

Tranche 2 – Critical Friends

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The **Critical Friend** approach within teacher professional development and assessment practices as a form of structured peer support, and highlights the importance of a collaborative and dialogical approach to feedback (or feed-forward) based on trust and dialogue.

In the context of the Years 9-12 course development process a Critical Friend is “a trusted colleague within the teaching profession who questions and challenges, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a course in its development.”

(Adapted from: Costa, A & Kallick, B, 1993, Through the Lens of a Critical Friend. Educational Leadership)

Scope

The appointment of Critical Friends will enable teachers to provide advice and feedback to the Curriculum Lead specific to their learning area.

Critical Friends will align their ways of working with the values of: Aspiration; Respect; Courage and Growth outlined in the [Department's Strategic Plan 2022-2024](#).

Timeframe

The role of a Critical Friend will exist for the duration of the specified course during its development.

Appointment process

Expressions of Interest will come from school, and non-school based Critical Friends such as representatives from TasTAFE, University of Tasmania and industry.

Critical Friends, where possible, will reflect a diversity of sector, region and organisation type, considered within each course and tranche.

There are recommended to be no more than three school-based Critical Friends for a course and up to two non-school based Critical Friends.

Expressions of Interest

Years 9-12 Learning will seek expressions of interest for Critical Friends through publication on the Years 11 and 12 website.

- EOIs collected and reviewed by Years 9-12 Learning at end of closing deadline.

- Each EOI will be reviewed on the evidence provided against the selection criteria, and against other EOIs received.
- A set of recommendations will be submitted to the Director of 9-12 Learning for approval/endorsement.
- If approved/endorsed, Critical Friends will be advised via email, and all successful and unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome at the same time.

Critical Friends can be invited to take part in the process through direct nomination by the Curriculum Lead, if insufficient or unsuitable expressions of interest are received.

Payment

Generally there will be no payment. Relief for teachers for extended work and tasks may be provided where there is an agreed need. Video conference meetings will reduce the need for extended travel, and travel costs, where required, will be covered within reason according to DoE policies and guidelines.

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

This role provides evidence against the following APST standards:

- 2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area
- 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
- 7.1 Meet professional ethics and responsibilities
- 7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements
- 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities

Role Description

The role description should be read in conjunction with the Terms of Reference for Critical Friends.

What is a Critical Friend?

A Critical Friend is someone who:

- has high-level knowledge and interest in the course under development
- extends and questions thinking and to offer alternatives; and
- supports the work of the Curriculum Lead (CL) in the course development process.

Critical Friends during the course development process:

- takes the time to understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the CL or Learning Area Advisory Group (LAAG) is working toward
- provides independent advice via confidential discussions to the Curriculum Lead on the key directions and changes to the course under consideration/development
- will ask about the adherence of the proposed course to the curriculum principles, standards, assessment principles and specified course accreditation requirements.

Selection Criteria

To enable consideration of a broad range of perspectives Critical Friends are, where possible, drawn from each of the three sectors, DoE, Independent and Catholic schools and all regions of the state.

A critical friend may be a practising or recently retired teacher and/or an academic or other expert in the field.

Critical Friends are selected based on their contemporary expertise and experience in the study or related disciplines including:

School Based:

- High-level knowledge and interest in the relevant learning area and/or specific course of learning.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of contemporary education practices related to the learning area discipline in Years 9-12.
- Current teacher registration and WWVP and Police Check.

Non-school based:

Years 9-12 Learning may utilise Critical Friends locally, nationally and internationally for relevant expertise in curriculum development and subject matter expertise.

- High level knowledge and expertise in the relevant learning area in Years 9-12 or post-year 12 education and/or how it applies in business or industry.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of contemporary practices related to the learning area discipline in Years 9-12 and/or Higher Education and/or Industry.