

# STANDARD 6: ENGAGE IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

(6.2) Engage in professional learning and improve practice.

*Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.*

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

(6.3) Engage with colleagues and improve practice.

*Seek and apply constructive feedback from supervisors and teachers to improve teaching practices.*

## **Australian Professional Standards for Teachers**

During a university summer semester, I developed a presentation on the core principles of professional development and strategies for teachers to enhance their practice, aligning with Standards 6.2 and 6.3 of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. The presentation was completed over five weeks and delivered via Zoom to an educational professional. This task required conducting an extensive literature review of key theories and principles of professional development (Standard 6.2) and synthesizing the findings into an actionable plan to support my professional growth, enhance collaboration with colleagues, and contribute to a positive workplace environment (Standard 6.3).

## **Reflective Practice**

One of the central themes of the presentation was reflective practice, a cornerstone of professional development (Standard 6.2). As highlighted on slide four of the presentation (Artifact 1), reflective practice is a concept rooted in the work of John Dewey (1933), who defined it as “the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends.” Reflective practice enables educators to critically evaluate their teaching methods, identify areas for improvement, and implement effective strategies for student engagement and learning outcomes.

Throughout my studies, I have consistently demonstrated reflective practice. For instance, during my second practicum, I taught a Year 7 film and media lesson and subsequently documented my reflections in a Word document (Artifact 2). This reflective process allowed me to critically analyse the lesson's strengths and weaknesses and plan for improvements in future iterations, aligning with Schön's (1983) model of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.

## **Feedback as a Tool for Growth**

Another vital component of professional development covered in the presentation was the concept of feedback, discussed on slides seven and eight (Artifact 1) (Standards 6.2 and 6.3). Feedback has been extensively researched by John Hattie (2008) in *Visible Learning*, where he emphasizes its significant impact on student achievement. Hattie (2008) asserts the importance of peer feedback, which empowers students to learn collaboratively by giving and receiving constructive critiques.

I have applied Hattie's principles in my teaching practice. For example, during week four of a unit plan completed for a university assignment (Artifact 3), I incorporated peer feedback activities by pairing students to critique each other's work. This strategy not only improved their understanding of the material but also fostered collaboration and critical thinking skills, consistent with Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) framework for formative assessment.

### **Future Directions**

Completing the presentation and formulating a professional development plan deepened my understanding of key theories and practical strategies for professional growth. As I transition from a pre-service teacher to a more proficient practitioner, I aim to cultivate a more professional demeanour and engage proactively in ongoing development opportunities.

To achieve this, I plan to participate in professional development seminars, workshops, and courses, both in-person and online. Additionally, I will seek mentorship and engage in collegial collaboration to refine my practice and contribute positively to the professional learning community. These actions align with the lifelong learning ethos emphasized in the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

### References:

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute.

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. D.C. Heath and Company.

Hattie, J. (2008). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.

Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 199–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070600572090>

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Basic Books.