

Second Edition  
FREE eBook

*This eBook is a go-to guide for every TA who wants to ensure they are supporting students in the most effective ways.*

# SUPPORTING LEARNING & TEACHING

DISCOVER PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR EVERY  
TEACHING ASSISTANT TO USE WHEN  
SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO SUCCEED



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# INTRODUCTION

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

To effectively support learning and teaching, Teaching Assistants (TAs) must understand the vital role they play in enhancing student learning. Equally, school leaders need to recognise their responsibility in equipping TAs with the knowledge, skills, and professional growth opportunities necessary to ensure students receive the highest quality support.

READ MORE



# STEP 1 KNOW THE LEARNERS

## KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Understand that each student is an individual
- Get to know backgrounds, interests, and learning needs
- Recognise learning styles, strengths, and challenges
- Learn to recognise wellbeing indicators
- Observe and adapt your support
- Respect differences
- Build each individual up and help them to belong

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Learn and use students' names
- Recognise and affirm strengths for each student
- Ask students about their hobbies and interests



# STEP 2

# SUPPORT TEACHING EFFECTIVELY

## KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Know the content being covered in class
- Understand the learning intentions/goals of the lesson/unit
- Understand the success criteria for learning tasks
- Support students to achieve lesson goals and succeed
- Develop evidence-based support strategies

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Access teacher planning to be prepared for lessons
- Read the class novel ahead of time/get access to textbooks
- Practice scaffolding the support and feedback you give



# STEP 3

# COLLABORATE WITH TEACHERS

## KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Set a time to meet with teachers regularly
- Read and understand planning for students
- Share observations and feedback that inform planning
- Support routines and strategies consistently
- Ask questions if you are not sure
- Value the teacher's leadership while contributing your expertise

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Check-in with the teacher before/after lessons
- Write notes on student progress and share with the teacher
- Offer to adjust resources if you see a need



# STEP 4

# SUPPORT LEARNING EFFECTIVELY

## KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Reinforce the teacher's instructions and clarify tasks
- Scaffold the feedback you give to ensure it is the least amount of support necessary
- Provide prompts, clues, modeling, and correction as needed
- Encourage independence, not dependence
- Adapt support for different learning needs

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Break instructions into 'mini-goals'
- Use visual aids or tangible resources
- Circulate the class and give scaffolded feedback



# STEP 5

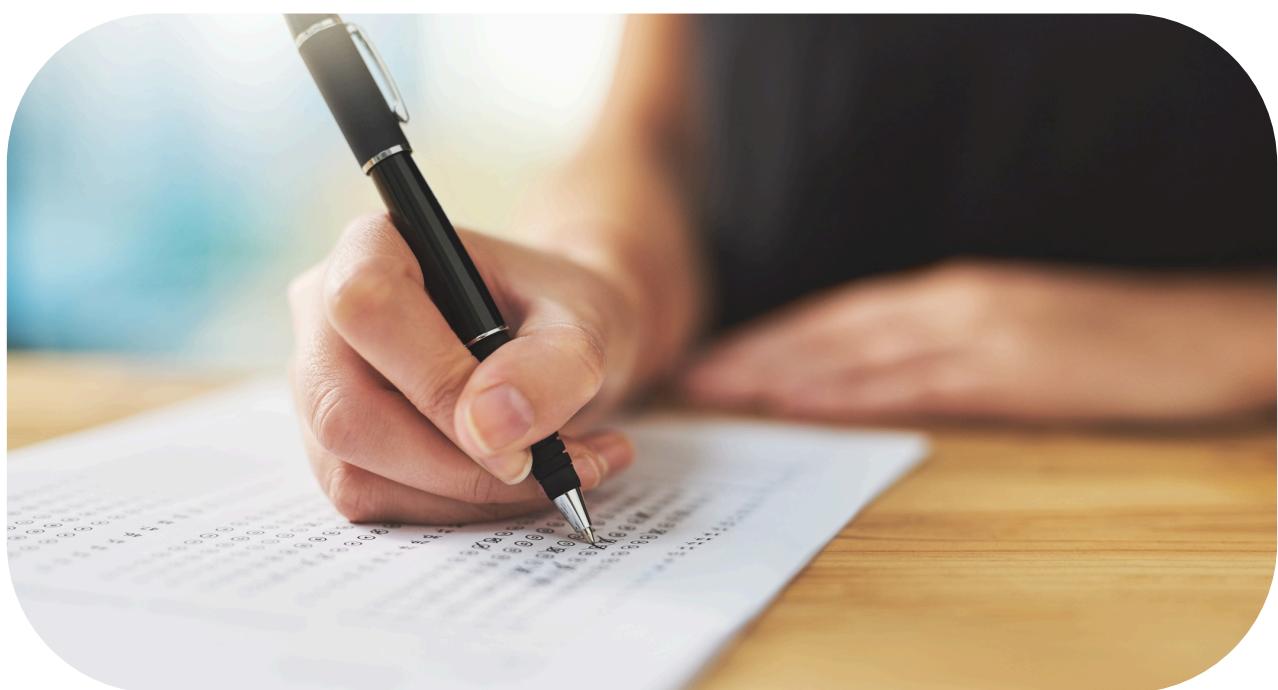
# GIVE MEANINGFUL FEEDBACK

## KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Scaffold the feedback you give to ensure it is the least amount of support necessary
- Provide prompts, clues, modeling, and correction as needed
- Be clear, specific, and constructive
- Affirm problem-solving strategies you see
- Record and communicate student support to the teacher

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Use “I noticed...” or “Next time try...” in feedback
- Always pair a suggestion with a positive affirmation
- Communicate with teachers regularly on student progress



# STEP 6

## GROW PROFESSIONALLY

### KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Reflect regularly on your professional knowledge, professional practice, and how you engage with colleagues
- Set goals to improve - consider using ATAPS to inform your goal setting (Appendix 1)
- Engage in professional learning and professional conversations

### PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Keep a simple reflection journal
- Join one training event or workshop each month (eg. ATA webinars)
- Review your improvement and celebrate!



# STEP 7

## BE A PROFESSIONAL

### KEY KNOWLEDGE TO DEVELOP...

- Model respectful and ethical behaviour
- Complete required mandatory training
- Follow school policies and procedures
- Maintain high standards of reliability and conduct
- Uphold the values of your school

### PRACTICAL STRATEGIES...

- Be punctual and prepared each day
- Speak professionally in all conversations



# AUSTRALIAN TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS (ATAPS)

## Standard 1: Know students and how they learn.

Focus Area 1.1 Understand how students learn.

Focus Area 1.2 Engage with students to establish positive and respectful relationships.

Focus Area 1.3 Demonstrate understanding of age and developmentally appropriate practice.

## Standard 2: Know how to support learning and teaching.

Focus Area 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the curriculum to support learning and teaching.

Focus Area 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based strategies to support learning and teaching.

## Standard 3: Collaborate with teachers to implement effective learning and teaching support.

Focus Area 3.1 Communicate with teachers to support planning for student learning and wellbeing.

Focus Area 3.2 Implement planned support.

Focus Area 3.3 Support learning using planned resources that are authentic, relevant, age, and ability appropriate.

## Standard 4: Contribute to and maintain supportive and safe learning environments.

Focus Area 4.1 Demonstrate inclusive practices that support student participation and engagement.

Focus Area 4.2 Enable students to develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning.

Focus Area 4.3 Encourage and support positive student behaviour.

Focus Area 4.4 Support students' digital literacy capability.

## Standard 5: Contribute to assessment and provide feedback on student learning.

Focus Area 5.1 Use agreed assessment methods to monitor student progress and provide feedback to teachers.

Focus Area 5.2 Demonstrate effective feedback strategies used with students to support learning.

## Standard 6: Engage in professional learning.

Focus Area 6.1 Use the Australian Teaching Assistant Professional Standards to guide your performance and professional growth.

Focus Area 6.2 Plan for professional growth.

Focus Area 6.3 Engage in professional learning to improve professional knowledge, practice, and engagement.

## Standard 7: Engage and communicate professionally with colleagues and the school community.

Focus Area 7.1 Comply with legal and ethical obligations in the school environment.

Focus Area 7.2 Comply with school policies and follow procedures.

Focus Area 7.3 Demonstrate understanding of the teaching assistant role.

Focus Area 7.4 Demonstrate professionalism in interactions with colleagues and the school community.