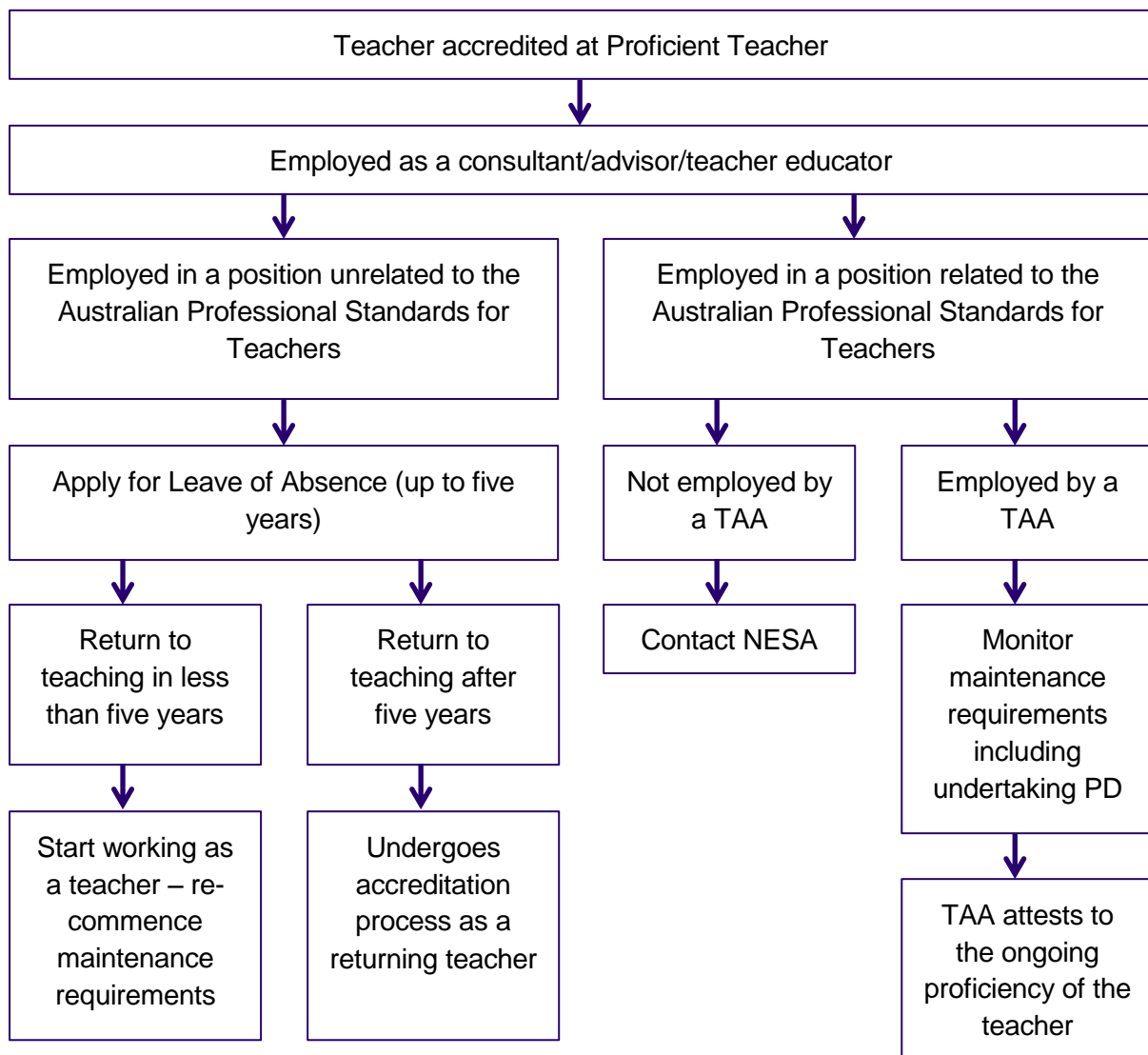
Teachers returning to employment as a teacher prior to, and at the end of the period of leave of absence are to notify NESA in writing to have their accreditation records adjusted.

Figure 1: Process for the maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher



The process for maintenance of accreditation at Proficient Teacher will recommence when each five year period is completed.

Figure 2: Accredited teachers employed in non-service/non-school-based positions



Notes

Distribution history – internal use only

Version	Approved	Author	Purpose/Change
0.1	April 2014	Teaching Standards and Professional Learning	Transition to Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
0.2	September 2016	Teaching Standards	Minor changes to nomenclature to include teachers in early childhood and care services