



Teacher Capability Development Q & As

1. [Why a new approach?](#)
2. [Who does this new approach to teacher capability apply to?](#)
3. [I have a teaching qualification - why do I have to engage in this process?](#)
4. [How were the Teaching Competencies developed and why were those particular ones chosen?](#)
5. [We've got Values and Leadership Competencies - how does this new set fit in?](#)
6. [I'm a teacher ... what do I have to do?](#)
7. [I manage teaching staff ... what do I have to do?](#)
8. [What do I get for participating / what's in it for me?](#)
9. [What happens if I don't engage with teacher competencies/digital-credentials?](#)
10. [How long will the self-evaluation process take me to complete?](#)
11. [How will the information captured during the self-evaluation process be used? Who will be able to see it?](#)
12. [Is there an ideal teaching competency profile?](#)
13. [Is this a strengths-based model?](#)
14. [What is a digital-credential?](#)
15. [Why are we introducing digital-credentials?](#)
16. [How many hours will I need to spend to complete each digital credential?](#)
17. [Will these digital-credentials mean anything outside of Unitec?](#)
18. [When will we be able to see a full range of available digital-credentials?](#)
19. [I don't have time for PD at the moment so what will be changed within my teaching schedule to fit this in?](#)
20. [How is this different to Practice Passport?](#)
21. [I completed my Practice Passport requirements. How does that get recognised within the new digital-credentialing system?](#)
22. [What other development opportunities are there beyond digital-credentialing for me to build my capability as a teacher?](#)
23. [Will this Professional Development approach carry over to non-teaching staff as well?](#)
24. [I want to know more - how do I get more information?](#)

1. Why a new approach?

Between 2017 and early 2018, Te Puna Ako and the Director Ako conducted a review of Unitec's approach to teacher capability development. The goal was to design a more effective, embedded approach that delivers academic quality and better outcomes for students in 2018 onwards.

After much research and consultation, we have designed a competency-based Professional Development approach that clearly models the sort of best-practice teaching we want from our teachers. It is based on applied practice and learning-in-work, and it supports a culture of continuous improvement and professional development for all teachers.

The approach will be integrated into our existing ADEP and performance partnering structure, which also means we can clearly demonstrate how we are delivering to NZQA's Key Evaluative Questions.

Teacher capability development has been reorganised with the goal of targeted support for individuals and teams of teachers that is competency-based and largely embedded in day-to-day teaching-related activities.

Teachers are able to flexibly access facilitated support and online resources in support of their capability development goals agreed as in the Performance Partnering process.

At its core, this is an approach based on evidence of competencies, outcomes and impacts as opposed to inputs e.g. attendance at workshops. Our goal is to ensure that teachers do not need to undertake professional development if they already have evidence of the associated competencies.

Digital-credential or 'badging' is the mechanism by which we evidence competencies. Each digital-credential achieved by a teacher represents a level of capability, based on evidence provided and a highly valid and reliable assessment process. [Back to top](#)

2. Who does this new approach to teacher capability apply to?

This new approach is a requirement for:

- All permanent teaching staff (both full and part time)
- All fixed term teaching staff on contract for 12 months or more
- Other staff are encouraged to participate with agreement from their manager

[Back to top](#)

3. I have a teaching qualification – why do I have to engage in this process?

We want to ensure no-one has to learn anything twice. However, as professional educators, our practice needs to keep pace with the changes in pedagogy and learning technologies. Continuous professional development helps us do this. Capability development is ongoing and there will always be areas in which any teacher can develop. Through use of self-evaluation and targeted professional development you will be augmenting – not duplicating – your prior expertise and any teaching qualifications you have. You may also have skills that your teaching qualification does not recognise and that digital-credentialing can! [Back to top](#)

4. How were the [teaching competencies](#) developed and why were those particular ones chosen?

In 2016 the Learning and Teaching Committee approved a 'Capable Teacher' definition that was developed by the Dean of Teaching & Learning and Te Puna Ako. This was designed to provide a baseline of capability for all teachers as a guide for professional development.

Taking this definition as a starting point, the Unitec teaching competencies are the result of a robust process of research and planning including consultation with and input from TEU, QAB, Deans, SALT, Pacific teachers forum, Ako Ahimura Maturanga Maori Roopu, and various other teaching stakeholders. Final approval was attained at Academic Board in May 2018. [Back to top](#)

5. We've got Values and Leadership Competencies – how does this new set fit in?



Our [organisational values](#) define what is important to us as an organisation and how we want to be. They are implicit in everything we do at Unitec and underpin the way that we partner with others and make decisions.



The [Unitec Leadership Competencies](#) apply to all staff at Unitec – recognising that we are all leaders at all levels. They are the skills, attributes and behaviours that we want everybody to be demonstrating to help us achieve the aspirations we have as an organisation.



[Unitec Teaching Competencies](#) apply to all teaching staff. They define effective teaching at Unitec and enable us to demonstrate our professionalism as educators in a more structured way.



The [Unitec Research Competencies](#) are intended to help research staff recognise their existing research competencies and build on these in a process of continuous development.

There may be other role- or position-specific competencies that also apply depending on your position – for example, professional or technical competencies relevant to their industry or vocation. Your manager can help you identify these.

Our core competencies are integrated into our [Performance Partnering](#) process and you are required to self-evaluate against the relevant set of competencies in preparation for your ADEP conversations.

These competency evaluations are a hugely useful input to your development conversations and in particular, development planning – the D of ADEP.

[Back to top](#)

6. I'm a teacher ... what do I have to do?

In brief overview, you will need to:

- Complete an online self-evaluation against teaching competencies
- Prepare for your ADEP Conversation by reviewing relevant PD options
- During your ADEP Conversation discuss and agree your Teaching Competencies development: the competencies you will focus on and the development activities you will undertake to achieve the goal of at least two badges.
***Note:** It is a requirement that all teaching staff complete the self-evaluation and achieve 2 badges/digital-credentials by the end of 2019*
- As your progress toward your development goals, ensure you log your PD leave as appropriate.

You can find more detail on what is required [here](#). [Back to top](#)

7. I manage teaching staff ... what do I have to do?

- When meeting with each of your teaching staff to have their ADEP conversation:
 - Review their Teaching Competency self-evaluation alongside any team development priorities as directed by Head of School
 - Incorporate appropriate teaching competencies goals and development plans.
- Actively manage and coach my teaching staff through the year to support and enable them to achieve their development goals including 2 digital-credentials by the end of 2019
- Ensure PD leave is logged and approved as appropriate

You can find more detail on what is required [here](#). [Back to top](#)

8. What do I get for participating / what's in it for me?

This Professional Development and digital-credential process is a simple way to gain formal recognition for your *existing* capabilities as a teacher. If you don't have a formal teaching qualification, this is a way to gain credentials that can subsequently support an APL application. Even if you do have a qualification, there will be additional competencies that you've acquired and that can be recognised through digital-credentials.

Longer term the intention is that progress towards achievement will contribute to formal rewards and recognition. We will also ensure that all digital-credentials related to teacher competency will support APL processes for teaching qualifications. [Back to top](#)

9. What happens if I don't engage with teaching competencies/digital-credentials?

Academic Board and Executive Leadership team have endorsed the Teacher Capability Development Project including the requirement that all eligible teachers* acquire at least 2 digital-credentials in 2019.

Individual progress will be tracked and reported through the Performance Partnering process-through regular ADEP check-ins and the formal Review of Achievements.

Progress towards pathway, network and organisational goals will also be monitored and regularly reported to the Executive. [Back to top](#)

**All permanent teaching staff (both full and part time), fixed term teaching staff on contract for 12 months or more. Other staff are welcome to participate with agreement from their manager.*

10. How long will the self-evaluation process take me to complete?

Approximately 10-15 minutes. This process is not intended as an exhaustive evaluation but rather to establish an initial profile of existing competencies as well as areas for improvement which can then be used as an input into development planning. [Back to top](#)

11. How will the information captured during the self-evaluation process be used? Who will be able to see it?

Think of this survey as the equivalent of formative assessment. Its value is in identifying learning needs and steering subsequent development - because it is based on opinion rather than objective evidence, it is not making 'summative' judgments about your teaching ability.

The primary purpose is as an input to development conversations to support more targeted development planning. Together, you and your manager will identify and agree priority areas for further exploration and development.

Your evaluation results will be made available to you and your ADEP Manager via email at time of submission, and may also be reviewed by your Te Puna Ako Liaison.

Aggregate reports will also be made available to Heads of Schools, TPA and HR Business Partners to understand competency profiles and development priorities at a pathway level. [Back to top](#)

12. Is there an ideal teaching competency profile?

Not really. The Teaching Competency framework identifies a profile to aim for and teachers should have a baseline of competence in each area. But just like students, we all have mixed profiles of interests and abilities. Our programmes also require different skill-sets. Over time, you will become adept at self-evaluation, and this, along with various other forms of feedback, will allow you to accurately identify strengths and areas for development. This is a core self-evaluative skill that EER requires of teachers. [Back to top](#)

13. Is this a strengths-based model?

We have used an adaptation of [Pohatu's Mauri model](#) to evaluate competency. This is a four-stage developmental model which focuses on fulfilling one's potential through continuous learning. You can learn more about the model [here](#).

While there is an expectation that all teachers maintain a baseline in all competencies, we also know that different teachers will have greater interest and strength in particular competencies and we encourage teachers to identify and develop such areas to a level of *Mauri Ora - Modelling*. At this level you are considered a role model for this teaching competency and you support others to develop in this area. [Back to top](#)

14. What is a digital credential?

Digital credentials or 'badges' are an alternative to traditional certificates as a way of providing recognition for achievements or competencies. They hold data including the criteria that was expected and evidence that the earner met that criteria. They are very easy to share via social media, email, download or you can even print them out as a certificate if you want a physical copy. Digital-credentials are also very secure as they are based on blockchain technology, meaning you can be very confident about who issued and who earned a digital-credential when you look at one. [Back to top](#)

15. Why are we introducing digital-credentials?

We are introducing digital-credentials as a way of recognising elements of the teaching competencies for a number of reasons. Digital-credentials have been around for many years now and we have looked at examples from a number of other organisations that have successfully used them to recognise the professional development of their staff. The digital-credentials that you earn will be extremely portable. You can share them within and beyond Unitec and they will have meaning on their own, or they can be used as the first steps towards the APL process for a more formal qualification. They also make it easy for the credential issuers and earners to keep track of the competencies that have been evidenced. [Back to top](#)

16. How many hours will I need to spend to complete each digital-credential?

The amount of time to complete a digital-credential will vary significantly depending on your prior knowledge and expertise, as well as the extent with which you need to undertake professional development activities for generating evidence.

There are three options available for gathering and submitting evidence for evaluation for digital-credentialing. Each of which will require a different level of time commitment:

- *Supported* - A structured learning experience for those wishing to learn and develop the competence, and generate evidence. Includes face-to-face sessions as well independent learning via the Moodle course. On completion of the Moodle course, learners will have created evidence of their competence.
- *Independent* - This is a flexible self-directed approach to learning and gathering evidence of your competence. You can work through the Moodle courses at your own pace, attempting the activities if you wish but these are not mandatory. Alternatively, you can use this Moodle course as a guide and find your own resources.
- *Evidence Only* - Teachers who evaluate themselves as 'demonstrating' or 'modelling' an aspect of teacher competence can simply gather and submit evidence from their practice for evaluation. It is recommended the Moodle course be used for reference and guidance on the types of evidence to be submitted. [Back to top](#)

17. Will these digital-credentials mean anything outside of Unitec?

Digital-credentials sit outside the NZQA system, and are evidence of a competency based on a robust, internal Unitec system. The recognition level would be similar to that of completing a Unitec short course that is not on the NZQA framework. Our digital-credentials are also designed to support APL towards a qualification - which would be recognised outside Unitec. [Back to top](#)

18. When will we be able to see a full range of available digital-credentials?

An initial set of approximately 25 digital-credentials will be available by the end of July 2018. We expect that the number will grow and evolve over time to meet new technological and pedagogical advances and in response to ongoing feedback from staff.

We also anticipate that other teams at Unitec will develop digital-credentials over time for their areas of professional development. [Back to top](#)

19. I don't have time for Professional Development at the moment so what will be changed within my teaching schedule to fit this in?

It is important to note that this approach to professional development is about applied practice - the intention is that much of your development will take place "on the job" - largely embedded in your day-to-day teaching-related activities.

If you have concerns about how to fit this into your schedule, you will need to work through this with your manager. [Back to top](#)

20. How is this different to Practice Passport?

The new [Teaching Competencies](#) approach builds on the foundation work established with Practice Passport. This is the next step - shifting to a focus on evidence of outcomes and impacts (as opposed to inputs such as attendance at workshops).

This approach provides greater personalisation through a self-evaluative process and a broader and more flexible range of professional development options, catering for people at varying stages in their career as a teacher.

It is also embedded in the [Performance Partnering](#) process as a key feature of the 'D' of ADEP. This ensures that it will become part of the way we do things and be kept alive and relevant through regular reflection and review. [Back to top](#)

21. I completed my Practice Passport requirements. How does that get recognised within the new digital-credential system?

As above, this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your application of what you learned through Practice Passport; you can also use evidence from your practice passport learnings to count towards digital-credentials. [Back to top](#)

22. What other development opportunities are there beyond digital-credentials for me to build my capability as a teacher?

Any development activity can lead to development of teaching competence. Whether you wish to use this for evidence toward a digital-credential is up to you. [Back to top](#)

23. Will this Professional Development approach carry over to non-teaching staff as well?

This Professional Development approach applies to teaching staff only at this stage. There are no immediate plans to extend the digital-credential approach to the wider organisation; this may be something we explore at a later stage. [Back to top](#)

24. I want to know more – how do I get more information?

Online Resources:

- [Unitec Teaching Competencies](#)
- [Self-Evaluation Tool](#)
- [Moodle Teaching Competencies Homepage](#)
- [Performance Partnering Portal](#)

Key Contacts:

- Maura Kempin, Manager, Te Puna Ako, mkempin@unitec.ac.nz
- [Your TPA Liaison](#)
- [Your Human Resources Business Partner](#)