Goal Setting Guide for Teachers

Approaching and Developing Performance and Development Goals

This Goal Setting Guide recommends an approach for developing Performance and Development (P&D) goals, together with samples of goals developed in line with this approach. The Guide is a tool to support the effective implementation of The Performance and Development Approach for Teachers.

Participation in the Performance and Development Process

Teachers play a pivotal role in the implementation of a school's Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) and the attainment of higher and more equitable improvements in student outcomes. In addition to supporting Teachers to share the leadership of school improvement, participation in the Performance and Development (P&D) process allows Teachers to role model a commitment to professional growth and life-long learning.

The performance and development experience – approaching goal development

The development of goals will be most effective when it is a collaborative experience, orientated by common goal-setting domains, a flexible – yet coordinated – process that reinforces consistent expectations for high quality goals.

Compared to the achievement of pre-determined, 'standardised goals', this Guide articulates a goal setting approach that involves the evolution of ideas into context specific goals that are directly relevant to a school's students and context for improvement.

This approach can be understood in terms of collaboration, coordination, flexibility and quality.

Collaboration: Collaboration is observable when Teachers develop goals with peers guided by school performance data and nuanced by student feedback and observations of practice. Collaboration enables priorities to be agreed collectively and connections between goals to be leveraged to deliver expedited school improvement.

Coordination: The four goal setting domains provide a common platform for coordinating goals and maximising their impact on school improvement. The goal-setting domains for all Teachers are student outcomes, professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. Figure 1 draws attention to the interrelationships between these goals and helps to understand the potential of these goals to provide a cohesive 'blend' of coordinated action.

Figure 1: Interrelated goal setting domains
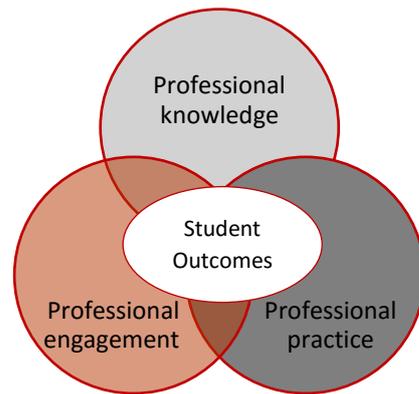
Flexibility: Flexibility is enabled by variation in the nature of the blend of goals, the strategies used to implement them and the measures used to monitor their achievement.

For example, there may be variation in the extent to which P&D goals are a blend of shared and individual goals; whereby:

- A team goal is a P&D goal shared by all Teachers within a team. Examples of teams include but are not limited to teams of: sub-school teachers, subject/faculty teachers, student well-being leaders, Curriculum/KLA leaders, Year level coordinators, specialist Teachers, Numeracy/Literacy/PDP mentors, School improvement leaders, VCAL teachers.
- An individual goal is a goal for an individual Teacher, differentiated according to experience and informed by feedback about individual performance. An individual goal is ideally connected to a Team and/or whole school goal that in turn relate directly to the AIP.
- A whole school goal is a P&D goal shared by all Teachers and possibly all staff in a school. A whole school goal may be a student outcome goal, developed in response to findings and recommendations from a school review and/or a self-evaluation of the previous year's school improvement performance. A whole school goal may also be a professional knowledge/practice/engagement goal developed in response to trends emerging from the previous year's end of cycle feedback and review conversations. A whole school may also be developed to support the achievement of team and individual goals.

There may also be variation in strategies implemented by Teachers to achieve a shared goal, differentiated in:

- Response to diversity in schooling contexts.
- Response to opportunities for professional growth.
- The extent to which strategies focus on developing the practice of other Teachers.

Variation may be further evident in the measures used to understand and review the achievement of goals according to:

- Whether they measure the implementation of strategies, progress being made achieving the goal and the impact of achieving the goal.
- Data literacy skills and the maturity of the school's professional learning culture.

Quality: Regardless of variation, the following criteria guide the development and communication of high quality goals.

- ✓ Strategic – The goal is directly aligned with the school's AIP and reflects the use of feedback from the end of cycle feedback and review conversations.

- ✓ Stretch – The goal involves learning something new; so that professional practice can be challenged.
- ✓ Strategies - Strategies for developing professional practice that enable challenges to be met, obstacles to be overcome and opportunities to be realised.
- ✓ SMART – The goal is action and accountability focused (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound).
- ✓ Standards – The achievement of the goal will increase professional growth and support career progression, which can be measured using the proficiency descriptions in the AITSL professional standards for Teachers.

Reinforcing the practice of professional learning conversations, a narrative approach is recommended to provide a consistent structure for collaboratively developing and communicating goals (see Figure 2). The approach proposed provides the content for PDP templates, as depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 2: A goal setting narrative for developing individual, team and whole school goals, Perillo (2016), Organisational Directions.
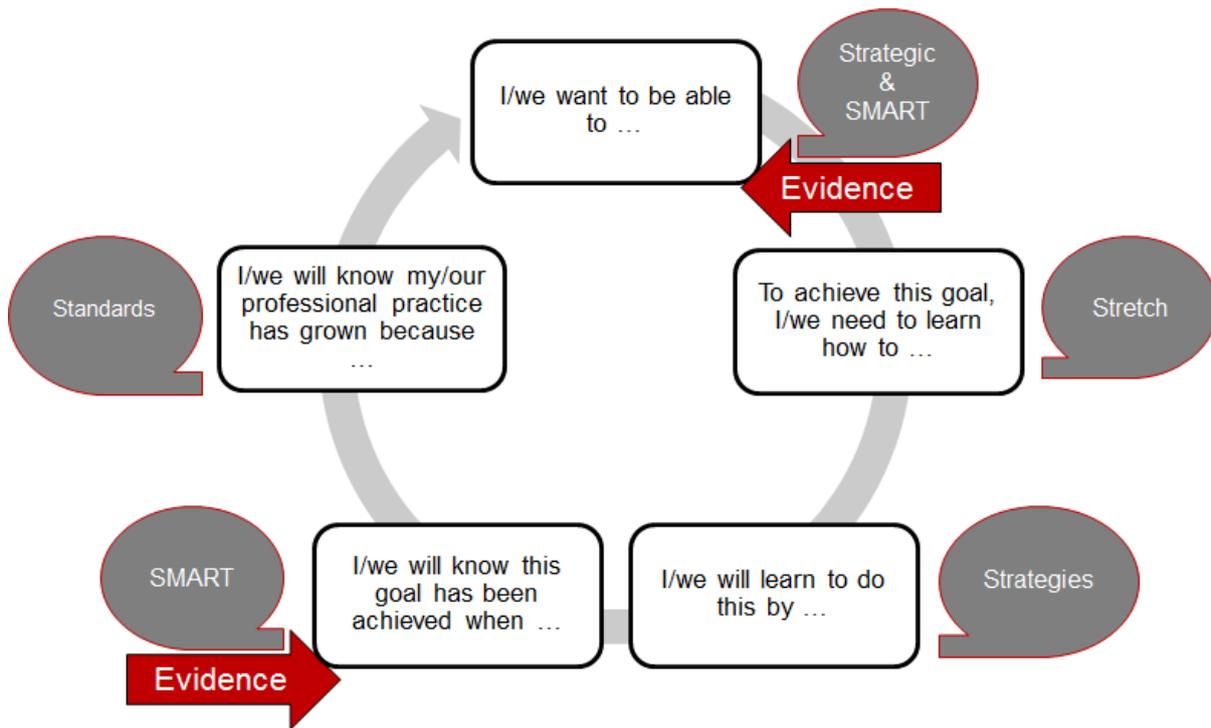

Figure 3: DET Performance and Development Plan template

Goal setting domain:

SMART (& Strategic)	Strategies	Predicted evidence
By the end of 2016, I want to be able to ……. (Strategically articulated)	To achieve this, I need to learn how to ……. (Building 'Stretch' into the criteria for a quality goal)	I know that I will have achieved this goal when ……. (Building on SMART to sharpen results focus)
School support, resources and/or development What will you need to learn/ what support will you require to achieve this goal?	I will learn to do this by …… …. (Strategies)	
Standards: I will know my professional practice has grown when ….		

Samples of Performance and Development goals

A coordinated suite of goals orientated towards an AIP priority focused on teaching and learning excellence

Idea: We need to improve the academic achievement of all students in numeracy to reduce the gap between literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Team student outcome (achievement) goal - Numeracy Team

We want to be able to increase student achievement in numeracy by an average of 20% across all year levels by the end of the year.

To achieve this goal, we need to develop more formalised protocols for using data to maximise the learning growth of all students.

To learn how to do this, we will partner with the literacy team to design a team wide process for analysing student learning needs and tracking learning growth throughout the year.

We will know this goal has been achieved when:

- Three team protocols are piloted by 100% of team members to differentiate learning needs and monitor the effectiveness of responses to these needs by the end of Semester 1.

- Teacher assessments show an increase in numeracy outcomes across all year levels by at least an average of 20% this year.

- Students achieve numeracy results in the same or higher band than those achieved in previous NAPLAN assessment of school performance in literacy within two years.

We will know we have grown our professional practice when we routinely refine practices that differentiate student learning and achieve higher outcomes in numeracy.

Idea: I can contribute to achieving an average increase of 20% in numeracy outcomes by challenging highly capable students more effectively.

Individual professional knowledge goal (Numeracy Teacher)

I want to be able to plan differentiated teaching practices that respond to the learning needs of students who can achieve more than 1 year's growth in numeracy.

To achieve this goal, I need to learn how to use multiple sources of data to identify students in need of extension and strategies for responding to these needs.

I will learn to do this by planning with a colleague in the Literacy Team who teaches the same year level as me and by using the FISO Continua of Practice to evaluate my use of evidence.

I will know this goal has been achieved when:

- Learning baselines are established for 100% of students that incorporate feedback from students and colleagues.

- My planning documents explicitly identify how the needs of students who can achieve more than 12 months learning growth have been responded to.

- I have identified five critical strategies that I can effectively use to challenge the learning growth of students.

I will know I have grown professionally when my proficiency in using data to identify and respond to students who need to be challenged to achieve more than 12 months learning growth becomes a visible part of my routine planning practice.

Idea: I can support an increase in numeracy outcomes for all students by sharing my experience to increase consistency in the use of high impact assessment practice within our team.

Individual professional practice goal (experienced Numeracy Teacher)

I want to be able to develop and support colleagues in my team to implement a process for moderating assessment at all year levels this year.

To achieve this goal, I need to research, adapt and coordinate practices currently being used.

I will learn to do this by attending KLA meetings to obtain feedback on current effective practices and validate this using the FISO Continua of Practice.

I will know this goal has been achieved when:

- A team process for moderating assessment is agreed and commences implementation by the beginning of Term 2.

- 100% of team members report that their participation in practices for moderating student responses has been successful in increasing a shared understanding of expectations and outcomes.

- Student feedback reports that Teachers consistently and 'most of the time' use assessment results to discuss learning progress against clear goals.

I will know I have grown professionally when I have evaluated the implementation and impact of our team's practices for moderating assessment on student achievement in numeracy, using research based knowledge and student data.

Idea: I can contribute to higher levels of student outcomes in numeracy by improving the way I require students to work collaboratively.

Individual professional knowledge goal (Specialist Technology Teacher)

I want to be able to use technology to differentiate group tasks and reinforce the development of higher levels of ability in numeracy.

To achieve this goal, I need to learn how to plan tasks using technology that require different levels of numeracy skills.

I will learn to do this by researching differentiated approaches to teaching students how to develop apps and by planning collaboratively with a Teacher from the Numeracy Team once each Term.

I will know this goal has been achieved when:

- All tasks planned require students to demonstrate numeracy skills

- Student survey findings report that students have been 'sufficiently challenged' to demonstrate numeracy skills by the tasks they have completed

I will know I have grown professionally when I adopt a strategic approach to the development of collaborative learning activities incorporating differentiated ICT strategies that expand learning opportunities and content knowledge for all students.

Idea: I can grow professionally by increasing my collective responsibility for the effective learning of all students.

Individual professional engagement goal (experienced Numeracy Teacher)

I want to be able to use my expertise in data analysis to coach less experienced Teachers to establish accurate student learning baselines, from which learning growth can be sufficiently challenged and regularly monitored.

To achieve this goal, I need to learn to effectively adapt my coaching skills to informal conversations.

I will learn to do this by meeting with a colleague in a different team/school who attended the coaching and feedback workshops series last year and formalise a peer mentoring arrangement.

I will know this goal has been achieved when:

- I integrate questions that constructively challenge my colleagues to improve their assessment practice into informal, ongoing professional learning conversations.

- When feedback data includes observations of my support being used to identify and respond to the learning needs of individual students.

- When at least one more colleague in my team seeks my help to improve their skills using data to plan and differentiate their instructional practice so students are challenged to maximise their learning growth.

I will know I have grown professionally when I demonstrate exemplary practice and high expectations and lead colleagues to encourage students to pursue challenging goals.

Idea: We need to increase student responsibility for ensuring that their behaviour is creating a strong foundation for increasing the level and equity of student engagement outcomes.

Whole school professional practice goal

We want to be able to empower all students to set and achieve goals that reflect high expectations for their behaviour and engagement in their learning and school life.

To achieve this goal, we need to learn how to increase the skills students have for giving, receiving and using feedback to guide their behaviour.

We will learn to do this by identifying five feedback strategies that can be used informally and then role modelling these strategies in our interactions with students and each other.

We will know this goal has been achieved when:

- 100% of students set at least one goal for their behaviour and engagement that reflects feedback from their peers and Teachers.

- There is a reduction of at least 50% in the number of students exited from classrooms for failing to meet expectations for behaviour.

- 100% of students attend class more than 85% of the time.

We will know we have grown professionally when there is school wide development of integrated instructional and behavioural learning programs, designed to ensure all students are engaged, motivated and thriving.

Idea: We need to increase school connectedness and engagement with learning for those who are at-risk of falling behind or dropping out of school.

Team student outcome goal (engagement) - Senior School Year Level and Wellbeing Coordinators

We want to be able to increase the level of connectedness to school for all VCAL students by the end of the year by at least 50%.

To achieve this goal, we need to learn how to identify, collect and review specific data that can be used to measure connectedness for this particular group of students.

We will learn to do this by researching student engagement data collection methods that focus on maximising the voice of all students regardless of their level of literacy skills.

We will know this goal has been achieved when:

- A process for collecting and tracking changes in baseline data measuring the connectedness is used by 100% of VCAL Teachers.

- 100% of VCAL students participate by giving feedback using at least one of the options created.

- All measures of connectedness indicated by measures of engagement nuanced to our school context continue to increase during the year.

We will know we have grown professionally when we are able to actively monitor the engagement of groups of students who are at-risk of falling behind or dropping out of school and develop targeted interventions to prevent anticipated problems and keep them connected to school.

Idea: I need to experiment with fresh strategies that engage students in their learning and increase their connectedness to their local community.

Individual professional knowledge goal

By the end of Term 2, I want to know how to minimise behavioural issues through the use of engaging learning spaces, within the school and local community.

To achieve this goal, I need to learn how to identify, predict and evaluate the impact different learning spaces will have on student engagement.

I will learn to do this by locating key research articles online, visiting three schools with similar student populations to our own and by prioritising options using student feedback data.

I know I will have achieved this goal when:

- At least five new options for using engaging learning spaces are identified.

- My planning documents explicitly identify the predicted impact of varying learning spaces on student engagement.

- A protocol is developed for monitoring the relationship between the use of different spaces and changes in student engagement.

I will know I have grown professionally when I routinely use student feedback and assessment data to improve my teaching and maximise the positive impact of learning spaces on student engagement.

Idea: The introduction of the new Victorian Curriculum provides an opportunity to improve the way we support new students from refugee backgrounds to join our school community.

Individual professional engagement goal (experienced Teacher)

I want to be able to support colleagues to integrate strategies for connecting students who have recently arrived in the country to their school community when they are planning and implementing the introduction of the Victorian Curriculum in Semester 1.

To achieve this goal, I need to learn how to facilitate collaborative planning sessions that prioritise the integration of student feedback into the development of strategies for increasing student connectedness and the measures used to monitor and review the effectiveness of these strategies.

I will learn to do this by adapting facilitation processes used at workshops I have attended.

I will know I have achieved this goal when:

- Collaborative planning sessions are scheduled and fully attended.

- Teachers can demonstrate how student feedback is reflected in effective teaching and assessment practices and other curriculum objectives.

- Measures of effectiveness report moderate to high levels of connectedness by the end of the school year.

I will know I have grown professionally when in addition to modelling exemplary practice, I routinely initiate programs to support colleagues in applying a range of timely, effective and appropriate feedback, engagement and learning strategies.