



Preparing future principals

Needs improvement

Systems are key: enabling conditions must be in place to support cohesive principal preparation across the nation

- **Workforce planning** – progression pathways, succession planning, demystification of the role
- **System alignment** – connections clearly made to Australian Professional Standard for Principals, system priorities, impact on student outcomes

The principal job is not for everyone: the right people need to be identified early and deliberately developed

- **Talent spotting** – early identification of the aptitudes needed for success
- **Career pathways and structures** – clear promotional opportunities and connections, career ladders
- **Learning and support** – timely professional learning opportunities, ongoing support at role take-up

Content matters: principals need the skills and knowledge to meet the changing demands of the role

- **Deeper subject matter knowledge and expertise** – pedagogical knowledge to promote a learning culture, instructional leadership and capacity building skills
- **Higher order skills** – strategic thinking, change leadership, values articulation, leadership identity
- **Interpersonal skills** – communicating effectively, building trust and collaboration
- **Management skills** – business acumen, delegation and distributed leadership abilities

Some preparation strategies are better than others: focus on the ones that work

- **Selection** – rigorous recruitment of suitable applicants for professional learning opportunities
- **Timeliness** – learning that is suited to each stage in the leadership journey
- **Varied learning experiences** – personalised and blended learning (e.g. case studies, e-learning, mentoring, reflective journals, internships, action research)

The role of the principal is crucial: we need to know what makes a difference

- **Systems** – strategic decision-making about investment in and timing of leadership development options
- **Providers** – programs informed by what works and examples of best practice
- **Individuals** – ability to determine their best leadership paths