ETS PPAT

Measuring the Power of Learning.®

The *PPAT*® Assessment

Cooperating Teacher Handbook

Last Updated July 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction 4
Overview of the *PPAT*® Tasks 6
Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment 6
Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning 7
Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning 7
Task 4: Implementing and Analyzing Instruction to Promote Student Learning 8
Evidence and Artifacts 13
Support and Ethical Considerations 14
General Guidelines 14
Support from Instructors and Mentors 14
Reflection of Actual Tasks in Assignments 15
Ethical Responsibilities of Candidates 15
Plagiarism 16
Essay Similarity Detection 16
A Team Approach 17
Rubrics and the Library of Examples 18
Guidelines for Writing 19
1. Writing about teaching 19
2. Descriptive, analytic, and reflective writing 19
3. The overlap between analysis and reflection 19
4. Revising and editing written responses 20
Video Recording 20
Preparing for the Candidate’s Arrival 22
Advance Preparation Checklist 23
Meeting with the Candidate 23
Helping the Candidate Get Started 24
Collaborating with the Candidate’s Supervising Instructor 25
The Professional Growth Plan 26
The Scoring Process 27
Web Links and Resources 28
Handbooks for Your Review 28
How Candidates Create and Submit Tasks 28
Ancillary Materials 28
Review the PPAT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) 28
How to Become a Rater 29
Conclusion 29

Welcome, Cooperating Teacher!

Thank you for your commitment to advancing the teacher preparation experience of candidates in your school district. Your willingness to open your classroom in support of your mentee's learning as she or he completes the *PPAT®* assessment is greatly appreciated and not only vital to his or her overall success but also that of the teaching profession.

The PPAT assessment is a performance-based, pre-licensure assessment of a teacher candidate's readiness and ability to teach effectively. It was developed by a team of exemplary national educators, which included faculty from Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) and cooperating teachers, like yourself, who are familiar with the demands of the teaching profession. This *PPAT® Cooperating Teacher Handbook* is designed to provide you with an overview of the PPAT, a guide for understanding what is expected of the candidate, and suggestions for ways you can offer support and model reflective practice.

In addition to this guide, the *PPAT® Candidate and Educator Handbook* will help you understand the history and background of the performance assessment and will provide you with a general overview as well as the specific details needed in order for your mentee to submit a completed response. The handbooks are available on the PPAT website.

The four PPAT performance tasks are designed to complement your efforts by helping the candidate assigned to your classroom acquaint him or her with students and their families with thoughtfulness and professionalism. The tasks provide a structure that encourages the teacher candidate's hands-on professional learning, and this same structure can help you facilitate professional dialogue with your candidate. The shared-audience structure of this handbook can help you and the teacher candidate's supervising instructor reinforce and supplement one another's efforts in support of the teacher candidate.

Appreciation is extended to Marie Collins, writer, along with the following educators who contributed the development of this guide.

- Ellen Baker, Vermont Council of Teacher Educators, VT
- Annette DeLuca, Educational Testing Service, NJ
- Gloria Edwards, Georgian Court University, NJ
- Adrienne Henderson-Cole, Littleton Elementary School District, AZ
- Dr. Marlene Henriques, NBCT, James Madison University, VA
- Diana Horton McIntosh, Lower Merion School District, PA
- Sean Kinnard, Arlinton Career Center, VA
- Donna Mitchell, Delaware Professional Standards Board, DE
- Dr. Cathy Owens-Oliver, NBCT, Educational Testing Service, NJ
- Dr. Rhonda Richetta, Baltimore City Schools, MD
- Dr. Denecise Salters, NBCT, Tupelo Public Schools, MS
- Tyler Wells, Wilmington University, DE

Introduction

The *PPAT*® assessment provides a meaningful measure of a teacher candidate's readiness and ability to teach effectively. It provides a comprehensive picture of a teacher candidate's potential for classroom success. This is a standards-based assessment that reflects the elements of teaching described by the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards.

These standards are articulated across ten general areas of professional practice, and multiple performance indicators further elaborate on those areas. The overarching purpose of the teacher standards is to provide effective educators for students across the nation. Throughout the careers of certified teachers, these standards serve as a focal point for professional dialogue. These teaching standards are referenced during professional development, used to help individual teachers identify their professional strengths and areas for improvement, and provide a basis for many teachers' annual professional growth plans.

Similarly, the close relationship between the PPAT assessment and the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards is intended to ensure that pre-service teachers perform at an acceptable level before they assume responsibilities as certified teachers. Teacher candidates are expected to be well versed in the standards and performance indicators, to engage with the standards and indicators when reflecting on their teaching and on their professional capabilities, and to understand what the standards mean as they apply to daily practice and student learning.

The InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards
Standard #1: Learner Development — The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
Standard #2: Learning Differences — The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
Standard #3: Learning Environments — The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
Standard #4: Content Knowledge — The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
Standard #5: Application of Content — The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
Standard #6: Assessment — The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
Standard #7: Planning for Instruction — The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
Standard #8: Instructional Strategies — The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding in and across content areas and to build skill at applying knowledge in meaningful ways.
Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice — The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration — The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Overview of the *PPAT*® Tasks

The PPAT assessment consists of four tasks. Each must be completed during the teacher candidate's clinical experience (or student teaching internship) and focuses on knowledge of the school and classroom context, planning and differentiation of instruction, assessing student learning, and making informed decisions based on data collected during instruction. During the clinical experience, the teacher candidate's task submissions must provide a variety of artifacts, including well-articulated lesson plans, student work, assessment data, and a video to demonstrate teaching practice.

These tasks are not inconsequential; they represent authentic work that engages pre-service teachers in learning, planning, and reflecting activities that are focused on the assigned students and classroom. The tasks serve two purposes: (1) they provide a way for pre-service teachers to demonstrate their readiness for classroom teaching, and (2) they scaffold the teacher candidate's work during the student-teaching experience. As all good classroom performance assessments do, the PPAT tasks both foster and measure learning.

While all of the tasks engage candidates in relevant instructional activities, only one of the four, Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment, is specifically intended to be a formative task. Task 1 is completed early in the clinical experience and is not scored as part of the pre-licensure requirement. However, it may be evaluated as part of the teacher candidate's EPP completion or graduation requirements. Refer to the *PPAT Task 1 Handbook* for additional information.

Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment

In this task, candidates will demonstrate the knowledge and skills that pertain to their understanding of their assigned classroom. The task requires candidates to provide evidence with regard to their specific students, school, district, and community, and to identify implications of these factors for instruction and student learning. It requires candidates to complete two steps:

- Step 1: Factors, Resources, and Protocols
- Step 2: Knowledge of Students

Task 1 sets the context and tone for the rest of the PPAT assessment; what the teacher candidate learns while completing this task will affect the approach he or she takes in the completion of the other three tasks. It also allows the teacher candidate to become familiar with the students with whom he or she will be working, to understand the PPAT assessment process, and to become acclimated to the online submission system where tasks are submitted. Task 1 affords the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher an opportunity to become familiar with the entire assessment process. It is a formative task in which you, the cooperating teacher, and the EPP instructor work together with the teacher candidate as he or she develops a response to the activities, guiding prompts, and artifact requirements of the PPAT assessment, while providing the candidate with constructive feedback.

Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning

In this task, candidates must demonstrate understanding, analysis, and application of assessment and data collection to measure and inform student learning. Candidates must use baseline data to determine where students are and where they need to go in their learning. They must focus on one assessment within a larger plan for evaluating students and show how the assessment is connected to teaching strategies, activities, materials, and resources. They must also explain their plan for the collection of resulting data and demonstrate modification of the assessment based on the needs of two focus students.

This task has three steps, each with guiding prompts to help candidates provide evidence that supports the rubric.

- Step 1: Planning the Assessment
- Step 2: Administering the Assessment and Analyzing the Data
- Step 3: Reflecting

Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning

In this task, candidates must demonstrate their ability to develop instruction and incorporate technology to facilitate student learning. The type of technology used will depend on candidates' choices and what they can access. Task 3 requires candidates to use instructional strategies that include a connection to goals and previous learning, differentiated instruction for two focus students, adaptation of learning goals, technology, resources, a method for evaluating impact on student achievement, and reflection on future instruction for the whole class based on analysis of data and student achievement.

Task 3 includes four steps:

- Step 1: Planning the Lesson
- Step 2: The Focus Students
- Step 3: Analyzing the Instruction
- Step 4: Reflecting

Task 4: Implementing and Analyzing Instruction to Promote Student Learning

In this task, candidates must demonstrate their ability to plan and implement a lesson using standards-based instruction. They must also show how they are able to adjust instruction for the whole class as well as for individual students within the class. Finally, they must demonstrate an understanding of reflective practice. Task 4 includes submission of a 15-minute unedited video. Candidates must demonstrate strategies that engage students in content-area language, critical thinking and inquiry, and the integration of literacy into content areas. In their written commentary, they must indicate where these strategies occur in the video so raters will be able to connect what is written to what is recorded. Task 4 is a culminating task that assesses a range of standards with some overlap. It requires use of two students' work samples to show impact on student learning and is more heavily weighted in scoring.

There are five steps in Task 4:

- Step 1: Planning
- Step 2: Implementing the Plan
- Step 3: Understanding the Two Focus Students
- Step 4: Reflecting
- Step 5: Uploading the Video

Comonalities Among the Tasks

There are commonalities across all tasks. All four tasks are aligned with the InTASC standards and indicators. They demand convincing evidence and artifacts and require candidates to connect teaching strategies to contextual factors. A Contextual Information textbox is included at the beginning of each task to provide a context for raters who will be evaluating the response. All tasks are content-embedded and require candidates to provide evidence of the impact of their instruction on student learning. Tasks are created and submitted in a private, secure online environment only accessible by the teacher candidate via a username and password. Here the teacher candidate can compose written commentaries, upload documents and artifacts, and link written commentary to artifacts. Tasks are submitted as completed and within the designated window for submission. Candidates will receive scores for tasks 2, 3 and 4 within three weeks of each submission deadline.

The required submission information for each task is summarized below. You will see the steps included in each task as well as the evidence candidates are required to submit. The full tasks and their rubrics are provided on the PPAT Assessment informational website.

Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment

Steps	Evidence of
Step 1: Factors, Resources, and Protocols	Your ability to identify and reflect on a variety of factors and resources that can influence, support, and enhance student learning.
Step 2: Knowledge of Students	Your ability to identify how you are cultivating relationships with your students and acquiring increasing depth of knowledge about each student's academic and non academic strength, skills, compenencies, and interests.

Submission:

Written commentary of no more than **21,000 characters** (**~7 typed pages**) that responds to the two steps and that is submitted using the provided textboxes

Four instructional artifacts of no more than **9 pages** that demonstrate how you obtained knowledge of students and their learning environment and that support your responses to the guiding prompts

Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning

Steps	Evidence of
Step 1: Planning the Assessment	Your ability to plan an assessment that uses appropriate assessment tools to meet student needs and the learning goal(s) **NOTE:** For textbox 2.1.2 The response for this textbox should reflect the activities, groupings, materials, resources, and technology that you are planning to use **to assess** the students. These are not preassessment activities but the actual activities, groupings, materials, etc. for the assessment. For example: Learning activities could include assessment through such things as games, in-class presentations, or student demonstrations. Materials or resources are those tools that aid in the assessment of students based on the activities the teacher candidate mentions as being part of his/her assessment, such as manipulatives or a computer-generated exam.
Step 2: Administering the Assessment and Analyzing the Data	Your ability to administer your assessment and to collect, record, and analyze the data
Step 3: Reflecting	Your ability to reflect on your assessment by providing evidence of student learning that resulted from the administered assessment plan Your ability to reflect on the data-based decisions that occurred through data analysis

Submission:

Written commentary of no more than **22,500** characters (**~7 typed pages**) that responds to the three steps, focuses on two students, and is submitted using the provided textboxes

Eight instructional artifacts of no more than **11 pages** that support your responses to the guiding prompts and that provide evidence of assessment planning and data analysis

Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning

Steps	Evidence of
Step 1: Planning the Lesson	Your ability to plan an effective lesson that facilitates student learning
Step 2: Understanding the Focus Students	Your ability to differentiate instruction for individual students
Step 3: Analyzing the Instruction	Your ability to analyze your lesson plan and evidence of student learning
Step 4: Reflecting	Your ability to reflect on the strengths of your lesson plan as well as on the components of the lesson that are in need of improvement

Submission:

Written commentary of no more than **25,500 characters (~8 typed pages)** that responds to the four steps, focuses on two students, and is submitted using the provided textboxes

Six instructional artifacts of no more than **7 pages** that support your responses to the guiding prompts and that provide evidence of lesson planning and analysis

Task 4: Implementing and Analyzing Instruction to Promote Student Learning

Steps	Evidence of
Step 1: Planning	Your ability to plan an effective lesson that facilitates student learning
Step 2: Implementing the Plan	Your ability to implement the lesson plan, interact with your students, and analyze your practice
Step 3: Understanding the Two Focus Students	Your ability to provide evidence of student learning resulting from the implemented lesson
Step 4: Reflecting	Your ability to reflect on the effectiveness of your lesson for the entire class and the two focus students
Step 5: Uploading the Video	Your ability to create and upload one video file

Submission:

Written commentary of no more than **28,500** characters (**~9 typed pages)** that responds to the four steps, focuses on two students, and is submitted using the provided textboxes

Seven instructional artifacts of no more than **10 pages** that support your responses to the guiding prompts and that provide evidence of lesson planning and implementation

One **15-minute video** (unedited) or a combined file of three 5-minute segments (each unedited)

Evidence and Artifacts

Evidence is the information that a candidate provides within a commentary such as relevant artifacts and quotations from students and colleagues. The quality of the evidence submitted is the most important measure of its value. Evidence is found in the responses to the prompts and in both teacher and student artifacts. Evidence is collected from wherever it appears within a task. Sometimes candidates include additional evidence for one prompt in the response to another prompt within the same task; that evidence is collected by the raters. Candidates should use the following questions to generate compelling evidence.

- Am I providing sufficient evidence?
- Is the evidence appropriate?
- Do I fully understand the evidence required by each prompt within a task?
- What are the best artifacts I can provide to address the prompts?

Candidates are required to submit different types of evidence for each of the tasks. Each task requires some form of a written response, which is part of the evidence. In addition, tasks may require other types of evidence, such as a lesson plan, rubrics (or scoring guides), and student work samples. Candidates should choose artifacts that provide them with a good opportunity to discuss what they did with students to generate the work, that provide the raters with a picture of their practice, and that clearly provide relevant information on which to score their performance.

For Tasks 2–4, candidates must select specific students to highlight in their response. They must understand the purpose of describing these particular students and what evidence they are asked to provide for each student’s performance. They should select a range of students who meet the specified criteria and that provide them with the opportunity to best show their practice. Quality artifacts are carefully selected, which connect, support, and enhance the written commentary. They also help to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and understanding when paired with relevant and insightful analysis.

When determining the best artifacts to use as evidence, candidates should start by identifying a number of artifacts that can be used to support a specific point in the written commentary. Then they can choose the strongest artifact and explain why they believe it supports the specific point. Only one-page artifacts are permitted unless it is specifically stated otherwise; therefore, the candidates should choose an artifact that best illustrates and connects with what has been written.

The artifacts to use in Task 1 include the Contextual Factors Chart, the Instructional and Support Resources Chart, one completed Getting to Know Your Students document, and a document that demonstrates a method of communication with students and families. The types of artifacts to use in Task 2 include a selected assessment, baseline data for the whole class and the two Focus Students, a rubric (or scoring guide), a graphic representation of the collected data, and completed assessments from the two Focus Students. The types of artifacts to use in Task 3 include a lesson plan for the whole class and a differentiated plan for each of the two Focus Students, and student work samples. The types of artifacts to use in Task 4 include a fifteen-minute video, a lesson plan, baseline data, and student work samples.

Artifacts to avoid include blank handouts and worksheets, artifacts that do not connect directly to the points being made in the written commentary, and artifacts that are difficult to read or decipher.

Support and Ethical Considerations

General Guidelines

As part of the required coursework, candidates may engage in professional discussions and activities related to the PPAT assessment Tasks, Standards, and Indicators with other candidates and educators. However, the work that candidates submit in response to each performance assessment task must be theirs and theirs alone. The written commentaries, student work, and other artifacts must feature their interactions with colleagues or students and the work that they facilitated within the school or district setting.

All materials and information necessary for candidates to complete the PPAT assessment are available and public. Candidates will have ample opportunity to review the tasks and rubrics before they begin the assessment process.

Support from Instructors and Mentors

Instructors and mentors should:

- review the assessment and the assessment process
- check for understanding of the task requirements, rubrics, and handbook
- only share information that is public for all candidates
- provide direction on how candidates prepare, plan, and manage deadlines
- understand the difference between personal opinions and policies
- know, understand, and uphold the assessment’s policies and guidelines
- acknowledge and respect that responsibility for developing and submitting the performance assessment rests solely and completely with the candidate
- ensure that candidates understand that breaches of trust and confidentiality may destroy the validity of the assessment and may negatively affect the reputations of the candidates
- immediately report violations of confidentiality, incidents of falsified information or materials, and breaches of security

Instructors and mentors should never engage in the following conduct:

- make choices for the candidate
- correct a task response
- assign a score to a task or in any way evaluate responses
- give an assignment that asks candidates to respond to a task's guiding prompts
- use the task rubrics to score an assignment

Reflection of Actual Tasks in Assignments

Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) should provide instructional activities that support candidates in obtaining the knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete the assessment's tasks. EPP guidelines include the following:

- EPP instructors can assess and provide feedback using the instructor's or university's expectations and rubrics on assignments that students MAY select to use as part of their submission for a task.
- Assignments should not include the actual assessment's guiding prompts and should not be graded using the assessment's rubrics. Instead, assignments should be graded using criteria determined by the EPP program.
- Assignments can include artifacts that candidates may use as a part of their tasks.
- Instructional assignments can be similar to parts of the tasks and can even ask candidates to select topics, include written responses, and request one or more artifacts that could be used or adapted by candidates when submitting their task responses.
- Instructional activities and assignments should allow candidates to have multiple experiences to draw from when creating their task submissions. Various shorter instructional assignments can provide multiple opportunities for candidates to grow as educators in the assessed areas.
- Some universities require performance-based assignments and student portfolios as a part of their program. The process of creating these collections of graded assignments can provide valuable experiences and artifacts that students may choose to draw from when submitting their tasks. EPP instructors should refrain from coaching students when selecting assignments to use and adapt for their submissions.

Ethical Responsibilities of Candidates

Candidates may engage in professional discussions with instructors and colleagues about requirements and activities of the performance assessment. However, the work candidates submit as part of their response within the submission must be theirs alone.

- The responses that are submitted are original to the candidate and do not reflect the work of other candidates, past or current, and/or responses shared in the Library of Examples.
  - The commentary consists of the candidate's own words.
  - Candidates may use artifacts that are the same as, or similar to, those used by another colleague. However, the completed artifact, as much as possible, should be different, reflecting the different colleagues with whom the candidate worked. If the candidates uses an artifact that is part of a shared project or shared work, that must be noted on the artifact. Also, take care writing commentary if using the same artifacts; commentary that is similar can constitute overlap.
- Candidate responses are not shared with current or future candidates.

Plagiarism

ETS reserves the right to cancel scores at any time when, in its judgment, there is evidence that text submitted is substantially similar to that found in other performance assessment responses and/or training materials, such as, but not limited to, the Library of Examples.

Essay Similarity Detection

Each task response in the assessment, whether submitted during the original submission window or during the resubmission window, must be entirely the candidate's work. While we encourage candidates to seek support from their EPP supervising instructor and mentor, each task must be distinctly and solely the candidate's own work. Software is utilized to scan all responses for overlap with previous submissions, with another candidate's submissions and with the Library of Examples. Paragraphs or even sections of paragraphs that are substantially similar will be construed as overlap. If such overlap is detected, an investigation with the ETS Office of Testing Integrity (OTI) may be initiated and scores could be voided at any time. If a task response is the subject of a review, the following steps will occur.

- Scores will be placed on hold before scores are released.
- The appropriate state agency or institution requiring the assessment will be informed of the investigation.
- Candidates will be informed that their task response is under review, and they will be provided the opportunity to submit additional materials to ETS's OTI to support their case.
- All materials will be independently reviewed and an assessment of the case will be provided to ETS's OTI.
- Candidates will receive a letter from ETS's OTI notifying them of the decision after the review has been completed.

- If it is concluded that scores should be released, the hold on scores will be removed and candidates will be able to view their score report online.
- If it is concluded that there is substantial evidence to support cancellation of scores, the scores will be voided and the appropriate state agency or institution requiring the assessment will be informed of the cancellation of scores.

A Team Approach

The EPP instructor and cooperating teacher both have an obvious interest in the success of the candidates they mentor. For EPP instructors, the accomplishments of candidates reflect well on the quality and reputations of the EPP in the preparation of future educators. For cooperating teachers, a teacher candidate’s performance can help motivate students and, at times, reinvigorate their own teaching. Both mentors invest themselves deeply in nurturing potential future colleagues. While their roles differ at times, the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher will act as a team to support candidates and serve both of their aims.

Although contact between the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher may not be as frequent or convenient as communication with the teacher candidate will be, it is essential that these team members share information. This communication can ensure that the feedback and advice they offer mutually supports the teacher candidate and does not unintentionally conflict. This communication requires advance planning.

One way to ensure successful communication among all members of the student-teaching team is to think ahead about who will communicate what and how. For example, the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher will likely want to determine in advance how they will share thoughts about the following:

- How candidates are progressing in their assigned classroom
- When each mentor will give the teacher candidate feedback and advice about instruction and the PPAT assessment
- The intent of the feedback and the advice they will give candidates

At the heart of this team, of course, are the pre-service candidates, who have spent several years preparing for careers as educators. The stakes are high for them as they embark on this real-life test of all they have learned. The coordinated support of a team approach can help get them started on the right foot. The EPP instructor, cooperating teacher, and candidate share a common goal of ensuring a successful student-teaching experience.

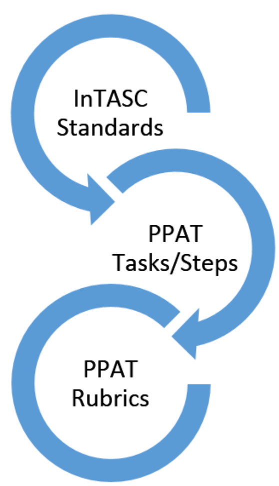
Rubrics and the Library of Examples

Another tool that can help candidates, and you as the cooperating teacher, understand the state's expectations for their performance on the PPAT assessment is the rubrics that accompany each task. Each of the four PPAT tasks is broken into multiple steps, and a unique rubric is provided for each step. The steps

- are directly connected to the guiding prompts of the tasks and to the standards.
- help you and the candidates come to a shared understanding of the explicit expectations of the tasks.
- help ensure consistency and reduce bias.
- help candidates better understand how to improve their performance and learning.

The rubrics associated with each task as well as suggestions for reviewing and reflecting on the PPAT steps are provided on the following pages. As candidates' mentors, the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher may wish to use these suggestions to guide their own review of the assessment in terms of the teaching standards. After doing so, they may find it easier to imagine what pre-service teachers are likely to find challenging on the assessment and in the classroom.

In addition to the rubrics, the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher will have access to the Library of Examples, a collection of written responses to the guiding prompts, which can help candidates better understand the task before them. These examples can also be critical tools for helping candidates visualize what a performance, strong or weak, might look like in a particular context. Candidates must pay attention to what is stated in the InTASC standards, how the rubrics measure those standards, and the way in which their performance reflects those standards.



Guidelines for Writing

Each task requires some form of written response. It is imperative that candidates understand what kind of writing is required by each guiding question. Following are some suggestions to help candidates craft strong written responses that will be part of their performance assessment.

1. Writing about teaching

The four tasks required in the PPAT assessment encourage the use of three kinds of writing: descriptive, analytic, and reflective. The evidence candidates select as representative of their practice for the purposes of this assessment should provide raters with a view not only of what is happening in the classroom but also of the rationale for choosing specific events and processes. It should also inform your view regarding the results of their teaching.

2. Descriptive, analytic, and reflective writing

There are essential differences between descriptive, analytic, and reflective writing. As candidates compose their written commentary, they need to keep these differences in mind. Description in this context is a retelling of what happened in a classroom situation or event. This kind of writing is meant to set the scene for raters. The description should be logically ordered and provide enough detail that raters will have a basic sense of the classroom situation so that they can understand what the candidate is conveying in his/her analysis.

Analysis in this context deals with the candidate's reasons, motives, and interpretations and is supported by the concrete evidence found in the materials submitted. Analytic writing shows raters the thought processes used to arrive at the conclusions made about a teaching situation or event. Analysis demonstrates the significance of the evidence candidates submit. In some cases, it will include the achievement results of the lesson taught or it could be discussion of the results of a survey that solicited feedback from sources.

Reflection in this context is the thought process that occurs after a teaching situation. Reflection allows one to think deeply about what occurred — and what did not occur — during a teaching event and to make decisions about how one would approach similar situations in the future. One could decide to do something the same way, differently, or not at all. Although reflective thought may occur in many places throughout candidates' submissions, the guiding prompts that ask for reflection are where they must show how they will use what they learned from their teaching experiences to inform and improve their practice in the future.

3. The overlap between analysis and reflection

Analysis and reflection do overlap, though they are not identical. Analysis involves the interpretation and examination of elements or events supported by evidence. Reflection, a particular kind of analysis, always suggests self-analysis or retrospective consideration of one's practice. Analysis deals with reasons, motives, and interpretation. All of these are grounded in the concrete evidence provided by the artifacts that candidates include in their submissions. But the candidates must explain the significance of their evidence and not expect the rater to draw conclusions.

4. Revising and editing written responses

An important step in writing, regardless of the skill or experience of the writer, is taking the time to review the writing with an objective eye. Even professional writers can become so involved in their writing that they sometimes forget to include information that the readers need to know. It is important for candidates to read their responses many times to ensure they have included all pertinent details and to edit the language, spelling, and other mechanics of writing.

Candidates may ask you to read their work with a critical eye. If you agree to do this, please use the rubric to review their written responses and the evidence they are including. One of your goals in reading their work is to discover things that are unclear to an external evaluator. Be careful not to use your familiarity with the learning environment to infer critical information that others would find unclear or missing. Assist candidates in determining if their writing is redundant or if there are any gaps in their work.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Teacher candidates should not use any identifying names or titles. This includes, but is not limited to, names of teachers, students, administrators, schools, and districts. In order for responses to be scored fairly and to protect the identity of students, it is extremely important that candidates do not identify themselves, their students, their school, or the city/town in which the school is located. Instead, they should refer to students as Student 1, Student 2, etc., and refer to places as "my school" or "my district." Please also help ensure candidates remove identifiers from student work samples by crossing them out with a marker or correction tape/fluid.

Video Recording

In Task 4 teacher candidates are required to submit a video recording of their teaching. The purpose of the submitted video recording is to provide a view of their teaching that is as complete and authentic as possible. Because raters are not able to visit the classroom, a video recording is the only visual demonstration of the following key aspects of a candidate's practice:

- The interactions the candidate has with the students and the interactions the students have with each other
- The climate the candidate creates in the classroom
- The ways in which the candidate engages students in learning

Teacher candidates must complete two key steps before they start video recording a class: (1) obtain and complete permission forms which allow the candidate to submit student work for Tasks 2, 3, and 4 as well as for the video recording (2) make sure video equipment is adequate for the task.

Candidates must obtain permission forms for videoing. The PPAT Student Permission Form and Adult Permission Form can be found directly on the [PPAT Assessment informational website](). These forms are used to document that signed permission has been granted for all of the individuals who appear in submitted photographs or who are seen or heard in video recordings or who create work that is submitted with this assessment. Candidates must secure permission from the parents or legal guardians of all students in videos. These permission forms must be retained by the candidate.

Please assist the teacher candidate in ensuring parents understand that the video recordings are not about the students; instead, they are intended for the candidate's use during professional discussions with other teachers about the best ways to teach. The students will never be identified by their full names. If, for some reason, a student's parents refuse to grant permission, the candidate will have to ensure that the student is seated out of the video camera's range. The candidate must have a signed Student Permission Form for each student who appears or is heard on a submitted video recording, who is seen in a photograph, or whose work samples are submitted.

Please apprise both the candidate and the EPP instructor of any State and school district policies regarding video use and processes for obtaining parental consent.

There are established guidelines for submitting videos. Candidates may not submit edited videos.

Editing in this context is defined as postproduction processing of the video itself or the use of cuts in an otherwise continuous segment. Examples of editing include the elimination of unwanted sections within segments, the addition of footage, the use of fade-ins and fade-outs, the addition of audio-recorded material from a device other than the video recorder, and the blurring of an image to conceal a face or nametag. In addition, video segments may not be created with two or more cameras, which would give the video recording a studio effect. However, amplifying the sound to enhance the audio on a video is acceptable as long as the amplification of the audio does not conflict with the postproduction editing guidelines described above. Please not that candidates are permitted to submit three five-minute segments. The rules regarding editing listed above apply within the segments.

It is a good idea for candidates to make several practice video recordings in order that they and their students become familiar with the mechanics of video recording and with maintaining a natural demeanor in front of the camera. They should record varied teaching formats, including whole-class instruction, cooperative group work, and small-group instruction. These recordings should be made during the rostered class to show the regular teaching environment and should not be created during an off period or after school.

Preparing for the Candidate’s Arrival

As the district-level educator in whose classroom the clinical experience occurs, the cooperating teacher is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that students in the clinical classroom achieve the district’s learning goals
- Observing how the candidate’s intellectual strengths and level of preparation transfer to classroom skills, and providing insight concerning areas of strength and areas needing improvement
- Helping the candidate understand the unique classroom context and curricular goals
- Providing daily formative feedback to candidates during the clinical experience to help them steadily improve their instructional planning and teaching skills

Prior to the clinical experience, it is a good idea to think about how you and the teacher candidate will collaborate in your classroom. These thoughts can better prepare you to guide the candidate through the student-teaching experience, while also ensuring that your students’ learning stays on course. You and the candidate can discuss these things at your first meeting. The following questions may help focus your reflection.

- What guidelines do you have for the teacher candidate’s interactions with students? What guidelines do you have for the candidate’s interactions with you in the presence of students?
- What do you see as the candidate’s first steps toward teaching your students?
- How do you see the teacher candidate transitioning from these first steps to higher levels of responsibility? How can you scaffold this transition?
- What evidence of developing proficiency will you need to see to increase the candidate’s classroom responsibilities?
- What opportunities will you provide for the teacher candidate to help generate that evidence?
- How will you foster open, two-way communication with the candidate about student learning and the clinical experience?

Advance Preparation Checklist

- Review the PPAT tasks, steps, guiding prompts, and rubrics.
- Reflect on the upcoming clinical experience and establish guidelines for collaborating with the candidate.
- Participate in a team meeting with the EPP instructor to discuss how to mutually support the teacher candidate.
- Participate in a team meeting with the candidate to discuss the classroom, ideas for collaboration, and the PPAT tasks.

Meeting with the Candidate

After each member of the team has reviewed the PPAT assessment but before the start of the clinical experience, the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate should meet to discuss the following points.

- The district’s curricular goals for the class in which the teacher candidate will student teach
- The educational requirements of any students in the class who have IEPs, the services provided for these students, and the roles of any support staff
- Classroom rules and procedures and how/why they were developed
- Daily/weekly/monthly schedules for resource instruction, “specials,” staff meetings, common planning time, and any other professional obligations
- The roles of other teachers of the same grade level, content area, and/or learning group as well as the roles of staff who provide student support services
- The cooperating teacher’s role in any planned formative observations of the teacher candidate
- The ways in which classroom responsibilities will be shared
- Instructional strategies and learning activities that the teacher candidate may be interested in implementing while student teaching and their appropriateness for this class
- New instructional strategies and learning activities that the cooperating teacher may be interested in implementing with the candidate during the clinical experience
- The teacher candidate’s timeline for completing the PPAT tasks
- How and when the cooperating teacher will provide feedback
- Potential resources the teacher candidate can explore prior to the start of student teaching that may contribute to his or her preparation for the clinical experience (for example, curriculum and policies)

- Potential resources the teacher candidate can explore prior to the start of student teaching that may allow him or her to start working on the PPAT Task 1 Contextual Factors Chart

Helping the Candidate Get Started

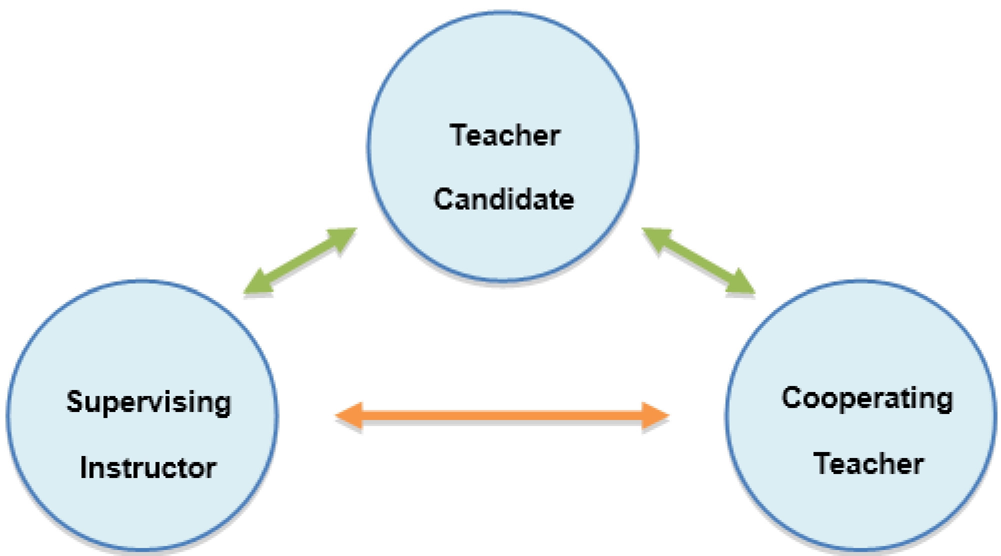
You can help the teacher candidate get started by doing the following:

- Providing information sources that helped you learn about the community, district, and school and by referring to the kinds of information that turned out to be most useful
- Helping the teacher candidate understand why some information matters more than other information (due to the curriculum or the developmental needs of the students in the learning environment)
- Helping the candidate assess which of the sources listed on the Contextual Factors chart are most likely to help him or her locate appropriate information
- Acting as a source of information about your students, school, and district
- Walking the teacher candidate through the district's computerized student information system, and explaining how to pinpoint useful information about the students in the classroom using the system
- Providing access to data from standardized tests, facilitating a meeting with the teacher who had the students last year, and sharing strategies for analyzing assessment data
- Introducing the candidate to key district and school personnel (e.g., the school business administrator, a curriculum supervisor, an ELL specialist, members of the Child Study Team) and colleagues (e.g., other teachers who support your students and other teachers of the same grade level) who can act as information sources about the district, school, and students
- Helping the teacher candidate manage time and stay on schedule
- Asking high-level questions that deepen the candidate's thinking and reflection about the relationship between his or her knowledge of students and the specific students' learning needs. For example:
  - Why do you think this activity was so engaging to this student?
  - Why do you think this student struggled so much with the activity?
  - Why do you think this student provided richer written responses than oral ones?
  - What do we know about this student that might help us make this learning more engaging or achievable?

Collaborating with the Candidate's Supervising Instructor

The roles that the members of the student-teaching team play during the clinical experience necessitate close working relationships between the EPP instructor and the teacher candidate (because of the time they both spend in the EPP supervisory seminar) and between the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate (because of the time they both spend in the classroom). Due to proximity, these team members will have numerous opportunities to interact. Nonetheless, planning structured ways to discuss professional practice can boost the effectiveness of this communication. Suggestions for planning are provided in this section.

While contact between the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher may not be as frequent or convenient as communication with the teacher candidate will be, it is essential that these team members share information. This communication can ensure that the feedback and advice they offer mutually supports the candidate and does not unintentionally conflict. This communication requires advance planning.



One way to ensure successful communication among all members of the student-teaching team is to think ahead about who will communicate what and how. For example, the EPP instructor and the cooperating teacher will likely want to determine in advance how they will share thoughts about:

- How teacher candidates are progressing in their assigned classroom
- When each mentor will give the teacher candidate feedback and advice about instruction
- The intent of the feedback and the advice they will give candidates about Task 1

The EPP instructor and cooperating teacher may also wish to preplan how to share some responsibilities related to the tasks, such as:

- Guiding the teacher candidate through completion of Task 1

- Supporting the teacher candidate through completion of Tasks 2–4
- Conducting regular formative observations of the candidate for purposes of the PPAT and providing regular, structured feedback that guides the teacher candidate's growth

Included in the *PPAT Reflective Practice Handbook* is a description of The Elements of Teaching, which are used as a framework for the PPAT Daily Reflection Form and the Professional Growth Plan.

This alignment is one reason the PPAT Daily Reflection Form may be a good choice for use with teacher candidates. Consistent use of the elements can help candidates assimilate information about their skill levels that they have received from several sources and can help them later use the information to identify goals for post-clinical professional growth.

Along the same lines, when you and the supervising instructor offer teacher candidates qualitative formative feedback, it may also be helpful to indicate from time to time how their skills are advancing with respect to the professional continuum. One way to do this is to use 1−, 1, or 1+ to rate their performances related to an element as they progress through Developmental Level 1 and to use 2−, 2, or 2+ for those performances that are moving toward Developmental Level 2. If candidates take the same approach on their self-assessments, this consistency — in combination with qualitative feedback — may help them self-assess their post-clinical proficiency for purposes of the Professional Growth Plan.

The PPAT Daily Reflection Form and Professional Growth Plan are available as downloads on the PPAT Assessment informational website.

The Professional Growth Plan

Many states require pre-service teachers to complete a professional growth plan so that they are aware of their strengths and their challenges upon entry into the profession. The PPAT Professional Growth Plan (PGP) is completed after finishing the PPAT assessment and the clinical experience. The PGP is a pre-service tool designed to help candidates self-assess their performance and set goals for their continued learning. This activity is a primer for the work that many certified teachers across the country do annually to direct their own professional learning and growth. The pre-service PGP can be found among the ancillary materials provided on the PPAT Assessment informational website. The PGP does not get uploaded as part of the PPAT submission.

The PPAT assessment is an educative process in that teacher candidates are learning about themselves as well as their students as they progress through the process. This on-the-job learning encourages candidates to tweak their practice as they move forward. The PGP promotes reflective self-analysis and generates thinking about what will be required during in-service teacher evaluation. The work pre-service teachers do while student teaching should funnel naturally toward completing the PGP. The PGP template offers questions and tools to help candidates drill down from multiple sources of information about their knowledge, skills, and abilities to manageable, achievable goals. Completed formative observations can be a key source of such information. Additional sources include candidates' own reflections, other mentor feedback, and the PPAT score report.

While the PGP is similar to the growth plan that many certified teachers complete annually within their districts, in most cases a candidate's PGP cannot be focused in the same way. The focal point of many certified teachers' annual goal setting is the specific students they know they will teach the following year. Of course, if candidates know where they will be hired for the coming school year, before completing the PGP, by all means they should think about their goals in terms of that setting. Nonetheless, cooperating teachers are encouraged to share with candidates the teacher evaluation protocols used at the school and district level so to help candidates begin thinking about how they may be evaluated on the job.

A teacher candidate's PGP should be targeted toward understanding what the candidate needs to further develop instructional skills within the context of the planned area of certification. In that way, the candidate can be better prepared for upcoming licensure tests, a job search, and a future position as a teacher. What candidates learn about their knowledge, skills, and abilities while student teaching could help them advance to the emerging-teacher level through greater proficiency in elements of teaching, teaching standards, and performance indicators.

The Scoring Process

Task 1 is scored locally by the EPP supervising instructor. Tasks 2, 3 and 4 are centrally scored by ETS raters to ensure greater transparency and interrater reliability. These scores provide states with greater score validity and consistent, reliable data for licensure and educator program decisions.

Scoring is specific to content and grade level and to each step within a task: planning, implementation, analysis, reflection, etc. Teacher candidates will receive feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline for each task. All raters calibrate regularly during scoring sessions. Raters may be faculty and any teachers (including National Board Certified Teachers and recent retirees) who meet rater criteria.

ETS is seeking raters for the *PPAT* assessment. If you are interested, please see the PPAT online scoring opportunities website.

Web Links and Resources

Handbooks for Your Review

- PPAT Candidate and Educator Handbook (PDF) — contains information about the tasks, rubrics, writing guidelines, artifacts, recording video and more.
- PPAT Task 1 Handbook (PDF) — guides the teacher candidate, EPP supervising instructor and cooperating teacher through the collaborative efforts to complete Task 1.
- PPAT Reflective Practice Handbook (PDF) — contains explicit directions and suggestions for completing the Professional Growth Plan.
- PPAT Cooperating Teacher Handbook (PDF) — provides an overview of the PPAT and guidelines for supporting teacher candidates

How Candidates Create and Submit Tasks

- Creating and Submitting Tasks — provides detailed information to guide candidates in submitting tasks online
- Submission System User Guide (PDF) — instructions on registration, entering written commentary, uploading artifacts, linking artifacts to written commentary and other site navigation.

Ancillary Materials

- How to Use the Ancillary Materials (PDF) — identifies each ancillary material and how teacher candidates, EPP supervising instructors and cooperating teachers can utilize them
- Glossary (PDF) — includes terms that are essential for teacher candidates to know and understand in order to successfully complete this performance assessment.
- Professional Growth Plan (PDF)
- Professional Growth Plan (Word) — May be required. Helps teacher candidates identify specific learning goals and provide a structure for continuing professional growth

Review the PPAT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How to Become a Rater

If you are interested in becoming a rater, please check the ETS Online Scoring Opportunities.

Conclusion

The PPAT assessment provides a solution, developed by educators for educators, for measuring a teacher candidate’s readiness to teach effectively. It allows teacher candidates to demonstrate performance in content coursework and clinical experience at the beginning level of teaching while completing their student teaching experience. It is designed to develop more effective teachers in the classroom, help candidates identify strengths and areas for improvement of practice, and contribute to their development plan for professional growth.

ETS has listened to the needs and concerns of state department representatives and educators in teacher preparation programs. The PPAT assessment includes the elements that they have told us are critical when measuring a teacher’s performance and growth as an educator during student teaching.

ETS is the trusted source in performance-based assessments and has the most extensive history of any measurement organization in developing, delivering and scoring assessments of educator performance, including the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards assessments, California TPA, GACE Teacher Leadership Assessment, and the Performance Assessment for School Leaders. We appreciate the role of cooperating teachers who help ensure the increased effectiveness of the teaching forces and valuable learning for America’s youth.

Thank you for your involvement in the PPAT assessment.