

About us

Australian Professional Teachers Association

We provide national leadership that supports and advances the teaching profession across Australia

The Australian Professional Teachers Association (APTA) is the peak body for the state and territory-based joint councils that represent the needs of teaching associations operating in their jurisdictions.

Joint councils exist in each state and territory. Teaching associations operating in each jurisdiction have specific support needs as the varied structural, social and demographic landscapes affect teachers and schools in each state and territory in unique ways, requiring local advocacy and support.

Joint councils exist to advocate on behalf of associations on jurisdictional matters, such as policy developments, resources and funding, governance matters, and to create a community of associations that can share advice, support and collaborate in meaningful ways.

Our members actively understand the issues affecting teachers and teaching associations in each state and territory. As their peak body, APTA is incredibly well-placed to provide leadership and advocacy at the national level on matters that affect teachers and teaching associations across Australia. Our voice is diverse, representative, experienced and at the forefront of education.

We have our fingers on the pulse of Australian classrooms.

All about --- **Teaching Associations**

Professional teaching associations were established by teachers to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of school education in their respective disciplines or subject areas. They do this in several ways.

Professional development: Professional teaching associations are state/territory-wide professional learning communities. They provide opportunities for teachers to participate in ongoing professional development. This may include attending conferences, workshops and other events, online learning, industry visits, and masterclasses with leading thinkers and practitioners. They also curate and disseminate resources and information about best practices and new developments in their field. Very frequently, associations are the only source of professional learning that focuses on how to teach a specific discipline or subject well.

Networking: Teaching associations provide opportunities for teachers to connect with colleagues and peers in their field, both within their own local jurisdiction and across the broader education community. This helps to foster collaboration, share ideas and experiences (which reduces workload and accelerates improvement), and build support networks (which reduces stress and professional isolation).

Advocacy: Professional teaching associations often serve as advocates for quality teaching in their subject area. This includes advocating for policy changes, better approaches to teaching and learning, improved educational outcomes for students, and teachers' access to resources and support. They may also promote the value of teaching and the important role that teachers play in society. Associations provide a valuable sounding board to education authorities and decision-makers on the potential impacts of policies on classroom practice, and the latest developments in Australia and overseas in the teaching of their disciplines.

Joint councils, national associations and peak bodies

At the state/territory level, there is usually one professional teaching association for each discipline or subject area. The associations within a state/territory then come together into a council, such as the Council of Professional Teaching Associations of Victoria.

In addition, the associations for the same subject in each state/territory might come together in a national subject association, such as the Australian Geography Teachers Association.

Each teaching association is therefore supported and represented in two ways. For example, the Science Teachers Association of NSW will be a member of both the Professional Teachers Council of NSW and The Australian Science Teachers Association.

Finally, there are two bodies that operate nationally.

- The peak body in which state/territory joint councils come together is the Australian Professional Teachers Association (APTA).
- The peak body for national subject associations is the Australian Alliance of Associations in Education (AAAE).

Both APTA and AAAE advocate for teaching associations at the national level and our interests and needs overlap. With APTA reflecting the needs of associations at a state/territory level and AAAE reflecting the needs of subject and cross-disciplinary areas across the country, both are well-placed to reflect the teacher voice and to advocate for teaching associations from a variety of perspectives.