



## Professional Standards Project (PSP) – Information Sheet

The Professional Standards Project is a nationally coordinated professional learning program for languages teachers, to improve the quality of languages teaching and thereby improve the learning outcomes of students. It is based on the use of the *Professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages and cultures* ('the Standards') as a framework. (These Standards are available at <http://www.afmlta.asn.au/afmlta/Standards%20for%20teachers.pdf> )

This Project is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) under the School Languages Program. Phase one (2007-2008) was one of the suite of Government funded national projects being undertaken to support the implementation of the MCEETYA *National Statement for Languages Education in Australian Schools and the National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008*. Phase 2 (2009-2010) will be developed and implemented by the AFMLTA with the MLTAs of all States and Territories and the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures Education (RCLCE) at the University of South Australia.

The overarching objective of the Project is to improve the quality of languages teaching and thereby improve the learning outcomes of students.

The Project aims to:

- (a) develop a national professional development program and support materials using the Standards as a framework;
- (b) stimulate self-assessment and self-reflection among languages teachers about their professional knowledge and practice;
- (c) promote and recognise quality languages teaching; and
- (d) promote professional collaboration among languages teachers and school leaders across languages and across States and Territories.

The initial professional learning program was developed in 2007 and implemented in 2008. An extension to the funding is enabling a second round of training in Stream A to take place in 2009, and development of a further assessment stream (Stream C) to take place during 2009 to be implemented in 2010. It will continue to incorporate a train-the-trainer model, where selected educators from each State and Territory will be trained to lead the professional learning program in their particular context.

The professional learning program continues in 2009-2010 and comprises Stream A and Stream C:

- i) Stream A will be offered again to a further cohort of language teachers and is a general 'awareness raising' stream, consisting of 2 x 3 hour modules that will familiarise participants with all the dimensions of the Standards; and
- ii) Stream C will build on Stream A and B and consist of a further 4 x 3 hour modules that will focus on assessment. Participants in this Stream will be selected by way of an application process. Trainers will undertake a case study after their training in late 2009 and teachers will undertake a professional investigation as part of the program in 2010.

A group of 400 teachers nationally participated across Streams A and B throughout 2007-2008. A further group of teachers will participate in Stream A in 2009 and in Stream C across 2009-2010. The target group continues to be teachers of all languages (including Indigenous languages) across Australia, in all sectors, across all levels of experience, and including those in mainstream schools, Government Schools of Languages, distance education, and ethnic/community schools. The materials and professional learning program developed will be relevant to all languages and programs.

The participants and trained educators will be a significant ongoing resource to support further work and professional learning by State/Territory MLTAs and individual jurisdictions.

Overall project outcomes include:

- o enhanced quality languages programs through enabling teachers to develop the attributes and capabilities embodied in the standards
- o greater leadership density and expertise at state/territory and national levels and across all sectors and all language groups
- o a national training package and support materials;
- o language specific annotations of the professional standards for teachers of Chinese, French, German, Italian Japanese and Spanish.
- o Improved teaching, learning and assessment practices in languages education.

All the professional learning resources and processes of this project will be made available online for use by individuals and groups in their local contexts.

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